

Beyond 3PL: Think Outside the Boxes

By Peter Levy, President, M. Block & Sons



Commerce moves faster than it did five years ago by a factor of ten. Consumer expectations have increased by a factor of infinity (as best as I can count!). If you are an established brand racing to keep pace with the convergence of B&M and e-Commerce, or a start-up striving to break through, it's imperative to understand that the old rules are becoming obsolete – what used to be remarkable 3PL is now table stakes.

A new efficiency paradigm is here.

These are The 3 Pillars of the new, faster, streamlined, model built for today's dynamic, hyper-competitive environment.

1 The New Pace of Commerce demands HYBRID Solutions

In today's new 3PL model, third party logistics together with traditional distribution services is simply the starting point.

Does your 3PL supplier offer?

- IT Support
- Sales Support
- Marketing Support
- Compliance
- Accounts Receivable
- Order-to-Cash
- Ecommerce Expertise
- Deep Amazon Experience & Consultation

A strong foundation of this model could be your bullet train to the top of your class or the top of Amazon search rankings. An expert in these areas can truly bring an exponential lift in operational excellence and speed-to-market results for your product.

2 Leverage Existing Retail Relationships

"From scratch" is quaint in the kitchen, but not if you're shipping millions of dollars of kitchen products, or any other product, to tens of thousands of retailers. Building new retail relationships is a huge drain that can take months if not years. So it's best to find a distribution partner with big time retail partners you can draft on. Instant Karma.

Look for a partner that has customers with most or all of the following: Department stores, mass merchants, Clubs, Specialty Stores, Off-Price Stores, Grocery, Independents and even Military (Don't forget our soldiers).



3 Think Omnichannel

Why deplete executive time sourcing and managing multiple vendors when this is no longer required? Start your search by finding a house that offers Omnichannel solutions. This means having one inventory that can support every channel: retail, ecommerce, direct-to-consumer, and third-party

Ask: Do they offer: Direct-to-Consumer shipping, inventory for e-retailers, Brand and MAP controlled sales through Amazon, Walmart/Jet, eBay?

Understanding the nuances of every retail and online channel and their complicated requirements demands "been there, don't that" knowledge. You don't have time or resources to be brilliant at all of that. Your genius could be much better deployed focusing relentlessly on making a superior product that will one-up that startup category-killer that just went public. Or you may be that category killer yourself.

Next Step: Think FAST

Speed-to-market starts with getting to decisions faster to stay ahead. Deciding to replace friction, redundancy and inefficiency with flexible, hybrid, modern solutions is an extremely promising place to start – with huge potential rewards for the future of your business. **So start.**

Learn more at MBlock.com



Peter Levy is the president of M. Block & Sons, a Chicago based 3PL company offering Hybrid solutions to manufacturers currently distributing products to Amazon, Walmart, Sam's Club, Walgreen's, CVS, Costco, Macy's, Staples, Whole Foods, Kohl's, Home Depot, Best Buy, Bed, Bath & Beyond. Manufacturers include: Kraft, P&G, Keurig, Braun, Starbucks and many more, including many top-performing startups.