

CASE STUDY

Standardizing a Multi-Warehouse 3PL Operation With SOPs and Controls

How VendorVita turned warehouse knowledge that lived in emails, conversations, and individual employees into a documented operating system - reducing fulfillment errors by 80%, shipment exceptions by 85%, and chargebacks by 95%.

80%

FEWER FULFILLMENT ERRORS

85%

FEWER SHIPMENT EXCEPTIONS

95%

FEWER CHARGEBACKS

The goal was to design processes that made the correct action easier to follow and the incorrect action harder to take.

CLIENT PROFILE

A growing multi-channel CPG company relying on third-party warehouse partners across multiple facilities.

The operation fulfilled Amazon, Walmart, direct-to-consumer, and wholesale orders - each with different requirements for packaging, labels, documentation, inventory, and exception handling.

The Challenge

As the business expanded across channels and warehouse locations, fulfillment complexity grew faster than the processes used to manage it. Too much operating knowledge existed in emails, calls, verbal instructions, and the experience of individual employees.

The same process could be handled differently depending on the warehouse location, employee, sales channel, or circumstance.

Where the operation was breaking down

- Incorrect products or quantities being shipped.
- Labeling mistakes and marketplace-specific fulfillment errors.
- Packaging inconsistency and preventable handling problems.
- Orders shipping after cancellation requests.
- Inventory discrepancies and inconsistent reporting between facilities.
- Repeated warehouse emails and calls for routine questions.
- Significant management involvement in exceptions and corrections.
- Preventable shipment exceptions and chargebacks.
- Slow employee onboarding because knowledge depended on experienced personnel.

The management burden

Before standardization, approximately 10-15 hours per week were spent overseeing warehouse execution, answering questions, resolving exceptions, correcting mistakes, and coordinating between locations.

10-15 hrs

WEEKLY OVERSIGHT BEFORE

Reactive

ISSUE MANAGEMENT

High

DEPENDENCE ON INDIVIDUALS

Building a Documented Operating System

VendorVita mapped the warehouse operation from order creation through shipment completion, identified the steps most likely to create errors, and converted fragmented knowledge into practical SOPs, controls, verification points, and escalation rules.

1	2	3	4	5
Review order	Pick & verify	Pack & label	Document	Final check

Standardized fulfillment workflows

- Order review and channel identification.
- Product and quantity verification.
- Picking and packing procedures.
- Lot-number entry and case quantity controls.
- Pallet creation and shipment preparation.
- Product, case, and marketplace-specific labeling.
- Shipment documentation and carrier preparation.
- Box and pallet closure requirements.
- Final shipment verification and order completion.

The SOPs were designed as operating tools employees could use while doing the work - not generic policy documents that sat in a folder.

Making the correct process visible

Employees gained a defined sequence of actions and checks for routine fulfillment. Management gained a consistent standard that could be trained, audited, and improved across locations.

Translating SOPs Into Real Warehouse Workflows

VendorVita documented procedures in the context of the actual order-management and warehouse systems employees used every day. Instructions were tied to the screens, actions, and decisions employees encountered while processing orders.

This reduced the gap between "what the SOP says" and "what the employee actually sees while fulfilling the order."

Consistency across multiple warehouses

- Common order-handling procedures across facilities.
- Standardized inventory reporting and reconciliation.
- Consistent packaging and labeling requirements.
- Marketplace-specific shipment preparation standards.
- Common exception and escalation procedures.
- Standardized cancellation handling and status confirmation.

Marketplace-specific controls

Amazon, Walmart, direct-to-consumer, and wholesale orders did not follow the same fulfillment process. VendorVita created channel-specific workflows so warehouse employees could identify the order type and follow the correct packaging, label, documentation, and completion requirements.

Packaging as a warehouse control

- Correct carton and divider selection.
- Product placement and packaging inspection.
- Damaged-packaging checks.
- Label placement and case preparation.
- Marketplace-specific packaging requirements.

Even a well-designed package can fail when it is assembled incorrectly. Packaging consistency therefore became part of the fulfillment SOP.

Controls for Exceptions, Cancellations & Inventory

Standardization did not mean trying to predict every possible situation. VendorVita defined which scenarios warehouse employees could handle through the normal workflow and which required management review.

Exception and escalation rules

- Unclear or unavailable inventory.
- Unexpected quantities or unusual order configurations.
- Missing products or label discrepancies.
- Damaged inventory or packaging concerns.
- Marketplace compliance questions.
- Shipping and system discrepancies.
- Cancellation timing or other high-risk exceptions.

Routine orders followed documented workflows. Cases outside predefined operating parameters were escalated.

A clearer cancellation workflow

VendorVita standardized how last-minute cancellations were checked and communicated so the team did not assume an order was stopped simply because a request had been submitted. The process included checking fulfillment status, contacting the warehouse, confirming whether fulfillment could still be stopped, updating the appropriate system, and escalating when timing made the outcome uncertain.

Inventory controls

- Warehouse-level counts and reporting.
- Inbound, allocated, and available inventory visibility.
- Discrepancy identification and reconciliation.
- Consistent inventory exception reporting across locations.

Standardized inventory reporting helped management distinguish what existed physically, what was already committed, and what was actually available for new orders.

Faster Training, Fewer Errors, Less Management Time

The new operating system reduced reliance on experienced employees to explain every process. New team members could use documented, system-specific SOPs alongside the tools they were already working in.

50% FASTER EMPLOYEE TRAINING	90% LESS TIME CORRECTING ERRORS	3-5 hrs WEEKLY OVERSIGHT AFTER
---	--	---

Measured operational results

- 80% reduction in fulfillment errors.
- 90% reduction in time spent correcting mistakes.
- 85% fewer shipment exceptions.
- 95% reduction in chargebacks related to warehouse execution.
- 50% faster employee training.
- Significantly fewer warehouse emails and calls.
- Management time reduced from approximately 10-15 hours per week to 3-5 hours per week.

The knowledge belonged to the company - not to one individual employee, warehouse manager, or facility.

Why the metrics moved together

Fewer errors created fewer exceptions. Fewer exceptions reduced corrective work. Clearer procedures reduced questions. Better training reduced dependency on experienced employees. Better marketplace compliance reduced chargebacks. The gains came from treating these issues as parts of one operating system rather than isolated problems.

From Tribal Knowledge to an Operating System

The most important result was larger than any individual metric. VendorVita turned warehouse knowledge that lived in emails, conversations, and individual employees into a documented operating system.

The company gained

- Defined fulfillment workflows and written SOPs.
- Marketplace-specific procedures and system-level instructions.
- Inventory controls and packaging standards.
- Verification checkpoints and cancellation procedures.
- Exception rules and escalation paths.
- Faster onboarding and less dependence on institutional knowledge.
- A consistent standard across multiple warehouse locations.

The objective was not bureaucracy. It was clarity: what needs to happen, in what order, inside which system, what must be verified, and when management needs to be involved.

BUILDING WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS THAT CAN SCALE

Operational Growth Without Operational Chaos

VendorVita helps growing companies build the processes, SOPs, controls, training, and reporting needed to manage 3PL and warehouse operations consistently across channels and locations.

The goal is not simply fewer warehouse mistakes. It is an operation that can grow without operational complexity growing at the same rate.