BEATING THE HOLIDAY BLUES— FOUR-POINT CHECK-UP FOR RETAILERS

The holiday season tests every supply chain to its fullest capabilities. Evaluating performance when your systems are tested to the max is a great time to really see where improvements can be made. We identified four key areas of evaluation and associated questions for retailers. Please use this as a guide for your team to help identify where you need to make adjustments for next year.

SUPPLY CHAIN SETUP

› How is your supply chain setup: fully automated, mostly automated, somewhat automated?

› How did the configuration of the supply chain handle the holiday spike?

› How do you address the e-commerce channel: fully integrated to back end, somewhat automated to back end, or bolted on manually to existing processes?

› How did the configuration of the e-commerce channel handle the holiday spike?

› Where are opportunities to optimize the supply chain?

PERFORMANCE

› How well were you able to monitor your supply chain's performance?

› How were communications between suppliers? Could they have been better?

› How happy were you with the data available? Was there data that you wished you had?

› Did the process break down anywhere? If so, where and why?

› How were you able to turn these breakdowns into positives?

SHIPPING

› How well did you manage the critical shipping dates and capacity?

› Did you adequately estimate the transit time during November and December?

› Did any unexpected delays occur on the transit route? If so how did you adjust?

› Were any products unable to make it from warehouses to their desired locations?

› Were you able to meet customers' expectations with delivery?

REVENUE/FEES

› How well were you stocked? Were you losing revenue because of stock outs?

› Where were you paying expediting fees to just keep items in stock?

› Were you overstocked and paying storing fees?

› Did your returns match your estimates? Were they over/under? Is your process easy and hassle free?

› Were the right supply guarantees in place on the vendor-score card? Where could grading be changed to improve efficiencies and improve delivery and stock?