



COVID-PROOF YOUR PRODUCT DELIVERY

FIVE TOP TIPS TO MASTER PACKAGE
DELIVERY IN 2020 AND BEYOND



WELCOME TO THE NEW WORLD

Here's how to master parcel delivery in 2020

COVID-19 has impacted many industries, including retailers and product suppliers. The delivery industry is not immune and has also been impacted by this unprecedented virus outbreak.

There is a lot of change happening at a rapid pace and it can feel hard to keep up with each new development. However, being patient and taking the right approach will make things easier for vendors, suppliers, their clients and the people responsible for packing and delivering items across Australia.

If your business relies on transport and delivery, there are a few things you should keep in mind.

The following report shares the do's, don'ts, mistakes and answers to the most commonly asked questions when it comes to product delivery in a COVID-19 world. As well as helping you cope with current conditions, it will set you up for the inevitable upswing when businesses begin to emerge from shutdown and hibernation.

Take a look at the following five tips to ensure your brand's reputation for reliability when it comes to delivering goods in a COVID-19 world.

smart  *send*



1

DELIVERY AND PACKAGE ACCEPTANCE

Here's what's different:

If you have received an eCommerce delivery yourself recently, you'll notice drivers using the 1.5-metre rule. Many are knocking and leaving goods on doorsteps, before signing on people's behalf when they answer the door.

This deems the consignment delivered, even if the receiver didn't sign for the package themselves.

As a retailer, this is something to be aware of right now. A customer may say they didn't sign but having the delivering authority add a signature instead of handing over a pen or hand-held device after interacting with them, even from a distance, may still mark a parcel delivery as complete.

So a receiver claiming non-delivery (because they personally didn't sign for the goods) won't

be covered by insurance if the delivery driver submitted a signature after seeing someone come to the door or speaking with them through the door.



VENDOR TIP

Check with your delivery service provider to find out how they define 'delivered' so you don't get hit with unexpected difficulties during these already stressful times. Ensure your customers are also aware of how delivery drivers will approach their home so they feel reassured about safety and are up to date about what counts as delivered.

2

PARCEL PICKUPS

What's happening with parcel collection?

Right now, it is vital that drivers do not fall ill. So many people rely on them, all over the country, to deliver essential goods.

If a driver catches COVID-19, there is a risk of them passing it around back at the depot or even inadvertently to customers. And we simply cannot have that, for the health of Australians as well as the economy.

While COVID-19 cases seem to have reached a plateau in Australia, it's worth noting steps remain in place for safe parcel pickups in order to prevent future outbreaks.

If you're a retailer or vendor who is working from home and you or someone in the house/building has contracted a confirmed case of COVID-19, parcel carriers require you to let them know. It is recommended you do not make a booking for parcel pick-up for at least two weeks, or while you remain unwell.

With your help and support, we can keep Australians safe and keep our economy moving. At Smart Send, we look forward to providing our services in a way that keeps drivers, clients and consumers healthy and thank you for working with us to achieve this.

The good news is very few transport companies have had staff diagnosed with COVID-19 to date. What's more, teams are staying safe by having call centre staff work at home, drivers separated from operational staff where possible and office staff keeping their distance. This reduces the opportunity for the virus to spread and allows our economy to keep moving.

However, the side effect of COVID-19 has been a blow-out in delivery times. Companies that have had to switch things up for safety require extra time to sort, load and organise packages. Some are so overwhelmed by orders that things are taking longer than usual.



VENDOR TIP

Stay in touch with your customers! Ask them to allow for extra time for their parcel to be delivered so they won't be disappointed. This will also save your call centre from being flooded with enquiries about late packages.



3

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRANSPORT PARTNER

Make sure your provider is right for you

In a COVID and even a non-COVID world, the safe and reliable delivery of goods is as important as the products themselves.

Too often, vendors see the delivery of their goods as the last thing on their to-do list. In fact, shipping is right up there with developing the product line when it comes to make-or-break factors.

Choosing the right transport partner for your online store can mean the difference between success and failure. With today's instant communication and social media holding your business accountable, you need to provide a positive customer experience from the moment someone notices your brand, right through to when their order arrives.

To nail the delivery side of your online business, you need to know you are backed by the right transport partner. This means choosing a reliable carrier and ensuring it has an Australian-based customer service team.

Before you invite expressions of interest from providers, have the answers to these questions ready:

1. How big are my products and will they be invoiced at a dead weight or volumetric weight?
2. Will my products incur surprise costs like length surcharges or unsortable fees?
3. Will I provide real-time quoting, set-price shipping or free shipping?
4. How will my shipping options impact my bottom line?
5. Are my goods fragile and do they require special handling?
6. How many people will be required to lift or move my packages?
7. Will I require insurance against damage or loss?
8. Will the carrier I use cover damage or loss?
9. Who is my average customer and how easy will it be to deliver their parcel to them?
10. Do I need more than one type of carrier to deliver my range of products?
11. Should I use a broker/aggregator or deal directly with transport companies?
12. Which shopping cart/ecommerce platform offers the best solutions for my business?
13. Will the transport partner I choose be able to 'speak' to my online platform with their own software solutions?



VENDOR TIP

There are also a lot of different types of carriers. Asking the above questions and knowing the answers will help you identify the right transport partner more easily.

4

PREVENTION & PRICE

Which delivery provider is right for your business?

There are some key factors to keep in mind once you have quizzed potential delivery providers.

Firstly, prevention is better than cure. By focusing on building your brand and leaving your transport partner to deal with any delivery issues, you put yourself at risk of negative fall-out from unhappy customers.

Ward off this problem by choosing a transport partner with strong customer service KPIs. For example, Australia Post responds to online queries within 48 hours. Will your transport partner do the same or better?

Next, remember price is only part of the solution. Service and reliability are key to keep those customers coming back and posting positive reviews. Make sure a cut-price transport carrier is not going to impact goodwill towards your business by failing to respond to complaints or refusing to take responsibility for damaged items.

In the end, selecting an aggregator who can supply all your shopping cart and IT solutions, a customer service team with industry knowledge, and all-around support to your business and customers might be the best solution. It may seem more expensive but when you take into account your time and the warehouse team's costs, it could save you valuable time and resources that are better spent building your brand.

These days, most aggregators offer similar tech solutions. Some transport partners you choose will be able to plug into your shopping cart software to fulfil bookings.

However, there are not many aggregators who can boast a customer team with a collective

70 years of experience in the transport industry. This is where Smart Send stands out.

The truth is, no matter how good you are, in transport things can go wrong, especially during the COVID-19 outbreak. As a regular sender, you will realise this is part of the experience. Investing in the services of a transport provider who will keep your best interests in mind as well as your customers can make all the difference to the longevity of your business.



VENDOR TIP

Customer care can often be more important than price. Don't try to cut costs if it means sacrificing goodwill from the buyers you rely on.





5

PARCEL DELIVERY TROUBLESHOOTING

Overcoming common delivery issues

With the wrong delivery partner, myriad problems can be daily roadblocks to your long-term success.

These include:

1. Too late pickups (if your brand is up against Amazon, the pressure is ON)
2. Too late deliveries (customers don't want to wait a millisecond longer than they think is reasonable)
3. Broken, damaged or lost items (always a nightmare)
4. Untrackable packages (no longer acceptable in our GPS world)
5. Crickets chirping where the customer service team should be
6. No insurance cover (that broken or damaged item is now an expensive nightmare for your business)

So how do you avoid the big six delivery problems?

First, choose a locally based delivery partner. Ask about their parcel insurance (don't forget to read the fine print), their commitment to customer service and their parcel trackability.

Before you commit to them, talk to your provider how they will make sure your customers get what they have paid for, EVERY TIME. Delivery partners should see themselves as an extension of your brand, not an add-on.



VENDOR TIP

Don't rush your provider decision. The right one will minimise delivery dramas so your customers are happy and your brand builds a better reputation.



CUSTOMER SERVICE AND RELIABILITY ARE KEY TO BRAND SUCCESS

The COVID-19 outbreak has been stressful but it has given brands an opportunity to stand out and even grow.

If you're a vendor who relies on the delivery of products, now is the time to shine. With so many more people spending extra time at home and away from the shops, having items delivered to their home or business is more important than ever.

When your business provides outstanding products, delivered as expected and on time, your brand will thrive. To ensure this happens, choose a delivery partner with a focus on customer service and a commitment to reliability.

Smart Send can help you elevate your brand to the next level when it comes to product delivery.

**Contact us today
to find out more:**



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