



nShift Guide

Online delivery management: buy, don't build

Agile, versatile, reliable:
the advantages of working
with a tried and tested delivery
management platform
rather than building your own



Introduction: Online delivery management



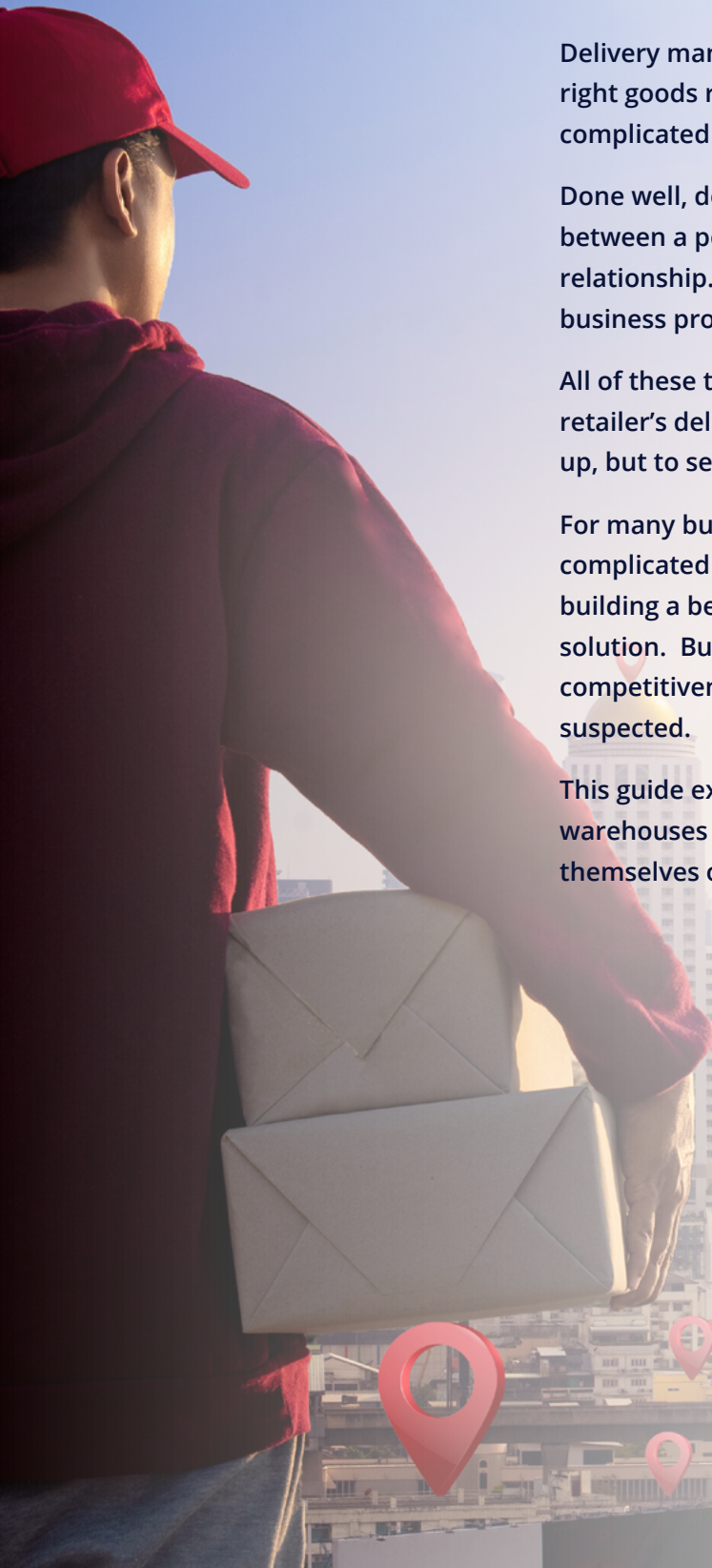
Delivery management is about much more than ensuring that the right goods reach the right customer on time, though that can be complicated enough.

Done well, delivery management can make the difference between a poor one-off buyer experience and a life-long customer relationship. It needs to integrate with existing ecommerce, business process and warehouse management systems.

All of these things are constantly changing. So it is critical that a retailer's delivery management platform is not only able to keep up, but to set the pace in driving new customer innovations

For many businesses, particularly those with an existing and complicated IT infrastructure, it can be tempting to think that building a bespoke delivery management tool is the most logical solution. But taking this approach can dent agility, reduce competitiveness and prove far more labor intensive than initially suspected.

This guide explores some considerations for retailers and warehouses when deciding whether to build a solution for themselves or buy in from outside.



The experience era



Over the years, omnichannel retailers, ecommerce businesses and their warehouse and logistics partners have invested heavily in a variety of technologies. These helps acquire customers, speed their journey through to checkout, and process their payments. The ability for these systems to work well together is usually critical to business success.

But what happens after the customer clicks “buy” often determines whether they will buy again or go elsewhere. The manner, speed, and experience around deliveries is a key “moment of truth” for the customer relationship.

In 2022, 53% of consumers abandoned the purchasing process due to excessively long shipping times¹. Out of online shoppers, 85% say that a bad delivery experience would discourage them from buying from the same retailer again².

Ecommerce - and therefore demand for deliveries - is growing fast. One study from the World Economic Forum estimates that global parcel deliveries will climb by 78% by 2030³.

For retailers to gain their share of this growing ecommerce market, they will need the ability to handle ever greater volumes of parcels - and the complexity that comes with that.

Offering customers the best experience means having the logistical infrastructure and transport capability to deliver on commitments. In other words, it's during the delivery management process where the retailers' promises do, or do not, become reality.

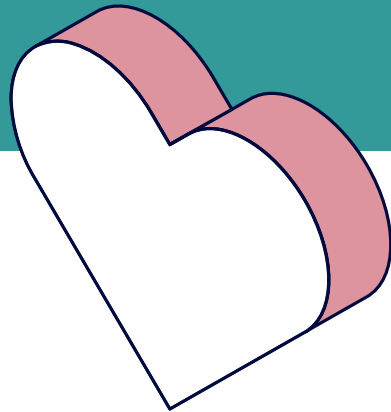


¹<https://www.marketingprofs.com/articles/2019/42235/overcoming-the-top-7-reasons-for-shopping-cart-abandonment>

²<https://www.ipsos.com/en/ecommerce-marketplaces-delivery-experience>

³https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_the_last_mile_ecosystem.pdf

The “beating heart” of ecommerce and multichannel retail



In their quest to win over customers and outshine their competitors, retailers must continually invest in all areas of their business, from in-store technologies to payments, and from the supply chain to warehouses.

It is logical for them to opt to build certain systems for themselves. This could be to save money. Or the business could conclude its environment is too sophisticated for an off-the-shelf solution. Or it might seem a simple undertaking.

Delivery management might seem like a prime candidate for in-house development: superficially, its function is merely to ensure that labels are printed in the correct format for the carrier and that the booking process is sufficiently automated.

Yet that overlooks the potential of how delivery management can build and strengthen the customer experience.

Done right, deliveries can drive loyalty, increase revenues, and unlock novel business models - as well as improving business efficiency and improving emissions performance.

Here are six advantages that ready-built delivery management solutions can have over internally developed alternatives.

1 Real carrier connectivity - out of the box

Delivery management's ability to build customer loyalty and reduce costs hinges on deep connectivity with the carrier (or carriers) the retailer uses to deliver parcels. Those connections enable customer choice, power tracking alerts, and underpin returns.

Providing the right range of delivery options can increase conversions by 20%⁴ as customers value being able to make the choice for what works best for them.

Many systems - including in-house ones - depend on retailers building those connections by themselves, or hiring an integrator to do so, and then updating them as carriers update their services.

If their chosen carriers then extend their offer into new areas - for example offering zero-emissions delivery vehicles, or PUDO (pick-up and drop-off points) - then the retailer must also revise those connections, again by hand.

Alternatively, managed carrier libraries automate the carrier management process. If a retailer wishes to support a particular carrier or mode of delivery, they can simply select it from the library, and add it to their checkout. No custom integration is needed.

nShift has the world's most extensive carrier library, making it easy for its customers to integrate their delivery management with more than 1,000 global carriers, delivering to 190 countries around the world.



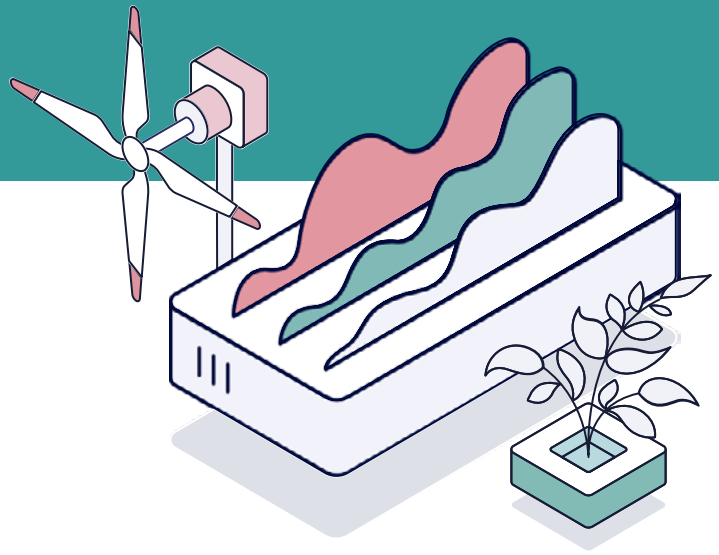
Harvey Nichols' investment in nShift pays for itself in less than six months

Switching to nShift's multicarrier shipping platform helped instantly reduce costs and improve the customer experience. *"We have seen substantial savings that wouldn't have been possible without nShift."*

James Henry, Head of Multichannel Operations at Harvey Nichols

⁴<https://nshift.com/>

2 Supporting the journey to net zero



Deliveries make a significant contribution to retailers' carbon footprints. Customers, and legislators everywhere are pressuring them to reduce their impacts. This is leading to greater scrutiny of carbon emissions in the last mile.

Consumer awareness of climate issues has grown dramatically in recent times. Some 88% of shoppers expect brands to help them live more sustainably⁵. Retailers can help them make a tangible difference and showcase their own values by:

- offering and badging a range of lower emissions delivery options at checkout
- setting up different delivery options to trigger charitable donations – such as restoring natural habitats or removing rubbish from the sea.

Increasing regulatory requirements

Many retailers have been gathering emissions data and publishing environmental sustainability reports for years. But emissions reporting is becoming more onerous.

In mid-2024, the EU's Corporate Social Responsibility Directive (CSRD) will come into force, requiring around 50,000 businesses working in the EU to provide detailed, validated reports on their carbon emissions - including those in the last mile. Penalties for delayed or incomplete submissions are likely to be stiff.

That means retailers will need to be able to collate reports on their emissions, and verify their data is accurate. They will need to identify areas where they can make rapid improvements, so the emissions tallies head downwards even as the business grows.

Many businesses are used to hiring consultants to compile detailed emissions reports on their behalf. However, using specialist emissions tracking software can be more cost-effective and less disruptive. It can bring the relevant data together automatically, ensuring it is consistent across carriers, and reflecting the latest standards.

By linking with delivery systems and carriers and collecting data down to the level of individual shipments, the right tools can help retailers identify quick wins for emissions reduction.

nShift is launching its emissions tracking service at the end of 2023. Retailers can register their interest to know more [here](#).

"Having one system is of great benefit to us – and I think our customers are receiving a better quality of service because of it. In particular, the nShift solution has enabled us to reduce errors, ensuring shipments arrive on time and at the right place."

Andrew Baxter, CIO, Makita Oy

⁵<https://brc.org.uk/media/678477/practical-guide-for-uk-retailers.pdf>

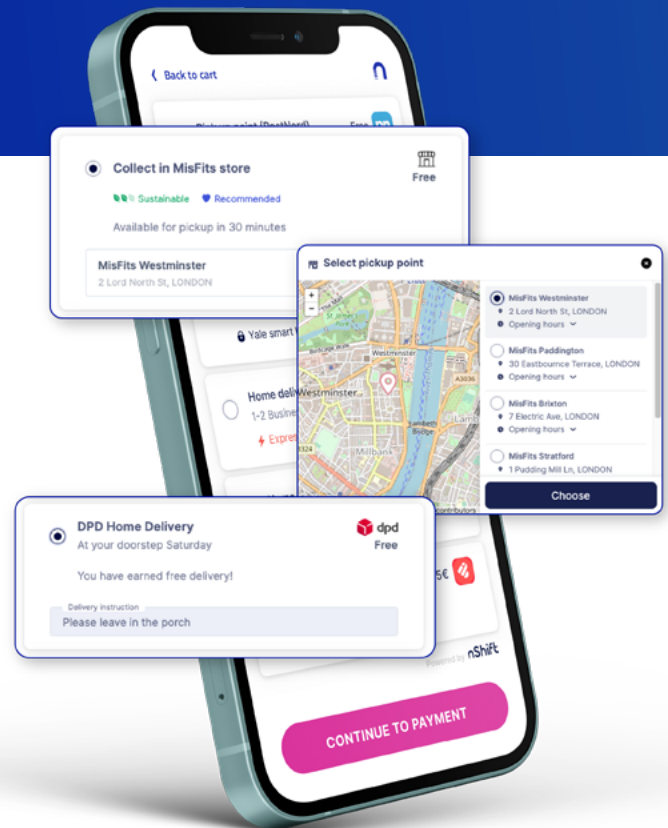
3 The power of delivery innovation

The onward march of customer expectations drives retail innovation. What may seem cutting-edge today could be yesterday's news in a matter of months.

Customers expect a choice of delivery options, a slick, branded tracking experience, and easy returns. They want delivery updates via the social apps where they live their digital lives. And, they want to be able to request a return the same way they followed their delivery.

Meeting these demands also opens the doors to creating new opportunities to build stronger relations with customers. For example:

- Regular “tracking” communications present rich marketing opportunities for retailers: customers are far more likely to open messages relating to deliveries than more conventional marketing. That means retailers can create additional sales opportunities by including product recommendations in these messages.
- Slick software to flip returns into exchanges - a consumer-friendly returns interface makes it easier for the customer to exchange the item they are sending back for something else. nShift customers typically convert 30% of returns to exchanges.
- Moreover, returns capabilities can open the door to highly innovative retail business models, based on marketplaces for pre-loved, “vintage” or used items. These can enable retailers to earn additional revenues for products they have already sold, and to double down both on customer loyalty and their own sustainability credentials.



To capitalize on these opportunities, and others like them, retailers need to be able to work with a delivery platform that has taken the responsibility to invest in new services.

In-house engineering teams may manage to keep homegrown delivery management systems up and running, but managing full-blown product research and development (R&D) will be a different story.

nShift puts one fifth of customer payments into R&D, to develop great new services which help retailers perform better.

Sportsdeal gets 20% sales boost with nShift

Outdoor sports retailer, Sportsdeal, was looking to give its customers the best possible shopping experience. And now it can, thanks to a partnership between nShift and smart payment provider, Walley, that has helped lift sales and conversion rates to new heights.

4 Seamless Integration with key business systems

Deliveries sit at the heart of a complex retail technology ecosystem, including the following:

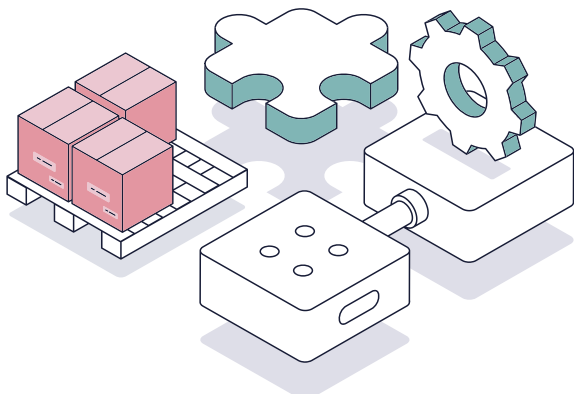
- Shopping carts
- ERP systems
- Payments platforms
- Customer databases
- Marketing tools
- Warehouse and inventory management systems

That makes deliveries uniquely sensitive to upgrades, system changes, or alterations to API specifications - any of which could lead to glitches and delays in dispatching parcels to customers.

Ensuring these systems integrate effectively with one another could be time-consuming indeed.

On the other hand, best-of-breed delivery platforms are designed to integrate with a very wide range of technologies. Retailers can effectively outsource those integrations to their supplier.

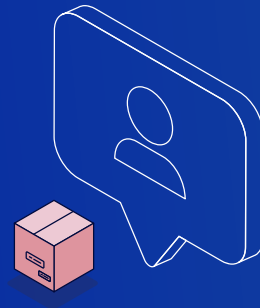
nShift integrates with more than 450 e-commerce, ERP, WMS solutions, and payment providers, so it is quick and easy to connect.



nShift increases warehouse efficiency at Glamox by up to 30%

Using nShift has not only helped lighting company, Glamox, save lots of time in the warehouse – it has also equipped them with the professional tools they need to handle 100,000 shipments a year with greater efficiency than ever.

5 Support and uptime



Royal Design Group lowers customer service costs 30% by automating returns

With nShift Returns, Royal Design Group have been able to digitize and personalize the entire shipping and consumer returns flow. Smart return rules have enabled them to create an incentive for fewer unnecessary returns. They have also managed to speed up handling times, lower shipping costs and reduce environmental impact.

Systems that run slow or, worse, go offline without warning, can lead to customers shopping elsewhere. It follows that checkouts, delivery tracking, customer communications, and returns not only need to be always-on, but also always-brilliant.

Retailers should therefore ensure they have strong service level agreements for delivery management - whether built in-house or sourced from an external provider.

Do they know who to call when things go wrong - regardless of the time of day? How confident are they that their deliveries platform won't become obsolete when the people who developed it leave the business?

At a minimum, they should expect support during business hours at their business locations and guarantees of product support that could span several years.

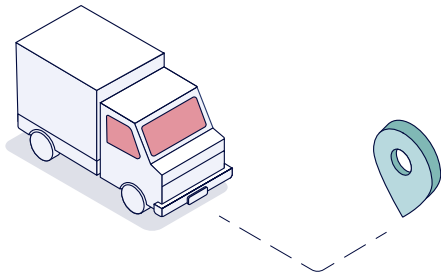


6 Easy expansion into new markets



Often one of the constraints into moving into new markets is to have the infrastructure on the ground to deliver there, even from existing home-country warehouses.

Because nShift already has the carrier library in place, it is easy for businesses to extend into new markets in the 190 countries it's carriers deliver to around the world.



"We've made returns part of a seamless omnichannel customer experience with increased returns control and insights. What was a historical pain point for the company and our customers has been changed into something that adds real value. And because we've added more intelligence to the process, we're getting much more in the way of consumer touchpoints helping us to constantly improve the service and experience we offer."

Robin Visser, Omni Channel Business Development Manager, Hunkemöller

nShift: 25 years of successfully delivering for customers



Deliveries are the “beating heart” of ecommerce. A smoothly beating deliveries capability means more sales, satisfied and loyal customers, and smooth-running operations. When deliveries develop a tic- or fail altogether - the whole business soon notices.

nShift has been innovating in delivery management for 25 years. As a global leader, we understand how the delivery management experience can drive business growth. Our customers trust our software to facilitate delivery of millions of packages a month. And they trust our R&D to produce new services which help them build their business for the future.

We invest one fifth of customer payments in R&D. That enables us to invest for the long term in our products and our roadmap. We build and operate our own carrier library with over 1,000 connections.

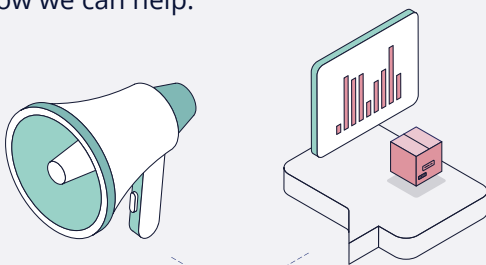
This means we can connect retailers to more delivery partners, and offer greater choice to customers, than any other vendor. Moreover, we have certified integrations with over 450 enterprise applications, from ERP systems to payments platforms.

Only with nShift can retailers:

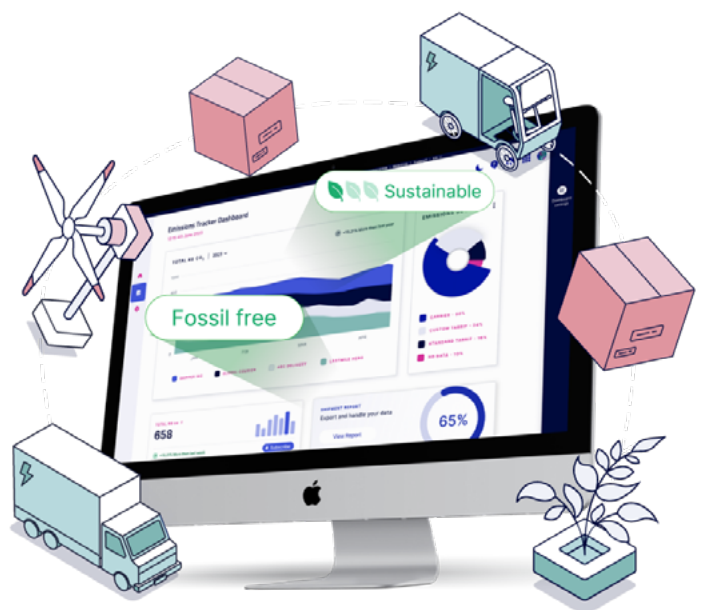
- Increase customer conversions with more carrier choices at checkout
- Harness the marketing and retention opportunities of the tracking and delivery experience
- Track, report on, and minimize last-mile carbon emissions
- Smoothly integrate deliveries within their technology ecosystem
- Improve online conversions and build customer loyalty

Get in touch

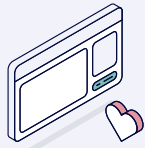
We work with retailers and warehouses around the world providing a multi-carrier delivery management solution that meets their needs. Please get in touch to discuss how we can help.



www.nshift.com



nShift is a multicarrier shipping solution that helps you get delivery right. Every step. Every time.



Checkout

Offer your customers the delivery options they want



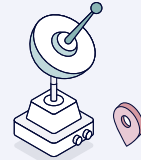
Book

Automatically select the right carrier for every delivery



Print

Print any label or document instantly



Track

Follow every parcel's journey from beginning to end



And repeat...



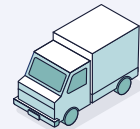
Report

View and analyze all your data in one place



Return

Make returning products easy for you and your customers



Deliver

Make delivery more convenient by adding options such as click and collect

A seamless solution to benefit you

CARRIER MANAGEMENT

8% cost savings with optimized carrier management

nSHIFT CHECKOUT

Up to 20% higher conversions with nShift Checkout

SUPPORT CALLS

60% reduction in customer support calls

CARRIER BOOKINGS

Up to 50% time savings with automated carrier bookings

Are you interested in nShift or do you have any questions?

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