



5 steps for advancing your marketing fulfillment

Every organization would like to fulfill their marketing in a manner that is:

1. Accurate
2. Timely
3. Cost effective
4. Engaging

Though critical, many marketing executives find that accuracy, timeliness and cost-effectiveness aren't as easy as one, two, three. In striving to meet these objectives, the marketing message itself is often neglected by its creators and therefore ignored by its audience.

At times, marketing executives do expend a majority of time and money on forming a standout campaign, at the expense of mistakes and missed opportunities. No matter how effective, the message instantly loses customer attention when a name is misspelled or time-sensitive materials arrive late.

So, how can marketing executives easily achieve all their fulfillment goals at once? It involves five simple steps.

1. Identify weak spots.

A lack of resources will cost you. And these costs will start presenting themselves in one or more of the following ways.

Untimely responses to customers

Late delivery of a product decreases your chances of a customer making another purchase.

Mistakes

When databases are incorrect, you will lose time, money, a reliable reputation and therefore future business. Erroneous data entry and infrequent updates lead to:

- Out-of-date customer information
- Fulfilling double entries
- Printing a product with the wrong information
- Improperly fulfilling an order, then having to correct it

Time wasted on manual processes

When orders are manually processed via fax or phone calls versus utilizing Marketing Portals with secure 24/7 access, time is wasted.

Incorrect branding

Whether within smaller organizations or across larger companies, incorrect branding and messaging can lead to:

- Missing out on customers who would have otherwise trusted the credible brand associated with your organization
- Damaging the reputation of your company due to unsightly branding and/or incorrect messaging

Reduced advertising/outreach

If it's difficult for your organization to advertise to customers, chances are you aren't doing it as often as you should for maximum results.

2. Determine resources that will help.

After identifying your organization's weaknesses, decide what it will take to strengthen them. Each can be attributed to a lack of one or more of the following resources:

Adequate employees

Your organization may be short-staffed or, if the current staff was not hired specifically for fulfillment, they may be undertrained.

Ample space

If you are without sufficient space to store product, retrieval becomes unorganized and therefore impeded.

Appropriate equipment

Without access to the proper tools, your organization's fulfillment process is hindered.

3. Explore benefits of securing resources from a partner.

Outsourcing your marketing fulfillment not only assists with your top priorities, but also offers added value.

Timeliness

When hiring a partner, you gain all the knowledge, experience and infrastructure that comes with a company specializing in marketing fulfillment. If they're doing their job right, they will be able to recommend best practices for your organization to

decrease the time between a sale and delivery of your marketing materials. This results in:

- Customers who are satisfied with your speedy service
- Keeping your organization and staff from losing momentum when it comes to manually processing orders, thus freeing them to focus and fine-tune their process for increasing sales.

An excellent partner is also prepared to fulfill high-volume, rush orders by having a flex team ready at all times.

Accuracy

Any staff – though especially an overworked and/or undertrained one – is bound to make fulfillment mistakes. Therefore, outsourcing to a well-trained and well-reinforced company will:

- Save you money
- Build your reputation for reliability

Online Solution Portal

An experienced partner will provide an online solution portal with secure 24/7 access to place orders and manage inventory. Users can view the items they are purchasing thereby eliminating mistakes.

Cost-effectiveness

Fringe benefits of a partner improving your time and accuracy objectives include an increase in repeat and first-time customers, as well decreasing the cost of errors.

But outsourcing can also help you avoid the start-up and fixed costs associated with in-house fulfillment, such as time and money invested in the following:

- Creating a start-up plan
- Hiring a new staff
- Training a new staff
- Warehouse space
- The increasing costs of staff performance reviews and warehouse lease renewals
- Purchasing proper equipment
- Implementing quality control

The right partner will also offer a fixed rate for a definitive period of time so you don't have to worry about unanticipated costs.

Added value

Outsourcing to an organization that specializes in marketing fulfillment will give you access to features that would be costly to obtain on your own, including some or all of the following:



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- The ability to submit data files in almost any format
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- Online product catalog/ordering
- Pre-designed print/email marketing templates
- The ability to upload your own design templates for print/email marketing
- The ability to upload your own internal forms
- Customizable promotional items
- Less expensive procurement
- Formulated inventory projections, re-order reminders and control
- An archive of all marketing products

4. Test trustworthiness of potential partners.

How can you trust your fulfillment partner? Verify that the organization has a solid quality control program in place. It should:

- Acknowledge receipt of each job you submit
- Confirm they have the correct information and product by providing a summary of your order with visual representation of the product

- Submit and require your approval of proofs before printing/mailing
- Update inventory numbers immediately in the online solution portal so the system automatically creates re-orders in a timely manner

5. Select the right partner.

A **good** marketing fulfillment partner is able to provide all the benefits listed above.

A **better** marketing fulfillment partner offers all of the above plus the flexibility of choosing added-value services individually or in any combination.

But the **best** marketing fulfillment partner offers all of the above and can integrate every added-value service through automation. GBS is the only partner that can do so and is the only partner with the fully automated data tool that enables this.



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