

After the Order: A B2B Fulfillment Performance Checklist

Use this to assess where your post-order experience is strong and where it's creating friction you may not be seeing.



INSTRUCTIONS

Are you tracking these metrics? If not start to and keep an eye on your order management and fulfillment customer experience.

Stage 1: Pre-Shipment

Are orders captured and processed accurately before anything leaves the warehouse?

- Order accuracy rate
 - percentage of orders entered without errors
- Inventory availability rate at time of order
 - what customers see should reflect what you actually have
- Order confirmation time
 - how long from placement to confirmed acknowledgment
- ERP/WMS sync latency
 - how old is your inventory data at the point of sale



Stage 2: Fulfillment

How well is the physical execution actually performing?

- Order cycle time
 - from order placed to order shipped
- On-time shipment rate
- Perfect order rate
 - shipped complete, on time, damage free, with accurate documentation.
 - Per APQC benchmarking data from over 50,000 organizations, median performers achieve 90%. Top quartile performers reach 95% or better. This is the single most useful north star metric for B2B fulfillment.
- Split shipment rate
 - lower is generally better; track trend over time
- Pick accuracy rate
 - errors caught in the warehouse cost less than errors caught by the customer
- Fulfillment node selection
 - are orders being routed to the right distribution center



Stage 3: Post-Delivery

What did the customer actually experience?

- On-time delivery rate
- Order fill rate
 - what percentage of what was ordered actually arrived
- Post-delivery customer service contact rate
 - if this number is high, it's a signal that something upstream in visibility or accuracy is broken. Most operators don't connect their CS volume to fulfillment performance. They should.



Stage 4: Exception Handling

This is where most operators have the least visibility and the most exposure.

- Return initiation rate
 - The percentage of orders that result in a return request
- Return resolution cycle time
- Claim approval cycle time
- Replacement order cycle time
 - how quickly a replacement order is placed, fulfilled, and delivered after an exception is confirmed
- Short shipment frequency
 - track by supplier and by carrier to identify patterns
- Customer service escalation rate tied to fulfillment issues
 - distinct from general CS volume; this specifically measures how often fulfillment failures drive escalations

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A note on benchmarks

For most of these metrics, published benchmarks are either consumer-focused or vendor-sourced, which makes them a poor fit for B2B.

The exception is perfect order rate, where APQC provides credible, independent data across a large sample of organizations.

For everything else, your most useful benchmark is your own trend line—directional improvement over time matters more than hitting an industry number that may not reflect your customer base, product mix, or operational model.





About

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