

Benefits of 3PL fulfillment for influencers

Besides many various trends in the past decade, the rise of influencers as important individuals in the eCommerce and marketing sphere is one of the most prominent ones. There are many influencers who started out as hobbyists in a certain field.

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Nowadays, we can see individuals who are working as full-time influencers. They use their popularity to kickstart their other businesses and merch. E-commerce is a *growing field*, and a lot of different niches are emerging.

Because of the lack of capabilities for conducting logistics and shipping, influencers are outsourcing their shipping to third-party logistics operators. These companies ensure that their partners don't have to worry about shipment and storage, and their only worry should be marketing and establishing a high-quality website.

This article delves deep into the various aspects of 3PL fulfillment for influencer businesses.

3PL fulfillment explained

The complex role of 3PL can be broken down into a simple advantage: "It's an act of outsourcing your logistics to someone else, making your job easier." However, when you take a closer look at 3PL, you can notice that it consists of numerous processes.

Starting from the warehouse, 3PL stores the products that you're looking to ship. 3PL providers can offer various opportunities for storage space, starting from a couple of pallets up to whole rooms or warehouses. This removes the need for renting your own warehouse, reducing unnecessary costs.

But precious products aren't left in an unknown room waiting to be discovered by an employee. In warehouses, items are commonly classified and sorted, allowing their owners to easily track them and have an insight into the inventory.

Once an order is created, the logistics provider is working on the next step of the process. They find the product in the warehouse, pack it, and then prepare it for safe shipping to the appropriate carrier.

Instead of having to negotiate and get in touch with various delivery companies, 3PL takes responsibility for this step. They track shipments, collaborate with centres, and ensure that the product reaches its destination. This process is much more useful than it seems at first. The company that provides you with logistics does what's in their best interest to save both you and them money.

3PL companies are also responsible for taking care of returns or customer-related problems. Unfortunately, even if you or they aren't directly responsible, the problems that occur during this process can end up as poor reviews or comments on behalf of the influencer or a company whose products have been ordered.

When we take a look at transportation companies, it might seem as if there's a lack of innovation. However, 3PL providers are keeping up with the trends, and they often offer a lot of interactive features. For example, an opportunity for *Shopify 3PL integration* is provided by certain fulfillment companies, and this is an incredible advantage.

While this is a broad explanation of the steps that 3PL companies take to deliver a product, keep in mind that these processes differ from company to company.

Benefits of 3PL fulfillment for influencers

For the average person, the life of the influencer might seem easy. They only have to create content, right? Well, this can't be further from the truth. Every influencer has a different amount of responsibilities and free time.

3PL helps a lot with saving the person's time. Instead of having to be present in the process of storing, shipping, packing, and doing customer support, influencers can focus on their other activities, such as marketing.

Along with time, outsourcing this task also helps with saving energy. However, it's still worth noting that individuals have to be involved, at least to some degree.

Because of the nature of 3PL businesses, scalability is another benefit that influencers can experience. You never know whether the next video that you create is going to be a big hit that can lead to unexpected conversions. Since 3PL businesses have infrastructure prepared upfront, they can handle a higher volume of orders.

One of the many advantages of online businesses is that they have higher chances of conquering international markets. The same goes for influencers, as they can attract a worldwide audience. In that regard, logistics companies can help them ship to international customers or at least in the broader region.

Many logistics companies offer customer service as well. In situations

where a package is lost, they will be the ones who take up the responsibility and try to solve the problem.

Successful influencer partnerships

When we dive into the world of influencers, we notice that some of the most recognisable names have been using 3PL fulfillment to streamline their success. One of the most recognisable names in the cosmetics industry, Kylie Jenner, has been using outsourced logistics for her products.

We can also list names such as Jeffree Star, Pewdiepie, David Dobrik, and many other influencers, large and small, who opted for a more straightforward solution.

If those entrepreneurs opted to invest in their own logistics departments, it could have led to various risks and additional expenses. Instead, reputable 3PL companies have taken that load on themselves while influencers can focus on product development and brand awareness.

Furthermore, many of the influencers aren't working on selling their products continuously. Their products can be one-time deals. This is another reason why there's no point in investing in in-house logistics for many of them.

On the other hand, if we take a closer look at influencers with fewer followers and investing capabilities, it's obvious that they aren't able to kickstart their own logistics operation.

Considerations for influencers when choosing a 3PL partner

Just like when searching for any other service, you can't pick just any 3PL

partner. There are numerous aspects that you must consider, starting from the alignment of the partner with your brand image and message.

The most basic aspect you need to consider about the partner is whether they are considered reputable. Read reviews and explore their reputation among both customers and influencers. For example, some companies might have left an amazing impression on the customers but were too costly for the influencers.

One of the benefits that was previously mentioned was scalability. While this is an overall benefit that you can expect when partnering with a logistics company, it varies depending on the company. If you're looking to market a few high-quality products, you can opt for a partner that offers great service and care rather than one that offers discounts for large quantities.

If you're aiming to scale, you should consider partners that would allow you such a venture. Another conditional benefit is the reach of the logistics company. There are many partners that can allow you to reach international customers, while others are limited by the region. Do surveys and segment your audience, and you will understand what market you should target

An important consideration in the current year is sustainability practices. There are 3PL companies that are eco-friendly without any of the trade-offs. You should always look for partners that care for the environment. This helps you build a better image as well as protect nature.

The cost structure of a 3PL partner needs to be researched thoroughly before you choose them. Each partner offers certain advantages and disadvantages, and it's up to you to understand whether this is worth the price. Furthermore, some companies have hidden costs that you should be aware of.

3PL challenges and risks

The majority of downsides from 3PL fulfillment are considered general drawbacks of outsourcing. You're losing control over your products to some degree, and you won't be able to quickly jump in and fix a certain problem.

If any problems do happen, you're relying on communicating for problem-solving. Communication can be tricky with the amount of people involved in this chain. The overall dependence on a third party can cause set-backs in your own operations and profits.

Let's say the 3PL company is stationed in another country. They are exporting your products to the whole region. At some point, their national holiday or vacation season starts, and their processes are put on hold.

This and numerous other unpredictable situations can lead to greater problems down the line that can lead to blows to your reputation.

With the regulations such as GDPR and CCPA adopted you should also choose a 3PL provider that's compliant with them. This is especially important if you have customers that are citizens from other countries.

Conclusion

Regardless of the size of your following and your niche, understanding the benefits that 3PL fulfillment can bring you can skyrocket your earnings. By outsourcing logistics processes, influencers can focus on their core activities and improve their content.

The reliability that fulfillment companies offer allows influencers to work on other business processes instead. While outsourcing comes with a risk, there are much higher probabilities of it helping you advance rather than

causing problems.

Influencers can live just fine without 3PL, but they can miss out on various benefits that are offered by such companies. Hopefully, this article has helped you to consider whether 3PL can benefit your situation and improve your business.

However, keep in mind that there isn't a single activity that can provide you with a solution to all of your problems. 3PL is there to streamline certain processes, but it's still up to you to deliver on the expectations in many other fields, starting from product quality.

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