

Retail Peak 2020:

# Capacity Planning Playbook

Smart steps to deliver more this season.



# Peak 2020: are you ready to scale?

Every year, retailers around the world plan assiduously for the demand that starts building from Black Friday, before finally subsiding sometime after Christmas. The spike is felt in online and offline sales alike, although the process of managing it is arguably more complex online, where the buying journey extends to fulfilment – in all the various shapes and sizes the modern consumer demands – as well as the logistical hassle of online returns.

Standard peak season is hard enough to manage – this year's peak is shaping up to be a task of epic proportions! Physical stores around the world have been forced to close their doors due to COVID-19, and even as they gradually start to re-open, many consumers remain wary of setting foot inside as the virus rages on. The result has been a shopping migration online, of such a magnitude that ecommerce has been running at usual peak levels since May. As we start to approach actual peak season, volumes are predicted to reach never-seen-before heights.

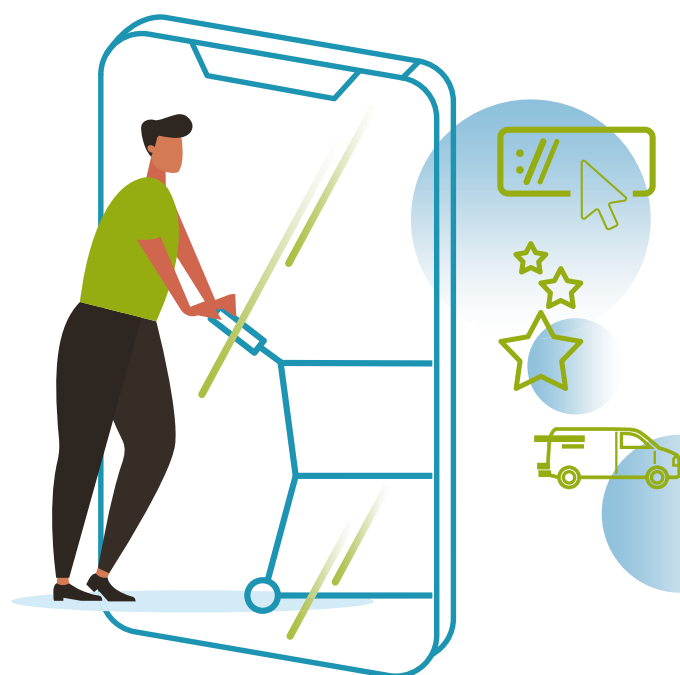
You only need to look to China to gain a sense of the volumes that await us. The world's first example of a pandemic-era peak season was China's Spring Festival,

which fell on February 25 – when the country was still recording hundreds of new infections each day. Alibaba's online supermarket Hema reported an order increase of 220% year-over-year, while sales for competitors Miss Fresh and JD.com's online grocery platform were up 350% and 470% during the same period respectively.

Peak season outside of China will undoubtedly offer an equally compelling opportunity to retailers. It is a chance to recover lost profits offline, and even to win new customers and drive new revenue. However, the delivery delays of early-pandemic online shopping show that this year's peak season could also spiral into missed opportunities and failed customer promises. The fact is, many retailers have continued to view online as a secondary channel and are now scrambling to build the infrastructure required to serve customers there. And many others are realizing their online experience isn't enough

to withstand the explosion of competitors in the space.

The good news is it's not too late. If retailers act now there's still time to prepare their ecommerce fulfilment to seize the opportunity that Peak 2020 represents. In this playbook, you'll learn the simple steps to building the supply chain agility you need to make the most of this year's peak season.



## 60%

Rise in **parcel demand** between March and June 2020

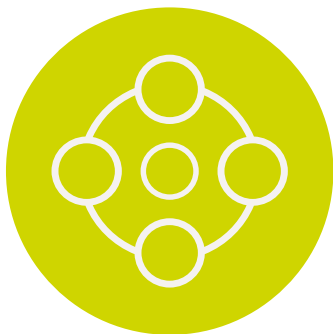
Source: Metapack Home Deliveries Volume Index

## 220%

Increase in **online orders** with Hema during the world's first pandemic-era peak season, China's Spring Festival

Source: Sixth Tone 'How COVID-19 sparked a silver tech revolution in China'

# Ensure you come out on top for this year's peak, in three easy steps



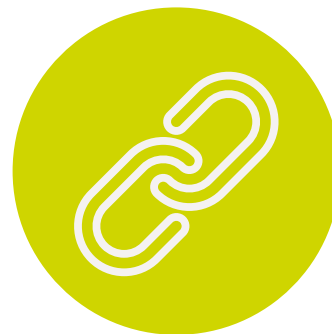
## **STEP 1** **Diversify** **your partner** **ecosystem**

Don't rely on one or two carriers to get you through peak.



## **STEP 2** **Offer** **a dynamic** **promise**

If you can't guarantee next day delivery, make sure you display something else.



## **STEP 3** **Optimize the** **post-purchase** **experience**

Address this too-often neglected stage to keep customers coming back well after peak.

## **Winning customers in peak relies heavily on the strength of your fulfilment.**

Building flexibility into your delivery promise is key to converting customers while maintaining trust. And satisfying your customers' expectations requires resilient, highly optimized operations.

# 160%

**Expected future increase**  
in ecommerce purchases  
from new or low-frequency  
users

Source: Accenture, 'COVID-19 Consumer Research'

# 33%

Have made a  
complaint to a retailer  
about delivery

# 37%

Say a bad online  
experience would  
**turn them off** a brand

# Step 1

## Diversify your partner ecosystem

### Build backup into your network

The biggest risk for retailers is achieving a freshly mobilized sales channel and high demand...but no carrier availability to get orders to customers! Many enterprise retailers rely on one or two carriers, which is a huge liability going into peak season 2020.



# 85%

Use **home delivery**

# 42%

Have tried **click and collect**

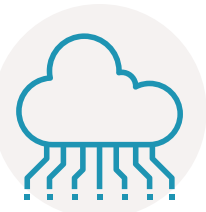
# 35%

Use **PUDOs**



#### Partner with several carriers

Carrier integrators with a strong network in your market will instantly increase your carrier availability – especially during busy periods.



#### Consider 3PLs and bolt-ons

If you're still scrambling to meet current demands, it could make sense to outsource some or all aspects of your supply chain to instantly boost capacity heading into peak.



#### Diversify distribution

Varying the ways you deliver to consumers – for example by offering collection at PUDOs and/or lockers – can offer more solutions to serve during high demand.

### Partner diversity in action

Metapack's delivery management software offers retailers access to the world's largest library of carriers and delivery services, ensuring availability during busy periods. It is the only allocation engine of its type on the market, equipping retailers and brands to make the best shipping decisions. Even in the most challenging environments, our customers continue processing orders faster than ever.

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## Step 2

# Offer a dynamic delivery promise

## Let your customers decide what convenience means

Online shoppers want to receive their parcel in a way that suits them, especially during busy periods. Unfortunately, the higher the demand, the more complicated it is to maintain your delivery promise. Retailers must find a way to retain consumer choice, while risk-proofing fulfilment to avoid disappointment.



### Diversify your delivery options

Delivery options convert customers, but in periods of peak demand, it gets harder to offer all of them. The greater the range, the easier it is to maintain customer choice.



### Personalize checkout

If you can't offer next day delivery, don't display it! Configure your website to display the options you can deliver, in real-time.



### Maintain transparency

Customers will feel more confident in their purchases if they are provided with accurate delivery timeframes, especially in busy shopping periods.

## Dynamic delivery options in action

Metapack's delivery options software allows retailers to grow sales with unique, personalized delivery options. Our customers have access to the world's largest library of carriers and delivery services, helping them offer the widest range of delivery options and collection points. The system's unparalleled responsiveness helps retailers maintain customer confidence, and keeps them coming back for more.

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60%

Would select a retailer based on **delivery options**

67%

Say **convenience** is the most important factor

74%

Want all **delivery options displayed** on the product page

# Step 3

## Optimize your post-purchase experience

### Make the last mile count

Think the battle to maximize this year's peak season ends when a customer clicks 'buy'? Think again – it's only just beginning! Every shopper you convert during peak will either become a return customer, or a disappointed deserter. And your post-purchase experience will be the deciding factor.



#### Flexible returns

Make it easy for customers to return and exchange items, with convenient options that suit their needs. Get stock back online ASAP.



#### Seamless tracking

Avoid costly WISMO calls by providing clear, branded tracking for your orders. Keep your customer informed and in control of their order.



#### Flex your operations

Build automation and integration into your fulfillment, so you can easily pivot your last-mile if needed, through tactics like 'ship from store'.

### Last mile agility in action

Metapack's 'ship from store' solution, which is built into our delivery management software, is already helping retailers adapt their last mile delivery to the current situation. The solution connects with the retailer's WMS and OMS to dynamically route orders regardless of the sales channel. The solution helps our customers make the best use of their available inventory, and offer shoppers the most efficient delivery options possible.

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# 69%

Say **tracking** is one of their top 3 considerations when shopping online

# 57%

Would be likely to choose a retailer with a **simple returns policy**

# 34%

Consumers who have **increased phone calls** to companies since COVID-19

Source: Accenture, 'The Human Experience: How organizations should respond to the experience implications of COVID-19'

# Partner with Metapack ahead of this year's peak season

Metapack is the leading provider of ecommerce solutions from checkout through to delivery, and beyond. We work with many of the world's largest and most successful retailers and brands, so we know what it takes to deliver addictive ecommerce experiences. We empower our customers with the high-quality insight and solutions they need to deliver these experiences to their own customers, no matter where in the world they are.

We know that the battle for customer loyalty doesn't end at the buy button – it's only just beginning! Increasingly, shoppers expect just as much ease and convenience through tracking, delivery, and even returns, as they do at checkout. Integrated with the world's largest library of over 400 carriers and 4,900 delivery services, our solutions allow retailers to provide their customers with a fulfilment experience to suit each customer's needs.

But we also know that a standout ecommerce experience relies on a strong operational backbone. That's why our solutions make it easy for retailers to continue offering customers choice, no matter how challenging the demand. Our solutions eliminate manual and time-consuming processes in the warehouse, while also reducing strain on customer call centres.

We're on a mission to help retailers and brands make online shopping simpler and more enjoyable. In other words, we're here to help them provide online shopping experiences that convert customers, and keep them coming back for more!

[REQUEST A DEMO TODAY](#)

## Customers who trust us

**BURBERRY**

ESTÉE LAUDER



**ASOS**

L'OCCITANE  
EN PROVENCE

LOUIS VUITTON



TED BAKER®  
LONDON

Timberland 



NESPRESSO®

TOMMY HILFINGER