

At the end of every peak season, it is important to take a fresh look at the business and the opportunities the next year holds.



With the continued growth of the online channel and the addition of new alternative channels, many companies almost have to look at their business as having two or more separate peaks, since brick-and-mortar, e-commerce and mobile all require their own focus.

“Shipping is about more than the simple act of moving products from point A to point B; it is about creating benefits across their entire business that ultimately improve the experience for both the shipper and the consumers to whom goods are being shipped.”

- Bill Razzouk
President & CEO
Newgistics, Inc.

Five Quick Tips for Assessing Post Peak Performance

- **Operations and Transportation.** Prior to the peak shipping season, did you sit down with your carrier and outline the specific service requirements expected of them to maintain or improve the customer’s shopping experience? What data do you have to support the evaluation process?
- **Customer Service.** Did call volume or e-mail traffic relative to shipping and/or return inquiries spike above forecast? What data was provided by the carrier relative to shipping activity, how often, and was it provided in a format that could be easily distributed across Customer Service, thereby allowing them to handle calls more efficiently, or better yet reduce overall call volume through proactive shipping status notifications?
- **Marketing.** How well did the carrier do in meeting the expectations of delivering products to the consumer, and how easy was the return process for those consumers wanting to return unwanted gift items? Were there additional sale or promotional opportunities that were missed as a result of limited visibility, or was inventory constrained during this critical period because of a slow or antiquated return process that negatively impacts available inventory -leading to reduced sales and a diminished customer experience?
- **Technology.** Did your systems perform as expected during the peak planning phase prior to the IT environment being locked, and if not, was it an issue of capacity or were there technical issues related to the software platform? What can be done to avoid future issues that may have existed, and what role (if any) can the carrier play in planning for the upcoming year’s peak system requirements?
- **Finance.** By assessing the impact that a carrier may have had across the organization as an integrated service provider, can you determine the total financial impact to the business as a whole and can small modifications to an existing investment net a significant ROI going forward?

One of the largest challenges for any organization coming out of peak is taking the time to look back at the previous season’s activities and assess the performance of the organization as a whole, particularly when trying to evaluate the impact that something as ‘simple’ as shipping has had on the overall operating plan. But when considering the fact that transportation can account for as much as 40% of the company’s total annual operations budget, do you really have a choice? By establishing a formal process by which post-peak performance will be evaluated, your company will be better positioned to drive improved results for the year ahead.

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