RESOURCES

Home
Resources
Resource Center



Ship On Time: Get Real-Time Inventory Visibility by Integrating With All Your 3PLs

By John Bermudez, Vice President, Product Marketing, TraceLink

Order fulfillment for companies in the life sciences supply chain is very challenging. Just some of the challenges associated with this process include:

- Shipping to 150+ countries
- Managing urgent medical needs
- Complex cold-chain requirements
- Handling controlled substances
- Drugs in short supply
- Compliance regulations
- Managing serialized shipments
- Ensuring drug security
- Rising logistics costs

3PLs provide specialized order fulfillment services

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved



John Bermudez

While there are numerous 3PLs with specialized services for the life sciences and healthcare industries that have designed logistics solutions to meet these challenges, they usually need to be operated out of the 3PLs' facilities with their systems. This means order fulfillment is done from 3PL warehouses with customer orders and shipping confirmations being processed through the 3PLs' systems. Although this can be a cost-effective solution to meet diverse logistics challenges, it limits visibility to inventory balances, shipment activity, and ultimately customer order fulfillment confirmations from 3PL locations. Generally, 3PLs offer several strategies to help life sciences companies with visibility into the order fulfillment process that range from full custom point-to-point integration to providing logins to their systems.

But these strategies have critical limitations. For example, data housed in the 3PL systems is not available in your company's ERP system, and point-to-point integration is too expensive and time consuming to build across dozens of 3PLs. To ensure high levels of on-time, in-full shipments, life sciences companies often keep larger inventories on hand to buffer the lack of visibility into 3PL warehouse stock levels and fulfillment activity. This practice ties up working capital and is not always very effective when product demand is volatile or has a short shelf life.

TraceLink MINT: A cost-effective solution

The good news is that the TraceLink network—which many pharmaceutical companies are already connected to for their track-and-trace compliance solutions—now provides a revolutionary new supply chain capability that enables 3PLs to be integrated with your ERP system. Powered by the TraceLink Integrate Once, Interoperate with Everyone™ capability, **MINT for Logistics** delivers fast, simple, and cost-effective integration that supports the complete set of B2B transactions, including warehouse stock transfers, warehouse shipping orders, advance ship notices, and inventory balances, to provide real-time information exchange with 3PL systems. With MINT, your ERP and other enterprise systems

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved

have up-to-date information to ensure on-time, in-full customer order fulfillment.

The value of real-time 3PL integration

Life sciences companies need to work with multiple 3PLs to serve patients across many global markets, so integrating only some 3PLs is not a patient-centric strategy. By integrating with all 3PLs, the ERP system has timely customer order data and accurate inventory balances that serve as the basis for replenishment and manufacturing plans. This enables the ERP to generate better supply plans and ensure CMOs and direct suppliers are getting their purchase orders with adequate lead time in the quantities needed for complete order fulfillment. Additionally:

- Visibility to 3PL warehouse stock transfers with arrival confirmations enables in-transit product tracking and ensures inventory balances are updated with recent production completions to support accurate available-to-promise (ATP).
- Integrated warehouse shipping orders with shipping confirmations enables customer service teams to monitor fulfillment operations from the ERP system across all 3PL fulfillment centers.
- Regular inventory balance updates with integrated inventory adjustments from the 3PLs ensure that the ERP inventory balances, which serve as the basis for supply planning and ATP, are always up to date.

With this increased level of visibility into 3PL order fulfillment operations, customer service teams will have the information needed to provide a high level of service with more confidence and far less manual effort. This includes:

- Timely and precise confirmations of customers’ inbound purchase orders.
- Advance ship notices sent will reflect what the customer ordered rather than only what could be shipped based on inventory on hand.
- With customer orders filled in full as ordered, integrated invoicing and

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved

payment processing becomes more practical because there are fewer exceptions requiring manual review.

The net result is happier customers and much shorter cash-to-cash cycle times. Over time, the complete end-to-end integration of your 3PLs will also increase the agility and resilience of your order fulfillment operations.

Watch our webinar to learn how to integrate all 3PLs!

Integrating all of your 3PLs seems unattainable? Fill out the form on this page to watch our on-demand webinar and learn more about how TraceLink makes it fast, simple, and cost-effective.

BlogMINT for Logistics
Get Real-Time Inventory Visibility from All Your 3PLs! Watch the on-demand webinar
Fill out the form to watch the webinar now.

Related Content

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved



Integrate with 100% of Your 3PLs with MINT for Logistics

Learn how TraceLink MINT enables fast, simple, and cost-effective integration with all of your 3PLs.

View More

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved



Why It’s Important to Integrate with All of Your Suppliers Now

Learn why real-time integration with your CMOs and suppliers is critical and how TraceLink MINT can help. Watch the video now!
View More

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved



3 Reasons Why Manufacturers and Suppliers Need to be Fully Integrated

Watch this quick video and learn how TraceLink enables fast, simple, and cost-effective real-time integration with 100% of your suppliers.
View More

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved