



# After Shark Tank

Lessons for Any Brand  
Navigating Sudden Growth



## Introduction

For nascent brands, securing investment or gaining national exposure can be instantly transformative. Whether growth comes from an appearance on “Shark Tank,” a viral social media moment or a major retail opportunity, overnight success creates new supply chain challenges that many organizations are unprepared to handle.

While rapid growth is certainly exciting, brands also need to be sure they are prepared to scale to accommodate that growth. Scaling operations often requires process changes to maintain optimal efficiency and to ensure that customers get the experience they expect from a new and exciting brand.

For these companies, growth isn't just about being able to ship more orders. It requires them to be able to build efficient, scalable and flexible supply chains that can handle shifts in demand due to promotional spikes, holiday sales or seasonal fluctuations.

In this white paper, we highlight the primary changes that growing brands should consider to ensure their supply chains are prepared for rapid growth.





## Anticipating the Volume Surge

With instant exposure from a television appearance, viral social media clip or breakthrough marketing moment, the first challenge most brands face is a sudden surge in demand and order volume. While increased visibility can create tremendous growth opportunities, it can also expose weaknesses in supply chain operations if companies are not prepared to scale quickly. Businesses must be able to accurately forecast demand, maintain sufficient inventory levels and replenish stock quickly enough to keep pace with customer orders. Failure to do so can result in stockouts, overstocks, backorders, delayed shipments or lost sales at a time when customer interest and brand momentum are at their peak.

Beyond inventory planning, companies must also strategically position inventory close to key customer markets to support fast, cost-effective fulfillment. As order volumes grow and customers expect increasingly shorter delivery windows, inventory placement becomes a critical factor in both customer satisfaction and shipping costs. Leveraging a strategic fulfillment network can help reduce transit times, lower transportation expenses and improve the overall customer experience while ensuring products remain available where demand concentration is greatest.

Operational scalability is equally important. A sudden influx of orders can place significant strain on warehouse operations, making it essential to have the right fulfillment partner in place. The ability to quickly scale labor resources for receiving, picking, packing and shipping activities helps ensure orders continue moving efficiently through the fulfillment process, even during unexpected volume spikes. Having an experienced third-party logistics (3PL) partner with established processes, flexible staffing models and proven operational expertise can help companies maintain service levels without sacrificing accuracy or speed.

Transportation capacity is another critical consideration. As shipping volumes increase, businesses need access to a robust network of parcel and freight providers capable of handling fluctuating demand. The right logistics partner can leverage established carrier relationships to secure capacity, minimize disruptions and provide greater flexibility as shipping requirements evolve. In addition, a diversified transportation network helps reduce dependence on a single carrier while improving resilience during peak seasons, market disruptions or periods of tight capacity.

Perhaps most importantly, brands must be prepared to scale without compromising the customer experience. Customers who discover a brand through a high-profile marketing event often form lasting impressions based on fulfillment performance, delivery speed and product availability. Companies that can quickly translate increased visibility into reliable, seamless order fulfillment are better positioned to convert one-time buyers into loyal customers, paving the way to long-term growth.

## Maintaining Inventory Accuracy

Just as important as being able to handle order volumes is the need to have full transparency into inventory availability to ensure plenty of product is ready to ship at a moment's notice across all sales channels. The right 3PL partner should also be able to meet any storage and handling requirements (e.g., temperature-controlled space, proper packing for fragile items, etc.) to protect the integrity of the products while being able to scale space up or down to accommodate fluctuations in demand.

While many young brands focus on a single channel for distribution, such as their website, growth often requires them to expand across multiple channels, including e-commerce platforms like Amazon, retail partner websites and even physical locations. Real-time inventory management through a trusted partner can ensure full transparency across multiple sales channels while providing a single view of inventory availability, helping to address or prevent challenges with forecasting.

In order to accomplish this, having the right technology in place is critical, as it serves as the foundation for establishing inventory accuracy, including the location, tracking and status of all goods across the supply chain. This allows companies to know how much inventory is available, when it needs to be replenished, and when orders are picked, packed and shipped. By utilizing advanced technology to manage this process, companies are less likely to experience errors due to manual entry, which helps to reduce stockouts, overstocks and costly shipment delays. It also allows companies to provide accurate reporting to identify trends, anticipate disruptions and make more informed decisions while creating more efficient supply chains and reducing operational waste.





## Protecting the Brand Experience

The importance of inventory accuracy extends to the brand experience for customers as well. Inaccuracies can suggest that plenty of inventory is available when it isn't, which can result in shipping delays and canceled orders that directly impact both profitability and the customer experience. In addition, late deliveries, incorrect information or lack of communication around timing of anticipated deliveries can leave customers feeling disappointed in their first interaction with a brand, which may influence whether or not they make repeat purchases in the future.

The brand experience also extends to the quality of packaging used for each shipment and how customers feel when they open a package. Poor packaging can result in damaged or broken items and disappointed customers, while thoughtfully designed packaging can elevate a customer's perception of the brand and build loyalty.

In addition, one of the most important elements of the brand experience is how well the brand communicates with the customer about their shipments and deliveries. Particularly for new brands or first-time interactions with a customer, trust has not yet been established, making the overall experience a make-or-break moment with a brand. Providing updates around shipment timing, delays and accurate delivery estimates helps to instill peace of mind while managing expectations for customers from the start.

## Keeping Parcel Costs Under Control as You Scale

As order volumes increase, parcel shipping costs often become one of the largest and least predictable components of fulfillment spend. Without a well-planned strategy, transportation expenses can grow disproportionately to revenue, reducing margins and limiting a company's ability to scale efficiently. Fast-growing companies should intentionally build and continuously evaluate their parcel operations to identify opportunities for savings and improved delivery performance.

As businesses expand into new markets and serve a broader customer base, parcel shipping costs can increase due to longer delivery distances and rising accessorial fees.

### Common cost drivers include:

- Increased residential deliveries
- Higher dimensional-weight charges
- Fuel surcharges and carrier fees
- Greater use of expedited shipping services
- Limited visibility into shipping cost trends

Without careful monitoring, shipping expenses can escalate quickly and consume a growing share of revenue, especially since parcel carriers consistently alter their pricing structure. Regularly evaluating parcel spend alongside sales growth helps companies identify inefficiencies before they impact profitability.

In addition, many emerging companies rely heavily on a single parcel carrier in their early stages. While this approach offers simplicity, it can limit flexibility and reduce opportunities for cost savings as shipment volumes increase. A diversified carrier strategy enables businesses to match shipments to the most appropriate provider based on service levels, package characteristics, shipment destinations and cost considerations.

Working with a 3PL with a network of national, regional and specialized carriers can offer several advantages, including:

- Improved pricing leverage
- Access to alternative service options
- Reduced dependence on a single carrier network
- Increased flexibility during peak shipping periods
- Better alignment between service requirements and transportation costs



As shipping requirements evolve, a multi-carrier approach can help businesses maintain competitive delivery performance while controlling expenses.

Parcel shipping costs are also heavily determined by the distance a package must travel, as the further a package travels, the higher the shipping cost is likely to be. Zone optimization focuses on reducing the average distance between inventory and end customers and can be achieved through strategic inventory placement, distributed fulfillment networks or the use of multiple warehouse locations. By positioning products closer to customers, businesses can reduce transportation costs, improve delivery speed, increase customer satisfaction and minimize reliance on premium shipping services, which tend to be more costly. Even small reductions in average shipment zones can generate meaningful savings when multiplied across thousands of annual shipments.



However, as parcel volumes grow, shipping decisions become increasingly complex. Utilizing a 3PL partner with experience negotiating rates can help businesses identify the best parcel shipping solution for their needs. A 3PL can compare available carrier and service options in real time, ensuring that each shipment is routed through the most cost-effective provider capable of meeting delivery requirements. Rather than defaulting to a single carrier or service level, businesses can optimize every shipment based on cost and transit time. They can also provide the analytics and visibility needed to continuously improve performance by identifying trends, negotiating more effectively with carriers and uncovering opportunities to reduce shipping costs without sacrificing the customer experience.

## Handling Returns Efficiently

While growing brands often strive to exceed customer expectations with every delivery, it's critical to have a reverse logistics management strategy in place to ensure seamless experiences, even when items must be returned. This is even more critical for brands that are still establishing their reputation in the market, as an unsatisfactory return experience can damage brand trust and prevent customers from making future purchases.

An effective returns strategy goes beyond simply accepting returned products and should include clear processes for receiving, inspecting, refurbishing, restocking or disposing of items while maintaining visibility throughout the return lifecycle. By streamlining reverse logistics operations, brands can reduce processing costs, recover inventory value more quickly and improve customer satisfaction by ensuring returns and refunds are processed quickly.

Key considerations include:

- **Standardized workflows:** Establishing processes upfront that ensure returns are handled efficiently and consistently across channels creates an easily repeatable process for maximum efficiency.
- **Customer expectations:** Today's consumers expect simple, transparent and convenient returns processes. Meeting these expectations can strengthen brand loyalty and encourage repeat purchases.
- **Cost recovery opportunities:** Effective returns management can help identify products suitable for restocking, refurbishment, resale or other value recovery programs, thereby minimizing financial losses.
- **Returns visibility:** Real-time tracking and reporting provide insight into return status, how the inventory should be handled (e.g., restocking, refurbishing, recycling, disposal, etc.) and recurring product issues, enabling better decision-making and continuous improvement.

For fast-growing brands, a well-executed reverse logistics program not only protects the customer experience, but also helps preserve margins, maintain inventory accuracy and support long-term growth.

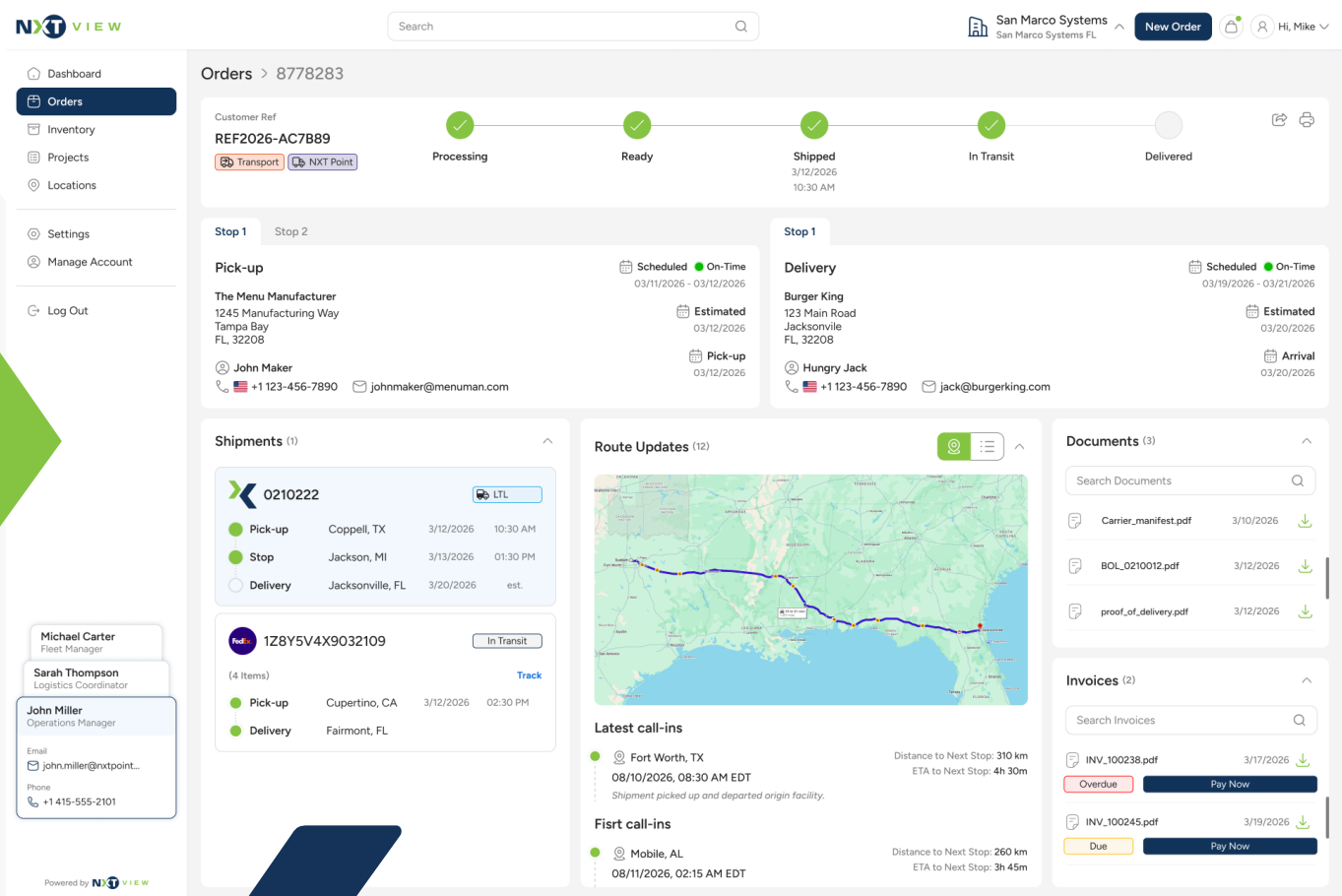


## Creating End-to-End Visibility

As businesses grow, maintaining visibility across inventory, orders and fulfillment operations becomes increasingly important. Without accurate, real-time information, companies can struggle to keep pace with customer demand, manage inventory effectively and make informed business decisions. End-to-end visibility provides a clear view of products and orders as they move throughout the supply chain, helping businesses improve responsiveness, reduce disruptions and deliver a more consistent customer experience.

The foundation of this visibility is the technology that supports supply chains behind the scenes. A 3PL partner with advanced technology – including a modern warehouse management system (WMS) – can provide real-time insight into inventory levels, locations and movements while supporting critical processes such as receiving, stocking, picking, packing and shipping. By using technology to streamline these activities and reducing reliance on manual processes, companies can improve inventory accuracy, minimize fulfillment errors and gain greater confidence in the data used to support planning and decision-making.

Visibility should extend beyond the warehouse and throughout the entire order lifecycle. Real-time order tracking allows businesses to monitor orders from receipt through final delivery, providing greater transparency for both internal teams and customers. This helps organizations proactively address delays, manage exceptions more effectively and set accurate expectations regarding order status and delivery timelines.



## Inventory

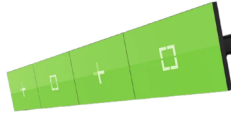
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All Quantity

1,781  
Total Results

2144 items found

SKU #X03N4  
Indoor Digital Menu Board



Quantity: 1068 Available

SKU #9844AK  
Self-Service Kiosks



1904 Available

SKU #935DMA  
Digital Switchboard



Quantity: 408 Available

SKU #935DMA  
Digital Switchboard



Quantity: 408 Available

SKU #X03N4  
Pre-Sell Display



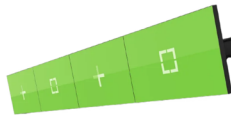
Quantity: 1068 Available

SKU #984ANA  
Order Confirmation Unit



Quantity: 1904 Available

SKU #X03N4  
Indoor Digital Menu Board



Quantity: 1068 Available

SKU #9844AK  
Self-Service Kiosks



Quantity: 1904 Available

SKU #935DMA  
Digital Switchboard



Quantity: 408 Available

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Equally important is the ability to transform operational data into actionable insights. Comprehensive reporting and analytics provide visibility into inventory trends, order volumes, fulfillment performance and customer demand patterns. These insights help businesses improve forecasting, optimize inventory levels, identify bottlenecks and make more strategic decisions as they scale their operations.

Ongoing performance measurement ties these capabilities together by providing a framework for continuous improvement. Monitoring key metrics such as inventory and order accuracy, fulfillment speed and on-time delivery performance allows organizations to evaluate success, identify opportunities for improvement and ensure their supply chain continues to support business growth. By combining warehouse management technology, order tracking, reporting, analytics and performance measurement, companies can build the end-to-end visibility needed to create a more agile, efficient and scalable supply chain.

## Conclusion

Rapid growth can be one of the most exciting milestones in a brand's journey, but it can also be one of the most challenging. Whether driven by national media exposure, a successful marketing campaign, retail expansion or surging customer demand, growth often exposes operational gaps that may not have been apparent at smaller volumes. Brands that are unprepared can quickly find themselves struggling with inventory shortages, fulfillment delays, rising transportation costs and inconsistent customer experiences.

Successfully scaling a supply chain requires a thoughtful approach to inventory management, fulfillment operations, transportation strategy, technology, visibility and customer service. From anticipating volume surges and maintaining inventory accuracy to controlling parcel costs, managing returns efficiently and creating end-to-end supply chain visibility, each component plays a critical role in supporting sustainable growth.

Most importantly, growing brands must recognize that the customer experience does not end when an order is placed. Product availability, fulfillment speed, delivery performance, order visibility and returns management all influence how customers perceive a brand and whether they choose to make future purchases. As demand increases, maintaining a consistent and reliable customer experience becomes just as important as acquiring new customers.



The brands that thrive after “Shark Tank” or viral exposure are not necessarily those with the best products. They are the companies that successfully scale operations while maintaining the experience that earned them national attention in the first place. By partnering with an experienced logistics provider, leveraging scalable technology and building flexible supply chain processes, emerging brands can transform rapid growth from an operational challenge into a competitive advantage. Those that invest in the right foundation today will be better positioned to meet evolving customer expectations, capitalize on future opportunities and build supply chains capable of supporting long-term success.

***Whether your business is preparing for rapid growth, entering new sales channels or managing increasing fulfillment complexity, NXTPoint Logistics can help create a scalable supply chain strategy that keeps pace with demand. To talk with our experts about how we can help build a successful supply chain from the start, [click here to contact us](#).***