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THE FINELINE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

The FineLine Competitive Advantage

Speed | Service | Innovation | Visibility

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Executive Summary

This paper focuses on the challenges retailers and vendors face in regards to supply chain management and efficiency, and offers solutions for meeting those challenges. It specifically focuses on the ticketing and labeling portion of the process and how best practices can streamline and increase the efficiency of the entire supply chain.

The retail industry relies heavily on an efficient supply chain in order to produce, process, and sell a multitude of products to consumers. Each link in the supply chain needs to pull its weight in order for everything to run smoothly. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Many things can disrupt the supply chain process, causing more than just headaches and diminishing profit margins. The next few pages will describe the challenges retailers and vendors alike face in regards to ticketing and offer comprehensive solutions that increase efficiency and ward off those nasty headaches.

Supply Chain Challenges

Human Error

This is arguably the most prevalent disruption of the supply chain. In many ordering processes, vendors and retailers alike make simple, but costly, mistakes when ordering tickets and labels. Simple human errors can result in being forced to reorder and incur the costs, missing the shipping deadline, and costly chargebacks.

Ordering Systems

The ordering systems of many ticketing companies contribute to supply chain nightmares as well. The issues are endless and any and all can halt the supply chain in its tracks, often for long periods of time while the vendor, retailer, and ticketing company try to figure out what went wrong, what was lost, where a shipment disappeared to, etc.

Visibility

The lack of visibility in the typical ordering process, or through the ordering system, makes it extremely difficult for retailers and vendors to track important ordering and shipping information. Visibility is essential to an efficient supply chain.



Meeting Challenges Through Innovative Technology

With the use of innovative technology, these ticketing issues can be avoided and not only get the supply chain back in working order, but actually increase its speed and efficiency as well. FineLine Technologies created a proprietary ordering platform, FASTtrak, which offers a solution to all these problems and more. With this technology, retailers and vendors around the world have found their communication improve, errors reduced, and ultra-fast turnaround times on all orders, no matter where or when that order was placed. Here's how it works.

Reducing Human Error

When a new retailer partners with FineLine for their bar code or RFID integrated hangtags, tickets, labels and stickers, they have the ability to choose how their vendors order. There are many options, including web-based purchase order or electronic order form based ordering, which are each customizable to fit the retailer and its vendors' needs. In a P.O. based ordering model, for example, the retailer provides the majority of the information, thereby reducing the chance of error by the vendor. By using this online ordering method, the retailer can limit, if not eradicate, any mistakes that could result in delayed shipments of merchandise to their stores and inevitably lost sales. In the same way, vendors can rest assured that the ticket information is provided by the retailer itself and is exactly what's needed.

Improving The Order Process

As previously mentioned, the ordering system itself can disrupt the efficiency of the supply chain. FASTtrak combats this problem by providing real-time ordering around the world. If a vendor places an order to ship to Thailand, FASTtrak will immediately route it to the nearest FineLine production center and begin processing and producing the order, often resulting in a turnaround time of 48 hours or less, if requested. FASTtrak also provides immediate confirmation of order receipt and shipping notifications so customers can track their orders.



Increasing Visibility

A recent report by Aberdeen Group “urges retailers to get a better handle on their supply chains... It is essential to establish visibility for all internal and external supply chain stakeholders... It is critical to align retailer and supplier metrics so that both groups have the same standards for success.”

“It is essential to establish visibility for all internal and external supply chain stakeholders.”

- Aberdeen Group

FineLine solves this problem with FASTtrak. Because of the way FASTtrak is set up, users can track when a purchase order is uploaded into the system, when an order is placed, the quantity produced, etc. This reporting ensures vendor accountability, brand accountability, as well as service bureau accountability.

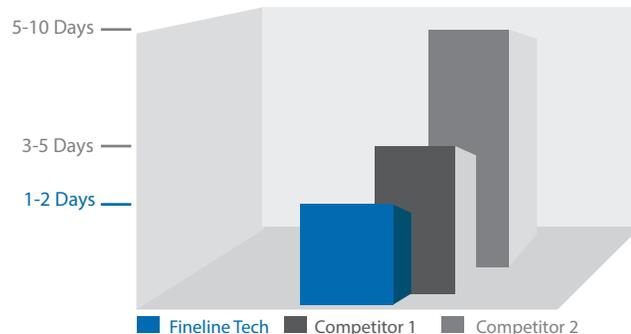
Supporting Innovation

With any technology, questions, concerns, and issues arise. It's important for ticketing companies to ensure they have sufficient support behind their various technologies. FineLine Technologies is an exceptional example of just how far incredible customer service can take a company. FineLine has customer service representatives on hand around the world to assist customers. In a time when automated messaging services reign supreme and often mean minutes, if not hours, on hold listening to awful elevator music, FineLine offers a refreshing customer service experience. An actual human being answers the phone, usually on the first ring, and is happy to assist in whatever way they're needed.

Conclusion: The FineLine Competitive Advantage

As previously alluded to, FineLine Technologies offers comprehensive solutions to common, and frustrating, supply chain problems. Through its customary speed, service, innovation and visibility the company provides an ordering experience that goes above and beyond the average scope of ticketing companies.

SPEED. FineLine Tech's real-time proprietary ordering system, FASTtrak, allows the company to process, produce, and deliver products ultrafast – sometimes even same day. With manufacturing capabilities in North America, Europe and Asia, FineLine typically ships all orders within 48 hours.



See the graph above to see how FineLine stacks up with its competitors on turnaround times.

SERVICE. FineLine's service and responsiveness, from product development through final delivery, is second to none. As previously mentioned, it has customer service representatives on hand throughout the world to answer questions, assist with orders, and provide an all-around great experience for its customers, big or small.

INNOVATION. FASTtrak's innovative web-based technology allows FineLine the flexibility of adapting to constantly evolving trends and the varying needs of its customers. It also decreases errors in the ordering process and increases efficiency throughout the supply chain, to name just a couple.

VISIBILITY. Through FASTtrak, decision makers can use the in depth analytics to review received at vendor and turnaround time metrics, adjust schedules and production strategies. Visibility provides flexibility and accountability which strengthens the supply chain.

So to avoid many headaches caused by delays, chargebacks, missed orders, and more, consider taking a look at FineLine Technologies and its ticketing solutions. The company is an approved supplier for most major retailers and offers a variety of products including UPC or RFID integrated price tickets and hangtags, labels, branded tags, heat transfer labels, eco-friendly items, size strips, and much more. Visit FineLine's website at www.finelinetech.com or via the contact information provided.



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