



# 4 Tips For Making A Painless Transition To A New Distribution Partner

**Avoid Inventory Discrepancies  
And Operational Delays**



Whether it's poor customer service, inventory loss or low priority given to your business, there are many reasons to seek a new distribution partner.



Your current partner may not have the correct tools or structure to meet your logistics KPIs. Perhaps your logistics company is adept at handling certain types of products but isn't agile enough to meet your needs as they evolve.

Some 3PL (third-party logistics) providers are technologically outdated. You need a partner that makes information such as real-time inventory numbers readily available.

If these problems apply to you, it's time for a change. However, switching to a new distribution partner may cause system conflicts with your ERP and WMS software, inventory discrepancy and operational delays – unless you choose a partner that's skilled at making your transition painless.

The steps you take to prepare also have an impact on how smoothly your transition goes. Follow these four tips to streamline your transition to a new distribution partner.



## 1. Create An Action Plan

Before you switch partners, create an action plan and share it with your new 3PL provider to confirm you're both on the same page. Planning for your transition period and having in-depth conversations with your new logistics partner helps to ensure your results will match your expectations.



## 2. Designate Points Of Contact

Designate members of your team to serve as project managers, customer service representatives, IT specialists, etc. Knowing which people fill roles before an issue arises allows you to quickly determine who can help in the event of a problem or whether you need to bring the matter to upper management.



## 3. Run Several System Tests

While you're still in the planning process, run system tests for every step of the supply chain that may impact your system. For example, you should confirm that purchase order receipts travel well from one system to another and make sure your new partner is receiving all relevant data regarding sales orders.



## 4. Follow Up On Inventory Status

Request several inventory updates during the transition process. This will help you cross check the units dispatched from your previous 3PL provider with the ones your new distribution partner receives. You'll be able to correct any discrepancies almost instantly and resume regular operations faster.

# What Your 3PL Provider Should Do To Ensure A Painless Transition

The right logistics partner will meet with you several times during planning to make sure it hits your transition objectives. You'll discuss when you expect to be fully running at the new distribution center and how much merchandise you must move.

You need a 3PL provider that employs the right personnel. Your partner should have a highly professional human resources team that uses psychological and aptitude tests to ensure personnel possess the necessary skill sets to provide reliable logistics services, especially during your transition.

While issues are bound to arise during any transition to a new distribution partner, the process shouldn't be messy. You need a partner that's able to resolve issues as soon as they arise and bring your operations back up to speed quickly.

Adequate planning goes a long way to pre-empt the most common problems inherent in a transition. Your distribution partner's expertise combined with your knowledge of your business helps to ensure a painless transition so you can start hitting your logistics KPIs sooner.



**Ready to learn more about transitioning to a distribution partner that helps you meet your logistics goals?**

Contact Exclusive Brands Logistics to discover how to improve distribution within your organization.

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+507 306 7600

[www.exclusivebrandslogistics.com](http://www.exclusivebrandslogistics.com)