OVERVIEW

A major seafood supplier was looking to expand its sales in other territories. To manage their growth, they enlisted third-party logistics (3PL) providers in several regions.

While using 3PL providers allowed them to scale quickly with lower upfront costs, it also created issues around visibility, accuracy and accountability, especially around inventory levels.

They began work with Routeique® to address these critical concerns.

CHALLENGES

1 **Timeliness of Inventory Data**
Due to the lack of real-time connectivity between the company and their 3PL partners, data such as inventory lagged behind what was currently happening.

This lag created friction between the partners. Discrepancies between physical and expected counts happened daily and were hard to reconcile. When counts were finally reconciled, new lagging information had already made them redundant.

2 **Inventory Level Inaccuracies**
The company and their suppliers had processes that the other parties were blind to. This created further inaccuracies in the network. Damages, mis-picks, mis-counts and receiving issues created inaccuracies on the 3PL side. Last-minute orders cancellations and changes led to discrepancies from the company's side.

3 **Complicated Technology Stack**
The company was using both in-house and 3rd-party tools in their stack. Their ERP system, 3rd-party e-commerce order portal, and other software didn't communicate well. The complexity individual suppliers' technology stacks further compounded the lack of timeliness and accuracy in inventory data.

4 **No Consistency Between 3PL Partners**
3PL partner used different processes, measurement and monitoring protocols, and platforms. As a result, the seafood supplier couldn't standardize the communication and coordination between themselves and their 3PL.

5 **Extensive Manual Labour Required**
The lack of available, accurate data meant that staff had to carry out additional manual labour at each step. Manual re-counts and reconciliations meant more work for 3PL partners and more costs. This wasted time and resources.

6 **Lost Sales Opportunities And Revenue**
The company lost sales due to under- or overstated inventory levels. Understated inventory levels caused the e-commerce platform to halt sales of items that were actually available. Similarly, overstated inventory allowed the sale of items that were *not* actually available.

7 **Decreased Customer Satisfaction**
These issues lead to lowered customer satisfaction, as some customers could not get what they needed in a timely fashion.

PROVIDING CONNECTIVITY AND VISIBILITY

The Routeique team set out to provide their internal team with instant visibility into what's on hand at their remote warehouse. This included our Digital Control Tower, WMS, and Remote Inventory Visibility Tools.

Additionally, Routeique helped digitize the seafood suppliers distributors across Canada to help improve service to their B2B and B2C customers.

This included:
- a concierge onboarding service
- configuring their data in their dedicated 3PL client account
- configuring their warehouse within a warehouse
- providing real-time visibility into their transaction and inventory data, down to exact lot and position
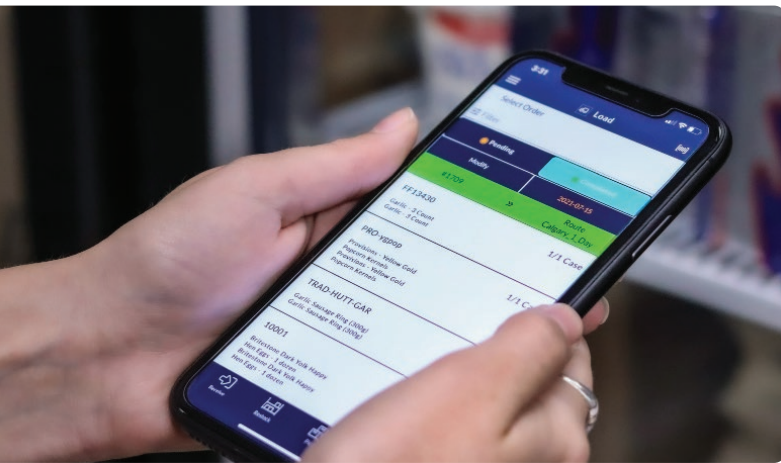
KEY RESULTS

This exercise resulted in immediate, impactful improvements to the operation.

1 **Near Real-time Inventory Data Availability**
Lag on accurate inventory availability was reduced from 48 hours to near real-time. Issues could be spotted and corrected quickly. 'Spill-over' of lagged data into the following day's numbers was eliminated.

2 **Improved Inventory Count Accuracy**
Discrepancies between actual and expected inventory counts on both sides were reduced from as high as 9% to less than 1%. The company could now sell available products and immediately to issues with stock availability at each 3PL location.

3 **Consolidated Technology Stack**
By using Routeique at each node of the partner network, the company eliminated several components within its stack. They could also receive partner data through a single channel with the same frequency and accuracy across their entire network.

4 **Consistency Between 3PL Partners**
In addition to providing consistent, accurate data, Routeique allowed the company to control the processes and workflow between each of its 3PL partners. The company could hold each 3PL partner to the same accountability, workflow, and compliance level. This made the differences in operations virtually invisible.

5 **Reduced Manual Labour**
Routeique automated the connections between the company and their 3PL partners. This resulted in cost and labour savings and a significant reduction in the errors caused by manual data entry.

6 **Fewer Lost Sales Opportunities**
The amount of missed sales opportunities lowered significantly. The number of 'Complete and accurate' orders for each 3PL was dramatically improved.

7 **Improved Customer Satisfaction**
Customer satisfaction improved significantly between the company and their 3PL partners and between the company and their end customers.

ROUTEIQUE DELIVERED THESE RESULTS:

Lag on accurate inventory availability reduced from an average of 48 hours to near real-time.

48 hr to **Real-Time**

Discrepancies between actual and expected inventory counts on both sides decreased from as high as 9% to less than 1%.

9% ↓ 1%

CONCLUSION

Routeique provided the visibility and connectivity needed to help the seafood supplier gain more efficiency internally and gain increased control, visibility, and cohesion within their network.

This resulted in time and cost savings, improved communications, accountability and business relationships, and greater customer satisfaction.