

Pioneering responsive multi-node fulfillment

OUTER
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Outerstuff: Pioneering responsive multi-node fulfillment

If one ingredient is essential to the success of modern fulfillment, it's scalability.

Peak season is the opportunity for retailers to make hay while the sun shines. But it can't be maximized when infrastructure and labor levels cannot be adjusted accordingly. The result is missed opportunities for growth and dissatisfied customers.

Scalability remains one of the biggest challenges facing fulfillment operators today. Businesses find themselves either scrambling to find labor to fulfill a sudden spike in order volumes, or else investing in expensive warehouse space and automation technology which ends up going under-utilized.

The solution? Partnering with a well-resourced 3PL who can put a flexible and advanced multi-node fulfillment network at your disposal.

Let's take a look at how Ryder made Outerstuff better equipped to navigate the challenges of fast-paced fulfillment and retail distribution—one node at a time.

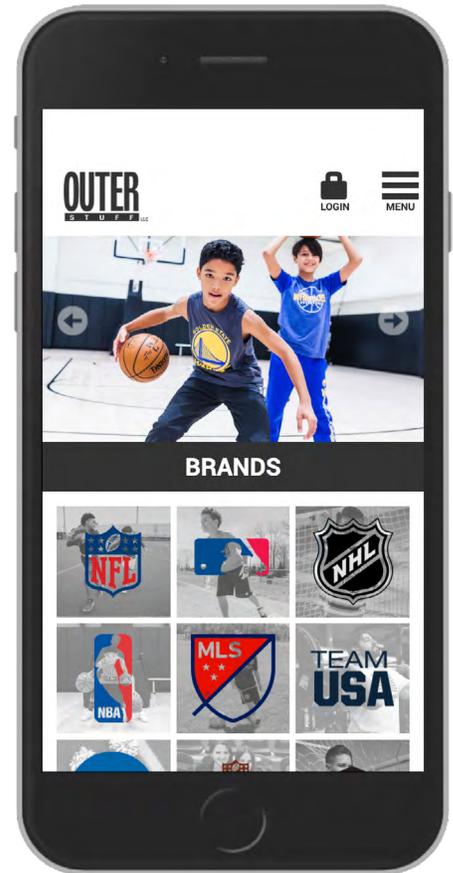


Outerstuff: The sum of valued partnerships

Outerstuff was first established in 1983 as a family-owned business specializing in branded children's apparel and outerwear. Today, it's one of the country's leading sports apparel manufacturers and an expert in creating licensed sports merchandise for the youth market.

The power of Outerstuff lies not in an extensive network of stores or D2C operation, but in their relationships with some of the most influential sports leagues and college teams in North America.

Outerstuff currently boasts partnerships with major sporting brands including the NBA, NFL, and the U.S. Olympic Committee, in addition to working closely with industry heavyweights such as Nike and Majestic Athletic.



Finding a provider with technologically advanced infrastructure

Due to the complexity of their fulfillment operations, outsourcing fulfillment has always been essential for Outerstuff. Given the company's large SKU counts and high-volume retail partners which include Walmart and major department stores, partnering with 3PLs that are well-versed in large-scale retail distribution is a core logistics strategy.

But as speed to market becomes a bigger necessity, Outerstuff discovered that experience alone was no longer enough. Without automation and advanced IT technologies, many 3PLs are unable to stay competitive in the age of ecommerce.

"We've worked with logistics providers in the past who simply weren't able to keep up with the level of pace and flexibility we needed," said Ted Feindt, VP of Operations at Outerstuff. "We even had a partner who was completely dependent on our own IT systems and expertise because they refused to invest in their technological infrastructure. This was incredibly demanding on both our time and resources."

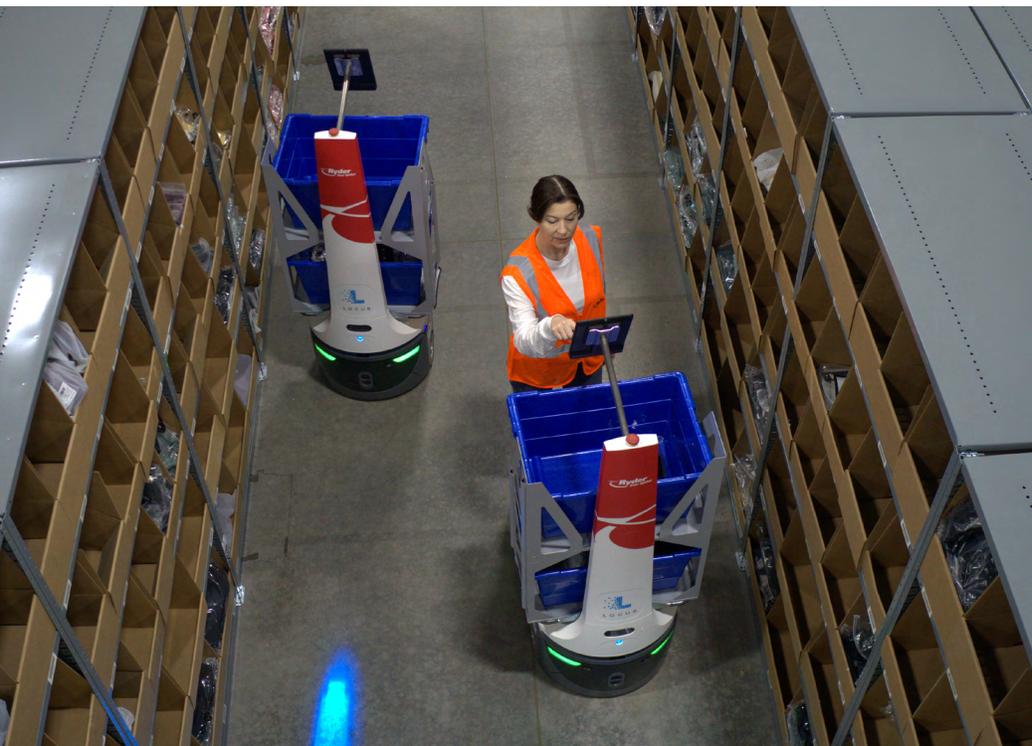
Through high-level EDI mapping by their in-house IT team, Ryder was able to integrate seamlessly with Outerstuff's systems for rapid, automated exchanges of data, ensuring both parties have access to accurate information concerning inventory levels and replenishment.

"Ryder has been a real game-changer from day one because they allowed us to completely step back from the distribution side and focus on sales. We have total confidence in their ability to deliver," Feindt said.

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Ted Feindt
VP of Operations
Outerstuff



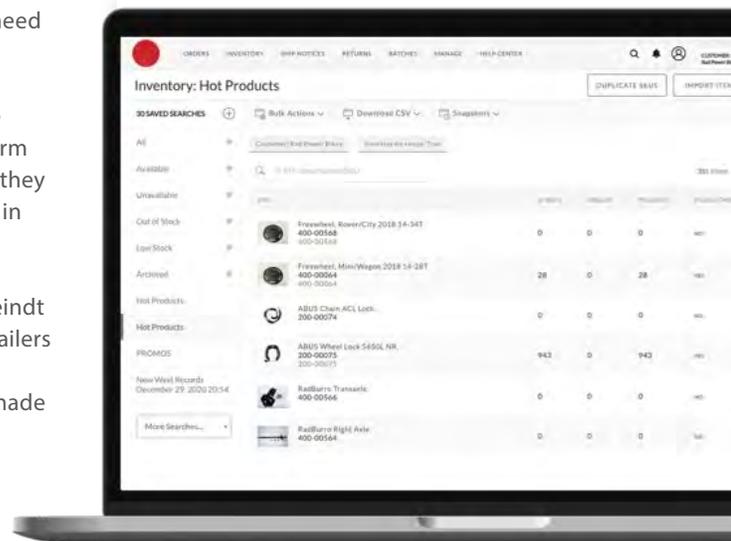
Best-in-class SKU management

Licensed sports apparel is a product category that demands an extremely nimble approach to inventory and SKU management. For example, there are numerous design and size variants to keep track of; certain teams (and therefore SKUs) can go from zero to hero as the season progresses. Sports apparel makers like Outerstuff work with stockists—retailers or distributors—which need to keep pace with fluctuating demand and swiftly manage inventory with replenishment, for example, when a team wins the big game.

“Sports-centered merchandise needs to be extremely dynamic because trends are changing all the time,” Feindt said. “It’s not just a matter of ensuring that products are with retail partners for the pre-season. Every game can create spikes in demand for certain SKUs—especially when a certain team or player is doing well. As a manufacturer, we need to be able to cater to our stockists’ needs effectively.”

In the past, meeting these rapid shifts in demand presented a major challenge for Outerstuff. Ineffective pick systems and the difficulty in managing short-term increases in labor levels meant orders could never be dispatched as quickly as they wanted. The result was frustrated sports teams and stadium concessions, who in turn were missing out on valuable sales opportunities.

“With Ryder, we’re able to be much more responsive to consumer demand,” Feindt said. “Their advanced automation and inventory management means that retailers can now place orders as small as six units to augment their stock in real-time, rather than trying to predict ahead which SKUs will prove popular. Ryder has made navigating these relationships so much more seamless.”



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Ted Feindt
VP of Operations
Outerstuff



Harnessing the power of multi-node fulfillment

Every business has to manage peaks and troughs in sales activity. But this becomes incredibly complex when it involves coordinating multiple organizations with diverse on and off-seasons.

“On average, most retailers will deal with one or two seasonal peaks per year. For Outerstuff, it’s as many as four or five to correspond with the onset of different sports leagues,” said Brian Weinstein, Senior Vice President of Business Development at Ryder. “For this reason, Outerstuff needed a huge amount of flexibility which Ryder’s nationwide fulfillment network was ready to provide.”

Outerstuff set up their first fulfillment operation at Ryder’s **LA location** back in 2018. This micro-network is composed of eight facilities that total 3.6 million square feet of space for warehousing, fulfillment, and distribution. The unique set-up gave Outerstuff a center of operations, with the remaining locations serving as overflow for intense, short-term peaks when required.

With a second permanent location established at Ryder’s Savannah facility in 2019, Outerstuff is now well-positioned to meet the demand of retailers and sports fanatics alike.

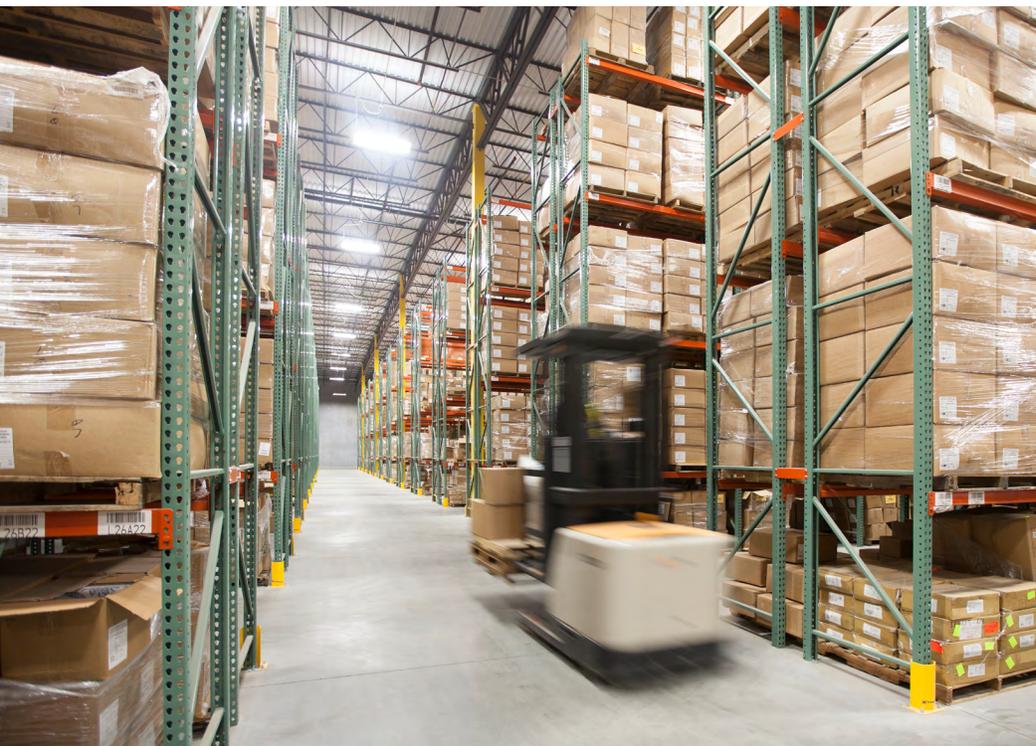
“Ryder helped us to pioneer a sophisticated multi-node fulfillment approach that can be easily scaled up or down depending on our needs,” Feindt said. “These capabilities have been invaluable in our efforts to remain one of North America’s premier licensed sports apparel providers.”



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Brian Weinstein
Senior Vice President of Business Development
Ryder



About Ryder System, Inc.

Ryder System, Inc. (NYSE: R) is a leading logistics and transportation company. It provides supply chain, dedicated transportation, and fleet management solutions, including warehousing and distribution, e-commerce fulfillment, last-mile delivery, managed transportation, professional drivers, freight brokerage, leasing, maintenance, commercial truck rental, and used vehicle sales to some of the world's most-recognized brands. Ryder provides services throughout the United States, Mexico, and Canada. Ryder is regularly recognized for its industry-leading practices in third-party logistics, technology-driven innovations, commercial vehicle maintenance, environmental stewardship, corporate social responsibility, world-class safety, and security programs.

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