

ShipStation®



Shipping Nirvana™

A guide to efficient shipping



INTRODUCTION

Fulfilling customers' orders involves many moving pieces. From ordering inventory, to fulfilling orders, to pushing shipments out the door, you have to worry about so many platforms, applications, integrations, workers, pickers, customer communications, and everything in between. ShipStation and BigCommerce have created a guide to help you manage your warehouse and shipping efficiency. Whether you need to overhaul your fulfillment workflow, or just tweak it, we've got you covered.

We want to help you save time and money fulfilling and shipping your orders. Everyone from garage sellers to Fortune 500 businesses can afford to save some green, especially on shipping costs. This guide will provide you with the tips and solutions you need to become more efficient.

Let's Get Ship Done!



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1

Optimizing Warehouse Operations for Enterprise Retailers

When a customer orders a product off an ecommerce website, the product is quickly delivered to them. Pretty simple, right? To the customer, it is. Behind the scenes, however, there's an elaborate network of processes that must be followed to ensure that the customer gets what they want, how they want it, and when they want it.

In this section, we will discuss ways for enterprise retailers to optimize their warehouse operations to enhance their ecommerce website and shipping processes.

Inventory Management in Warehouse Operations

For an enterprise brand, managing inventory efficiently is crucial to the success of your business. From tracking stock levels to fulfilling orders for finished products, every point in the supply chain that involves your product is part of inventory management.

Effective inventory management not only helps streamline warehouse operations, but it also helps businesses minimize costs, improve cash flow and boost profitability.

But with high SKUs and increasing order volumes, managing your inventory can be complex.

This is where inventory management techniques can come in handy, such as just-in-time (JIT); first-in, first-out (FIFO) and last-in, first-out (LIFO); ABC analysis; and dropshipping.

01. Implement

Implement a warehouse inventory management software:

An inventory management system (IMS) can help automate warehouse management tasks and track inventory in real-time.

02. Utilize

Utilize demand forecasting tools: These will help plan inventory levels based on historical data and market trends.

03. Inventory

Implement inventory control checks: As your SKUs and sales volume increase, inventory control checks are important for ensuring the composition, condition, and location of inventory in the warehouse.

04. Establish

Establish inventory KPIs: Measure your performance using inventory KPIs such as rate of inventory turnover, carrying costs, cycle time, and order status.

By effectively managing inventory in warehouse operations, businesses can improve customer service, reduce carrying costs, minimize stockouts, optimize storage space, and streamline order fulfillment processes — ultimately leading to increased operational efficiency and profitability.

How to Use Shipping Software with Inventory Management Systems

ShipStation provides an array of features and integrations with inventory management platforms. While you can access ShipStation's native inventory management system to keep track of your stock levels, a standalone system may offer more of the robust features and functionality you need. To keep up with your order volume, ShipStation has direct integrations with popular order management and inventory management systems. Everything from BrightPearl, SKUVault, and ChannelAdvisor to many more can integrate seamlessly with ShipStation so you can stay on top of your order volume and never worry about overstock, out of stock, or delays.



Tools and Software to Streamline Operations

If you're managing a high sales volume, it's imperative to streamline back-end operations to improve customer experiences, decrease wasted time, and increase efficiency. As an enterprise business, you likely already have a number of tools and technologies to help manage your ecommerce operations, such as:

- **Order management systems (OMS)**
- **Inventory management systems (IMS)**
- **Warehouse management systems (WMS)**
- **Enterprise resource planning software (ERP)**

Each one of these tools has a specific functionality to help drive efficiencies, and enterprises often need a combination of these systems to automate end-to-end processes. However, disparate systems can fall apart quickly, particularly when selling across multiple channels, such as direct-to-consumer websites, marketplaces, and physical stores.

Thus, the key to ultimate efficiency is ensuring that all of your systems work seamlessly with one another and can be integrated with your ecommerce platform. Ecommerce platform solutions like BigCommerce, for example, have native integrations with several OMS, IMS, WMS and ERP solutions.

Success story: ToolStop and ToolSaver.

After launching both Toolstop and Toolsaver on the BigCommerce platform, the hardware business brought in its own software developers to help build out its B2C and B2B websites.

On top of building an in-house PIM solution, SKUPAL, Toolsaver also launched its own warehouse management system (WMS), which integrates directly with BigCommerce and Toolsaver's ERP system, Sage 200. The system allows staff to take orders through both websites, and those orders feed directly into their ERP. On the warehouse floor, all of their warehouse personnel have an Android device with a barcode scanner, which integrates with Sage.

Thus, when customers place orders through either the Toolstop or Toolsaver website, those orders feed into the ERP and are sent to handheld scanners on the warehouse floor. This way, warehouse employees can ensure that every order is picked and scanned accurately, helping to eliminate mispicks and returns.

After warehouse personnel scan and pack the order, they can enter the weight of the package into their handheld device and send the package off to the courier. The courier then produces a consignment label and attaches to the parcel, which is delivered the following day. When the handheld device dispatches the order, an update is sent to the Toolsaver BigCommerce site, informing the customer that their order has been shipped.

Although a seemingly simple process, Toolsaver's warehouse management system has tremendously improved the automation of the business's back office operations, allowing for a faster, more streamlined ordering process.



Third-Party Fulfillment vs In-House Fulfillment

Thanks to Amazon, today's customers want their orders fulfilled and shipped at lighting speed. However, not every business has the infrastructure in place to meet these expectations. Depending on your company's resources, you may need to make the decision between third-party fulfillment and in-house fulfillment.

Third-party logistics (3PL) companies are best suited for businesses that don't have the space or inventory to fulfill enterprise-level order volume in house. For example, if you're a B2B manufacturer launching direct-to-consumer (DTC) for the first time, you may not have the tools to manage high volumes of inventory or the physical space needed to take apart, repackage and manage inventory.

In these cases, 3PLs handle all the back-end logistics, including:

- Receiving your inventory.
- Storing inventory in their warehouse.
- Picking, packing, and shipping the orders.
- Processing returns.
- Maintenance of brand identity and custom packaging.

Alternatively, many enterprises do prefer to invest in their own warehouses for in-house fulfillment. With shoppers discovering products on social media, checking inventory online before visiting a store, and buying on third-party marketplaces, brands are expanding warehousing and fulfillment capabilities. Take BigCommerce merchant Solo Stove, for example.

According to John Merris, CEO of Solo Stove, at the end of 2018, the brand decided to open a warehouse for in-house fulfillment. This ended up being a massive differentiator for Solo Stove, as it enabled them to provide a better experience for their customers by delivering products faster, more accurately, and more affordably.



Today, Solo Stove's vast inventory and warehouse system consists of three warehouses in the U.S., one in Canada, one in Europe, and a soon-to-open warehouse in Australia.



Third-Party Logistics (3PL) Providers

A 3PL provider is a company that provides logistics and supply chain management services to other companies. These services can include services as far-ranging as transportation, warehousing, parcel delivery, freight forwarding, inventory management, and other related activities. 3PL providers function as intermediaries between shippers and carriers, and help streamline logistics processes, reduce costs, and improve supply chain efficiency for their clients.

By outsourcing logistics to a 3PL provider, companies can focus on their core business activities and leave the complex logistics operations to a specialized provider. This can be particularly beneficial for companies that lack the expertise, space, or resources to manage logistics operations on their own. Additionally, using a 3PL provider can provide access to a larger network of carriers, warehouses, and other logistics resources that can help improve your efficiency, reduce costs, and create better brand awareness. By leveraging a 3PL for all or some of your fulfillment and logistical needs, you can have the space to focus on other sectors of your business instead of worrying about shipping.

Signs You Need a 3PL

Signs that a company needs a 3PL are easy to notice. The problems generally come down to needing more space, needing more workers, and having more order volume and inventory than you can handle. Remember that 3PL can be both a short-term and a long-term solution. And regardless of third-party involvement, an efficient in-house shipping process is also recommended so you can best determine your needs.

- **Lack of space:** A major sign that you need to use a 3PL provider is that your company has run out of space to store inventory. A 3PL provider offers warehouse space for your additional storage needs.
- **Inadequate resources:** Another sign that you need to use a 3PL provider is when your company lacks the resources to manage your logistics operations effectively. This could include a shortage of staff, equipment, or technology. A 3PL provider can offer expertise, technology, and other resources to help you manage your logistics more efficiently without you having to invest heavily for in-house solutions.
- **Peak season demand:** If your company experiences fluctuations in demand, it can be challenging to manage your logistics operations effectively. A 3PL provider can offer flexible solutions to help you manage your inventory and shipping needs.
- **Rapid Business Growth:** If your business is growing rapidly, you may find that your current logistics operations are struggling to keep up with demand. This can lead to delays in shipments, increased costs, and customer dissatisfaction. A 3PL provider can help you scale your logistics operations to meet the growing demands of your business.

By outsourcing logistics to a 3PL provider, companies can focus on their core business activities



How to Choose a 3PL

- **Technology:** Check if the 3PL provider utilizes advanced technologies such as transportation management systems (TMS), warehouse management systems (WMS), and inventory management systems to optimize logistics operations.
- **Scalability:** Ensure that the 3PL provider can scale its operations to meet your changing needs as your business grows. Moving inventory to other 3PLs can be a compounded cost.
- **Flexibility:** Look for a 3PL provider that can offer flexible solutions tailored to your specific requirements, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. A credible 3PL provider should be able to cater to your needs without sacrificing fulfillment speed.
- **Compliance:** Check if the 3PL provider adheres to industry standards and regulations, including those related to data privacy, security, and environmental sustainability. Check with any other platforms or organizations you partner with to see if they too have requirements for whom certified vendors or sellers can use.
- **Cost:** Evaluate the 3PL provider's pricing structure, including fees, rates, and additional costs, to ensure that it fits your budget and provides value for money.

How ShipStation Helps You Work With 3PLs

With ShipStation, businesses can import and manage their orders from multiple sales channels, including online marketplaces, shopping carts, and platforms, and automatically send order information to their 3PL provider for fulfillment. ShipStation also provides real-time tracking information and inventory management capabilities, helping businesses to stay on top of their logistics operations and provide better customer service.

- **ShipStation Integrates With Over 30 3PLs**
ShipStation makes finding the right 3PL easy. With over 30 partners, we have partners that provide warehousing, fulfillment, and shipping support for businesses of any size. You can find the right solution for your business.
- **ShipStation Even Helps 3PL Warehouses**
ShipStation provides support for 3PL providers to strengthen communication and relationships with the vendors and merchants they partner with. ShipStation 3PL is a tool that helps businesses at every link in the supply chain stay connected.





Dropshipping

Dropshipping is an ecommerce business model where the retailer doesn't physically house the products they sell. Instead, they buy their inventory from a third-party manufacturer, and the manufacturer either ships the items to the end-customer or sends the stock to a dedicated drop shipper.

Dropship Manufacturers, Aggregators, and Wholesalers

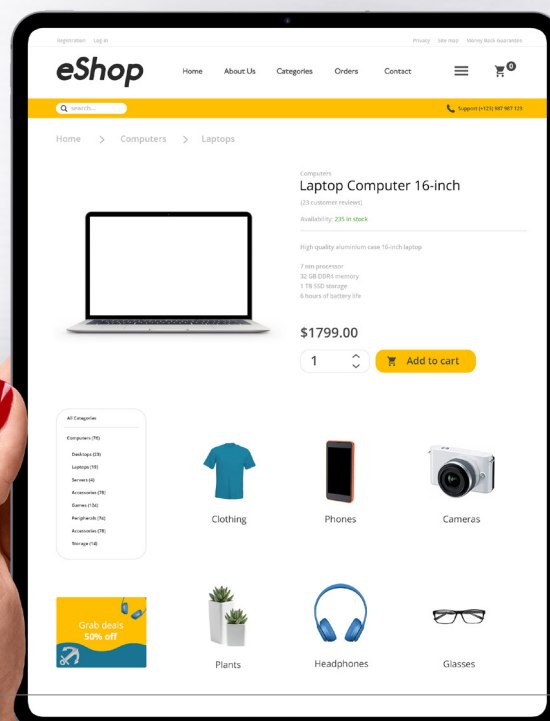
When you want to start a dropshipping business, you need to first find products to sell. This is where manufacturers, aggregators, and wholesalers come into play. Merchants place orders with these dropshipping businesses. These entities then send the items to the end consumer themselves or to a fulfillment warehouse.

- **Dropship Manufacturer:** The manufacturer is the party that manufactures the products. While they aren't necessarily the party that dropships the items, they can send it to the warehouse that fulfills the orders for the customers.
- **Dropship Aggregator:** A dropship aggregator is a wholesaler who buys from multiple manufacturers—thus offering a more extensive selection of items to customers. An example of a dropship aggregator is [Worldwide Brands](#). These aggregators offer many categories of products that you can sell on your website.
- **Dropship Wholesaler:** A dropship wholesaler is a dealer that buys bulk quantities of items from a manufacturer and then sells these items to retailers. There are many [reputable choices](#) that you can buy products from to sell on your website.

Is Dropshipping Worth It?

The major question you are probably asking yourself now is “Yeah, it sounds easy to set up. But is it worth it?” This comes down to profit margins for the items you sell. **Let’s review.**

PROS OF DROPSHIPPING	CONS OF DROPSHIPPING
<p>Less Overhead Expenses: Since you aren’t housing or fulfilling the orders yourself. All you have to pay for upfront is the cost of manufacturing and warehousing fees. Typically, the picking fees are only applied once an item is sold.</p>	<p>Lower profit margins: Because of additional fees associated with dropshipping, your profit margins are usually reduced to as much as 20-30% of the profits of what you could expect from housing/fulfilling products yourself.</p>
<p>Requires less space: Whether you are just starting out in ecommerce or are growing beyond your current warehousing and staffing needs, dropshipping allows you to operate with a smaller warehouse and workforce.</p>	<p>Finding the right supplier: A lot of what makes a dropshipping business successful is finding the right supplier. Profit margins are low for dropshipping. And if you use models like a subscription wholesaler, you’re effectively paying a middleman that takes even more of your profits.</p>





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Choosing the Right Ecommerce Platform for Enterprise Retailers

What do a global pandemic, a shipping crisis, inflation, and a social media revolution have in common? All have had a profound impact on consumer shopping behaviors in the last several years, upending commerce as we once knew it.

While modern commerce requires the ability to quickly adapt to ever-changing shopper behaviors, agility, however, can be difficult for many enterprises to achieve with their current tech stack — which is

why choosing the right tech stack can have a significant impact on the success of an enterprise-level ecommerce business.

In this section, we will discuss ways for enterprise retailers to optimize their ecommerce tech stack and, specifically, why BigCommerce is an ideal ecommerce platform for enterprise retailers.

Signs it's time for a new enterprise ecommerce platform.

As an enterprise business, you can likely attest to the fact that your business needs today are far different from your business needs ten years ago, five years ago, or even last year. Whether you're planning to expand into a new region, sell across new channels, or launch a new brand, chances are your business is in a far different position now than when it first began.

Thus, while your current ecommerce platform may have been sufficient in the beginning, as business requirements evolve and consumer behaviors shift, you may find that your original systems are hindering your ability to grow and innovate.

If that's the case, it may be time to consider replatforming. To help your enterprise business determine if it's time to replatform, we've put together a questionnaire addressing some of the most common pain points we hear about from merchants.

- ☐ 1. Does tedious manual work on maintenance, updates and security drive up costs?
- ☐ 2. Are you unable to get to market quickly with new promotions or make simple website updates because you're overly reliant on developers?
- ☐ 3. Do you often scramble to keep up when the business wants to implement a new growth strategy (such as adding a channel) that the platform doesn't support out-of-the-box?
- ☐ 4. Is your platform unable to handle complex catalogs or high transaction volumes?
- ☐ 5. Are you forced to use your platform's preferred or proprietary solutions instead of the tools you want?
- ☐ 6. Do you often run into functionality limitations or technical issues that prevent innovation?
- ☐ 7. Does your website suffer from slow site speed and responsiveness?
- ☐ 8. Are you frustrated with a lack of timely guidance, support and expertise when you need it?
- ☐ 9. Does your current ecommerce platform lack essential omnichannel capabilities or integrations?
- ☐ 10. Do you often feel that you're unable to deliver the customer experience you want?



Of course, migrating away from a legacy commerce system isn't something enterprises should take lightly. But it doesn't have to be an expensive, disruptive, and time-consuming process.

The team at BigCommerce understands the replatforming process, having worked with numerous enterprises to migrate their stores. If you answered “yes” to any of the questions above, check out this [comprehensive replatforming guide](#) that walks you through the critical steps for embarking on a platform migration.

Plus, [BigCommerce's integration with ShipStation](#) means you can spend less time shipping and more time selling. By connecting your BigCommerce store to ShipStation, merchants can access instant carrier discounts, connect to their favorite carriers, streamline enterprise fulfillment processes, and more. Below are just a few of the additional features supported by the ShipStation integration:



Product information import.



Requested shipping service.



Support for multi-package orders.



Support for multi-warehouse.



Tracking updates.

How to Ship ERP Orders

While an ERP offers a range of features, services, and benefits, some features are still more effective with an authorized partner of the ERP you use. Luckily, platforms like ShipStation offer a range of parcel shipping and delivery services. ShipStation is customizable with automated shipping features and discounted shipping rates that can help companies of all sizes save time and money. National brands like Cotopaxi use ShipStation for their parcel shipping needs. As you grow, ShipStation provides a scalable shipping that fits your needs. Whether you need ShipStation's web app to manage and create shipments or you just need our shipping APIs to work with your platforms, apps, ERP, or WMS app, we have you covered.

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We then use Nova Module to push the orders into ShipStation so that all the orders are in the box and ready to be weighed. It does the order evaluation of what's quickest and/or what's cheapest. Then the item is pretty much ready to be shipped out. Then we communicate that back to Netsuite, then back to the store that the items have shipped. It's a nice flow despite going through all these systems. So ShipStation still fits in these systems.

SEAN WEINLE
COTOPAXI'S DIRECTOR OF OPS AND DATA INTEGRITY



Build a future-proof enterprise commerce solution with BigCommerce.

By building on a solid technical foundation with BigCommerce, enterprises can remain agile and quickly respond to ever-changing consumer expectations.

Modern flexibility that simplifies customization

The API-first architecture gives businesses freedom and flexibility. Essential commerce components are available out-of-the-box, and the extensibility allows businesses to innovate and tailor the platform to their specific needs. Easily connect to leading third-party business applications, such as an ERP, OMS, PIM and more, through reliable integrations.

A trusted team of ecommerce experts

With BigCommerce, enterprises partner with a team that has the technical expertise, organizational structure, and commitment to ensure they launch their site successfully and flourish on their new platform. Depend on BigCommerce's ecommerce expertise to architect the optimal solution for your business and provide support at every stage.

Built for enterprise scale

BigCommerce provides the scalability to test new growth strategies, expand revenue channels, launch new products and optimize conversion — without compromising platform performance.

Enterprises can keep up with customer demands, knowing they have a platform that can handle complex catalogs and high transaction volumes.

With easy-to-implement growth solutions, such as search, marketplace and social connections, accelerated checkout buttons and powerful B2B tools, enterprises can deliver a seamless omnichannel experience that stands out from the competition.

Unwavering peace of mind

Unreliable platforms force businesses to waste time and resources securing their site. BigCommerce offers peace of mind by handling platform maintenance, hosting, security, updates, and compliance. Enterprises can rest easy knowing that BigCommerce is ISO 27001 Certified, Sitewide HTTPS, PCI DSS, GDPR, and CCPA compliant.

Platform
Maintenance



Hosting



Security



Compliance



Other enterprise retailers have paved the way: BigCommerce migration success stories.

Find out why three of our enterprise merchants decided on BigCommerce and successfully made the switch.

UPLIFT Desk

When UPLIFT Desk — a standing desk and ergonomic chair brand — started its ecommerce journey on Yahoo, they found that the platform lacked in performance, affordability, reliability, scalability, and customization.

After vetting several providers, UPLIFT Desk landed on BigCommerce, which provided the performance, functionality, and ease-of-use the company needed to create the optimal customer experience.

To give online customers a type of in-store experience, the brand leveraged BigCommerce's flexibility to stand up a state-of-the-art desk configurator. This tool allows customers to pull from the brand's large catalog to see their desks being virtually built with various product option combinations such as desk frame, color, desktop materials, and more.

The team has seen a marked improvement in online operational efficiencies and accuracy fulfilling both single and high-volume orders, with the latter being inherently more complex. The BigCommerce integration with Oracle NetSuite ERP changed things tremendously for their sales team by giving them the ability to enter orders directly into BigCommerce. The data then transfers into their ERP, enabling all order data to originate from the same place.

Not only has the team at UPLIFT Desk increased efficiencies, but they've also seen a 226% increase in orders, 61% increase in conversions, and 203% increase in customers.



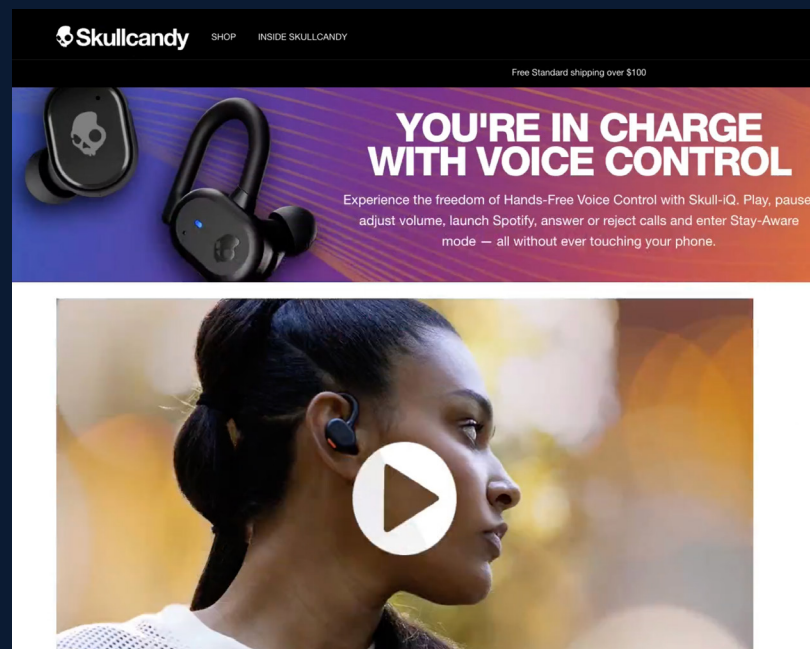
226%
**increase in orders,
61% increase in
conversions, and
203% increase in
customers.**

Skullcandy

When searching for a new ecommerce platform, Skullcandy needed four things: versatility, adaptability, affordability, and a superior user experience — and their previous platform, Salesforce Commerce Cloud, simply wasn't cutting it. The lifestyle audio brand wanted a solution that allowed it to manage and develop its site, without leaning heavily on third-party contractors. Enter BigCommerce.

With the scalability and flexibility of open APIs, BigCommerce allowed Skullcandy to navigate within its existing tech architecture and go to market quickly. In fact, their unique approach to ecommerce has also allowed Skullcandy to innovate not only with their brand, but with their site experience, as well. Using BigCommerce's Stencil theme, they have been able to go live with eight separate site instances across the globe.

Checkout is another area of focus for Skullcandy. To accommodate varying discount and payment strategies across the globe, they needed another custom solution that could work in a fast-changing environment.



In this instance, their agency partner was able to work with the BigCommerce storefront API and incorporate some very unique programs to accommodate Skullcandy's needs.

Five years after switching to BigCommerce, Skullcandy continues to see success, with its ecommerce business more than tripling in that time. Since moving to BigCommerce, Skullcandy has seen a 200% increase in revenue, a 40% increase in conversions, and a 100% increase in traffic.

200%
Increase
in revenue

40%
Increase in
conversions

100%
Increase
in traffic



3

Choosing Carriers and Shipping Services

Finding the best carrier rates is an important part of running a business. Parcel delivery is ever changing and part of running a successful business. Whether you are a direct-to-consumer brand or you just need to ship a portion of retail orders, there is a lot more to know about shipping than you might expect.

ShipStation prides itself on being able to provide businesses with some of the best rates available.

Businesses of all sizes rely on ShipStation and take advantage of discounted out-of-the-box rates and carrier integrations. Mix and match carrier accounts, utilize any of your own.

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We reduced shipping costs 36.78% by being able to add UPS this year.

ALLEN BARK
FOUNDER OF INKER SUPPLY

Calculating Shipping Costs

In order to choose the best carrier service for your parcel, you need to first calculate the shipping rate. Shipping rates are factored by weight, dimensions, destinations, additional surcharges, and more options. Remember, a good way to minimize surprise fees and receive affordable shipping rates is to create your labels using ShipStation Carriers.

Weight

A package’s weight is a major deciding factor in a shipping rate. Typically, each new pound increases the shipping cost. While other factors determine a shipping cost, weight may be the biggest indicator of which service you end up using over the package size or the order’s delivery address.

Dimensions

Dimensions play a big part in shipping costs. A major way dimensions play into shipping rates is for things like dimensional weight or cubic. This can greatly increase a rate or allow you to receive discounts. more of a limiting factor—if you exceed a carrier’s maximum dimensions, it is subject to an additional handling surcharge.

Destinations and Shipping Zone

The distance between the origin address and the recipient’s address greatly influences shipping rates. Carriers determine distance-based rating structures on shipping zones. This distance is ranked in levels of 1-9. If the distance is a 1, this is the shortest distance. Meanwhile, 9 is the furthest distance—overseas territories. Every postal code in the US has a corresponding shipping zone, and this is what the carrier uses to rate the parcel. Carriers also use zones to determine international rates but they function a bit differently and may not be as easy to follow as domestic zone charts.

How to Find Cheaper Dimensional Weight Pricing

Even if a large parcel is lightweight, shipping it can be expensive. Large parcels cost more because of their dimensional weight. Dimensional weight is a pricing structure that increases the shipping rate if a parcel is deemed too large in relation to its weight—think things like a bike rim or a hula hoop. Since packages take up so much space in cargo vehicles and airplanes, etc., their shipping rate increases with their size.

CARRIER	DOMESTIC DIMENSIONAL FORMULA
UPS on ShipStation	$(L \times W \times H) / 166$
USPS	$(L \times W \times H) / 166$
FedEx	$(L \times W \times H) / 139$

How Cubic Weight Impacts Pricing







Smaller parcels usually cost less to ship because of their small cubic weight. Luckily, Cubic weight can decrease the shipping cost for small, heavy packages! Cubic weight is what allows smaller parcels to cost less than large ones that have the same weight. ShipStation offers great rates for these smaller packages through both USPS and UPS.

Surcharges

Surcharges increase the shipping rate, they may be included in the initial shipping rate (as they are with ShipStation Carriers) or they are paid on your monthly invoice. This is much more common with carriers that post-bill. These typically include additional fees for things like fuel surcharges, extended area delivery surcharges (a home in a more remote location) or residential surcharges. However, they can also occur if your shipment is not properly weighed, measured, or is oversized.

ShipStation Carriers

ShipStation provides you with discounted shipping options as soon as you sign up. All you have to do is log into your account and start shipping. With discounts of up to 89% on top carriers like USPS, UPS, GlobalPost, DHL Express, and many more, you can find the right service for all your packages. If you need to use your existing carrier accounts, you can connect accounts from dozens of carriers, logistics providers, and fulfillment services.

	UP TO 89% OFF	USPS® Retail Prices
	UP TO 82% OFF*	UPS® International Services
	UP TO 78% OFF*	UPS® Ground
	UP TO 78% OFF	GlobalPost Economy
	UP TO 81% OFF	DHL Express International
	UP TO 67% OFF	Carrier Insurance

USPS Services and Discounts

USPS Discounts Available On ShipStation

The USPS offers a range of options to ship everything from letters to large parcels. USPS from ShipStation provides substantial shipping discounts. With a large domestic delivery network that provides service to virtually every residential or business address, they are a carrier that every US-based business should utilize. Additionally, they provide international shipping services that deliver to recipients in over 220 countries and territories across the globe.

If you're a ShipStation user, you'll receive a free PC Postage account through Stamps.com. The rates you get from ShipStation are the USPS's commercial rates. These are discounted heavily over the retail rates you get directly from the post office. There's no contract, you'll receive this deal for as long as you have an active ShipStation account. Take advantage of rate discounted up to:

- **84%** off Priority Mail
- **13%** off Priority Mail Express
- **5%** off International First Class, Priority Mail, and Priority Mail Express
- **40%** off USPS Package Insurance Rate

ShipStation provides you with discounted shipping options as soon as you sign up





USPS Service Options

Through ShipStation, you can ship with the following services. Their weight and size limits, as well as delivery timeframe vary based on service.

SERVICE	MAX. WEIGHT	SIZE LIMIT	DELIVERY TIMEFRAME
USPS Priority Mail	70 lbs	108" in combined length and girth	1-3 days
USPS Priority Mail International	70 lbs	79" in combined length and girth	1-3 days
USPS Priority Mail Express	70 lbs	108" in combined length and girth	1-2 days
USPS Ground Advantage	70 lbs	130 inches in length + girth	2-5 days
USPS First Class International	4.4 lbs	24" max length, L+H+W= 36"	7-21 days
USPS Media Mail	70 lbs	108" in combined length and girth	2-10 days

NEW SERVICE ALERT

UPS® Ground Saver

When it comes to shipping lightweight residential packages, traditional shipping methods can quickly become expensive. With UPS® Ground Saver, you can enjoy cost savings while still receiving reliable delivery services. Traditional shipping companies charge based on the weight of your package, while UPS® Ground Saver offers flat rates for packages weighing up to 10 lbs. This can translate to significant cost savings and consumers alike. Plus, with the added benefit of package tracking and delivery confirmation, you're always in the know.

This innovative shipping solution is designed to help merchants save money on their shipping costs and ensure their packages arrive safely and quickly. ShipStation has made it easier than ever to take advantage of this great service, making it the perfect option for anyone looking to save money on their shipping costs.



[Learn More](#)

UPS Service Options and Discounts

ShipStation is a certified UPS Ready® application that allows you to get rates and create domestic and international shipping labels using negotiated UPS shipping rates. ShipStation users can receive a UPS discount of up to 82% off Daily Rates*.

As with the other ShipStation Carriers, all you need to do to access these discounts is create the postage in ShipStation. These are a few UPS discounts available:

- Up to **78%** off UPS® Ground shipments
- Up to **73%** off UPS 2nd Day Air® services
- Up to **82%** off UPS International® services*

- No minimum shipping volume requirements
- Avoid certain surcharges, saving you even more money
- Updated UPS tracking and delivery alerts
- Domestic and international delivery services
- UPS Paperless™ Invoice on international shipments



UPS Service Options

UPS provides a range of domestic and international services that provide different delivery times based on your customers’ needs.

DOMESTIC UPS® SERVICE OPTIONS		INTERNATIONAL UPS® SERVICE OPTIONS	
UPS® Ground	Day-definite delivery in one to five days	UPS® Standard to Mexico	Fast, reliable service for less urgent shipments to Mexico
UPS 3 Day Select®	Delivery within three business days	UPS® Standard to Canada	Economical standard ground delivery to Canada
UPS 2nd Day Air®	Second day delivery	UPS Worldwide Expedited®	Day-definite expedited delivery to over 220 countries and territories
UPS 2nd Day Air A.M.®	Second day morning or noon delivery	UPS Worldwide Saver®	Day-definite delivery by the end of the business. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next business day delivery by the end of day to Canada. Second business day delivery by end of day to Mexico and major metropolitan areas worldwide
UPS Next Day Air Saver®	UPS's most affordable next-day delivery service		
UPS Next Day Air®	Next-day delivery service	UPS Worldwide Express Plus®	Time-definite delivery to 140 countries and territories with morning delivery
UPS Next Day Air® Early	Early morning delivery	UPS Worldwide Express®	Time-definite service to 140 countries and territories

International Carriers

DHL Express Service Options and Discounts

ShipStation users can save up to 81% on DHL Express shipping rates through ShipStation Carriers. As the world's largest express global delivery provider, DHL Express has more experience shipping to more international destinations than any other carrier. Shipping to over 220 countries and territories, their huge global network includes over 300 dedicated aircraft, 34,500 vehicles, and 120,000 employees.

DHL Express International Service Options

Express Worldwide is DHL's next-day delivery service that delivers by end-of-day the next available business day. Additionally, you can take advantage of Express 9:00, 10:30, and 12:00 services—making final delivery on the next business day by these selected times.

DHL EXPRESS SERVICE	DIMENSIONS AND RESTRICTIONS
DHL Express Envelope	13" x 10" x 0.3"
DHL Express Worldwide	150 pounds and the maximum length is 120 cm/47.24 in.

GlobalPost Services and Discounts

GlobalPost helps businesses overcome the barriers of international shipping and save up to 78% on international shipping rates. With GlobalPost on ShipStation, you unlock an international network of carriers and last-mile providers. GlobalPost uses multiple carriers for some of the quickest and most affordable last-mile delivery available. Their carrier relationships allow you to deliver to over 220 countries and territories. GlobalPost's discounts and partnership with ShipStation provides added incentives.

GlobalPost Service Options

GlobalPost may not have the same name recognition as some other carriers, but their services are just as reliable and efficient for international delivery. Perhaps most notable, though, is how affordable they can be without sacrificing quality. In fact, some services provide advanced electronic customs clearance and consolidation offerings that typically come with a far more premium price tag.

GlobalPost Economy International: An affordable option for sending small parcels up to 4.4 lbs. Delivery takes 6–10 days to make final delivery to addresses in supported destination countries.

GlobalPost Plus: This is GlobalPost's Delivered Duty Paid (DDP) service for parcels sent to Mexico, Canada, and the United Kingdom. GlobalPost Plus allows you to prepay duties and taxes on behalf of your customers. This removes surprise fees at delivery for the recipient. GlobalPost Plus also includes advanced customs clearance. This helps goods clear customs electronically before arriving. This helps expedite the whole delivery process.

GlobalPost Standard International: An economic delivery option that takes 6–10 days for parcels weighing up to 70 lbs. It also has the added advantage of "Door to Door" tracking.

GlobalPost SmartSaver: If you ship five or more international orders a day, you may be approved to use GlobalPost SmartSaver. This service provides you with an additional 30% savings on international shipping by letting you consolidate your shipments into a larger container shipment and send (For free through ShipStation) to the nearest GlobalPost facility. [Learn more about SmartSaver here.](#)

ParcelGuard Services and Discounts

Typically, carrier insurance charges per \$100 value PLUS a base cost of roughly \$2.50. This can compound shipping costs quickly. A cost-effective and economical alternative is to use ParcelGuard. You can save up to 67% on shipping insurance with ParcelGuard. You don't have a base rate to pay, it's just a consistent rate for coverage per \$100 of an item's declared value. Additionally, with ParcelGuard, you only have to familiarize yourself with one set of [terms and services](#) instead of different carriers' guidelines for insurance.

ParcelGuard works seamlessly with all major carriers, both domestically and internationally. Regardless of whether you are insuring a package going down the road or across the globe, ParcelGuard covers the entire value of your shipment, up to \$10,000.

Unlike most providers, ParcelGuard covers both branded and unbranded packages. So, whether you're shipping with your logo on the box or using generic packaging, your shipments will be protected.

ParcelGuard Coverage Costs

CARRIER SERVICE	PARCELGUARD COST PER \$100*
USPS Domestic	\$1.09
USPS International	\$1.39
Non-USPS Domestic	\$0.99
Non-USPS International	\$1.39

*For every \$100 increment of an item's declared value, you pay the corresponding rate



**Save up to 67%
on shipping
insurance with
ParcelGuard**





4

Shipping Workflows and Strategies

Knowing which services to use and how to fulfill your orders is crucial for your warehouse to save time and cut costs. From choosing the best service for your parcels, to reducing clicks, to updating the customer and selling channel that an order has shipped, you can handle a steady shipping volume or order spikes with ease.

“ ”

ShipStation has a very user-friendly interface, and being able to pull all the orders into one platform saves a lot of time and clicks.

HOON KIM
PROJECT SPECIALIST AT SPIGEN

Cheapest Shipping Options

Finding the cheapest way to ship a package doesn't mean sacrificing quality. Affordable shipping rates are available to anyone that knows where to look. And since you're reading this, you're already on the path to making shipping more affordable. ShipStation is all about saving you time and money on your shipping and fulfillment. And here, we'll go over all the different ways you can find more affordable shipping options. You'll discover new ways to use the services you use every day, new options you may have never heard of, and ways to create a better shipping workflow.



Cheapest Shipping Options Based on Delivery Time

Different services ensure delivery within specific timeframes. From economy services to express ones, providing customers with affordable shipping options requires merchants to also save money. These are some of the preferred services for some common delivery timeframes.

Cheapest Standard and 3-Day Shipping Options

Standard shipping options can vary based on a number of factors. USPS Ground Advantage, for instance, is a new USPS service that provides an economical delivery for parcels weighing up to 70 lbs. But that doesn't mean it's the best standard or 3-Day shipping option. For instance, USPS Media Mail® provides affordable delivery for approved materials. But other services like UPS® Ground, USPS Priority Mail®, and FedEx Ground® provide services that also offer good ground shipping options. And depending on where they're being shipped to, they may arrive sooner. UPS® Ground, for instance, may even arrive in as little as 24 hours.

Cheapest Two-Day and Express Shipping Options

Two-day shipping options are very popular thanks to Amazon and other market leaders. As a result, many consumers expect quicker delivery. ShipStation recently found that delivery speed is the second most important factor behind price for delivery options. There are many great 2-day shipping services. When you open a UPS account on ShipStation, you get discounts of up to 73% off UPS 2nd Day Air® service*, 17% off USPS Priority Mail Express rates, and 81% off DHL Express international services. Other 2-day shipping services include FedEx 2Day®.

Cheapest Overnight Shipping Options

Overnight shipping is a premium shipping service, but there are ways to save. When you ship UPS on ShipStation, you get access to discounts on UPS Next Day Air® services. There are also other great services that can deliver next day including FedEx Standard Overnight®. For even more premium overnight options, look for AM services.



The size of a parcel is going to greatly determine your shipping rate

How to Ship a Package Based on Size

The size of a parcel is going to greatly determine your shipping rate. The more space a package takes in the back of a truck, the fewer parcels the carrier can transport at once. One way to maintain steady shipping costs is to opt for [Flat Rate packages](#). But since this will not always give you the lowest rate, let's explore some more packaging options.

How to Send a Small Package

USPS Ground Advantage offers amazing rates for small parcels under 16 oz. But UPS® Ground and USPS Priority Mail® have great rates too and deliver much more quickly. Small parcels weighing over 16 oz can be more affordable than you'd think with services like UPS® Ground.

The Cheapest Way to Ship Large Packages

When you ship UPS on ShipStation, it usually costs less than USPS for large or heavy parcels. UPS® Ground and USPS Priority Mail® are two commonly used services.

But USPS Ground Advantage™ is another one to look for if shipping speed is less important. If you use FedEx, FedEx® Ground is a good option.

Cheapest Shipping Options Based on Weight

Similar to size, the weight of a parcel can greatly impact its rate. Since we've already discussed size-based pricing and dimensional weight pricing, let's take a look at what the most cost-effective shipping service is based on different weight groups and cubic pricing.

How to Ship Packages Under 1 LB

USPS Ground Advantage™ provides an affordable economy shipping option for parcels weighing under 16 ounces unless USPS Media Mail rates can apply. However, when you ship UPS on ShipStation, you get discounts of up to 78%* off UPS® Ground that makes it an attractive alternative—especially if the parcel needs to be delivered quickly.

How to Send a 5 lb Package

For parcels between 1-5 lbs, UPS® Ground rates on ShipStation provide merchants with versatile nationwide coverage for parcels sent to any destination. Other domestic services to look at include USPS Priority Mail and Ground Advantage.

How to Mail Packages Weighing 10 LBs or More

[UPS rates](#) on ShipStation also offer a great option for domestic parcels over 10 lbs. There are always variables that change this, though, so it's best to rate shop for the best option. An important factor in choosing a shipping service, particularly when shipping heavier parcels is the distance a package requires to be delivered. Distance also impacts shipping rates. Carriers break pricing down into [shipping zones](#). Understanding how a zone impacts shipping costs help you pay substantially less money on delivery.



The Cheapest Way to Ship Internationally

For parcels weighing 4.4 lbs and under, USPS First Class Mail® International and GlobalPost Economy will be the most economical way to ship internationally. However, keep in mind that there are no requirements for estimated delivery time on this, so it may take weeks to arrive at its final destination.

For quicker delivery—or for parcels weighing over 4.4 lbs—ShipStation offers discounts on GlobalPost and USPS.

And when you ship UPS on ShipStation, you get access to discounts of up to 82% off UPS international services* and 81% off DHL Express international shipping as well!

*Discounts off UPS daily rates. Rates are limited to shipping from the U.S. only. Rates and any applicable discounts are subject to change at anytime without notice.

Where to Start With International Shipping

International shipping doesn't have to be a barrier for online orders. With ShipStation, you can access discounted shipping rates and a wide variety of shipping tools that make international shipping as easy as domestic.

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Shipping is something that can make or break a customer's opinion of a brand, and global shipping comes with its own set of questions. Make it easy to find the answers to FAQs for international commerce like who pays for tariffs, how long shipping takes, etc.

KATHRYN BROWNING
SENIOR MARKETING MANAGER AT JUSTUNO

International Address Verification

International addresses can be tricky to verify. That's why ShipStation provides a way to verify and validate international shipping addresses. When you ship to popular international markets, you can breathe easily knowing that ShipStation can help reduce your workload by identifying correct addresses.

Customs Declarations

Customs declarations are what customs officials use to identify the goods being imported into their country. Their purpose is to determine that items are allowed, appropriately taxed, and cataloged properly. Customs declarations are either integrated with the label, printed separately, or transmitted electronically.

Customs Duties

A customs duty is a tax charged to the end customer when receiving an imported item. Similar to how sales tax is applied to an item purchased domestically, customs duties are the taxes applied to any item received internationally.

Who Pays Customs Fees

Customs duties are paid by the end consumer, however, many carriers provide a Delivered Duty Paid (DDP) option for the sender of an item to prepay. With DDP, you can prepay the customs fees on behalf of your customers. This eliminates the risk of customers rejecting their order due to surprise fees and allows you to plan shipping fees more accurately.

Autogenerated Customs Forms

An advantage of ShipStation is that you are able to generate customs forms automatically. If you have the item descriptions saved, ShipStation is able to pull that information from the order and onto the customs form. This is helpful especially since some markets like Europe now require Harmonized System (HS) codes to be on imported goods. You need to include customs descriptions of items being shipped. This is how HS codes are applied. However, it is advisable to go on and add these for your items you sell internationally. Luckily, ShipStation supports the creation of many different customs forms and you have the ability to automatically apply customs information to your items when your orders import into ShipStation.



Countries ShipStation can verify recipient addresses for include:

- Australia
- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Great Britain
- Israel
- Italy
- Norway
- Spain
- Sweden
- United States



How Automated Shipping Workflows Scale Fulfillment

Shipping and fulfillment involve much more than slapping a label onto a box. You want to make shipping smarter, not harder. Almost all tasks in ShipStation can be automated. A lot of ShipStation users have everything automated to the point that all they have to do is highlight the orders they want to ship and click “Create Label.” Let’s go over some of these key features.



Automatically Configure Shipments

ShipStation offers a way to apply specific actions to orders as soon as they import. These import automations can be configured based on your specific needs. Say, for instance, any domestic order weighing over 3 lbs needs to use UPS® Ground, you can configure that! There are almost limitless options for what you can set up. So anything you find yourself repeating throughout the day can likely be automated.

How to Use Your Shipping Services

For most selling channels, ShipStation receives the shipping option your customer selected at checkout. This is called Service Mapping. Say “Standard Shipping” is an option you frequently use on your website. If that uses USPS Priority Mail Package, you can simply apply that in ShipStation, and all orders that customers place on your website with “Standard Shipping” will import into ShipStation with USPS Priority Mail Package applied to it!

Batching

Once you configure the shipping preferences of an order, you’re ready to ship. To make the process simpler, ShipStation lets you print up to 500 labels at once. This process is known as batch shipping. Select the desired orders, and simply process the batch and all of the labels print out.

“ ”

Prior to finding ShipStation I was running shipping labels for our stores individually. Now with ShipStation, everything is consolidated. Run one giant batch and you’re done.

LESLIE HARMON
MADE BY CLEO

Scan-Based Workflows

ShipStation has features that cater to all types of workflows. There are a lot of tools and strategies you can incorporate into your fulfillment plan. Barcode scanners are a big part of warehouse picking. But, many programs that use barcode scanners can be quite expensive. Luckily, ShipStation lets you perform all types of dynamic, scan-based actions for no extra charge. We want to keep your shipping consolidated and efficient and we want to make sure you do it for a fair price.

Scan to Verify

It can be a major headache if you send out duplicate items or wrong items to a customer. Luckily, there is a way to avoid this! Scan to Verify ensures that you cannot generate a shipping label until you scan all UPC or SKU barcodes on an order's items. This customizable feature verifies that ALL the items in an order and ONLY the items in an order are in the box when you print the label. Instead of paying for an expensive standalone program and integrating it into your tech stack, use our scan-based verification natively!

Scan to Print & Scan to View

A barcode and scanner function the same as a keyboard and/or mouse in that they perform a specific command. It's hard to have a typo with a scanner! With ShipStation, you can perform a myriad of scan-based tasks using either the barcodes on a packing slip and/or on a printed-out sheet. If you use features like Scan to Verify, this makes the process a lot more seamless. You just scan the packing slip for an order, that pulls the order up, then you can scan a barcode, then use Scan to Verify to print the label, tape up the box, add the label, then ship it out!

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The scan to verify system has been so great, because before we just did everything ourselves. We didn't go to training, I didn't go to school for this, so it's just been trial by fire. We were just reading, packing slips, and checking things off manually. So that barcode system and scan to verify have been really great.

DAMON OATES
DECO EXCHANGE



**ShipStation lets
you perform all
types of dynamic,
scan-based actions
for no extra charge**

KEEP EVERYONE UP TO DATE

With ShipStation, you can automatically update customers and your selling channel with tracking and shipment status. This minimizes manual entry and keeps everyone up to speed in real time. Along with returns and branded tracking, you never have to worry about leaving anyone in the dark. ShipStation keeps you, your team, your customers, and your selling channels in the loop at every step of the shipment's journey to your customers' doorsteps and beyond.

We hope you found the information useful as you start to build out or re-evaluate your shipping processes. We strive for every ecommerce business to be as efficient as possible when it comes to their fulfillment practices, and so we have even more resources to aid you.

Thanks.





shipstation.com

About ShipStation

Every day, tens of thousands of ecommerce merchants rely on ShipStation to solve the day-to-day challenges of importing orders and processing shipments. The trusted leader in shipping software since its founding in 2011, ShipStation helps online sellers scale their businesses and deliver exceptional customer experiences, with an intuitive online solution that allows them to efficiently ship orders -- wherever they sell and however they ship. The multi-channel and multi-carrier platform offers the most integrations of any e-commerce solution, with more than 300 partnerships with leading shopping carts, marketplaces, carriers and fulfillment services, including USPS, UPS, FedEx, Amazon, Shopify, and BigCommerce. ShipStation is a member of the Auctane family of companies and is headquartered in Austin, TX. Auctane brands include ShipStation, Stamps.com, Packlink, ShippingEasy, ShipWorks, ShipEngine, Endicia, Shippi, GlobalPost, and Metapack, with offices in El Segundo, Austin, London, Madrid, Sunnyvale, Zielona Gora, Atlanta,



bigcommerce.com

About BigCommerce

BigCommerce is a leading open software-as-a-service (SaaS) ecommerce platform that empowers merchants of all sizes to build, innovate and grow their businesses online. BigCommerce provides merchants sophisticated enterprise-grade functionality, customization and performance with simplicity and ease-of-use. Tens of thousands of B2C and B2B companies across 150 countries and numerous industries use BigCommerce to create beautiful, engaging online stores, including Ben & Jerry's, Molton Brown, S.C. Johnson, Skullcandy, Solo Stove, Ted Baker and Vodafone. Headquartered in Austin, BigCommerce has offices in London, Kyiv, San Francisco, and Sydney.