



# Selecting the Right Order Management System

## CHECKLIST



Your order management system (OMS) is the wiring for your retail fulfillment network. It gives you inventory visibility, order orchestration, order routing, returns management, store fulfillment, customer management and many other powerful functions. But, beyond all of that, it is the key part of making a customer's shopping journey seamless, easy and natural. Selecting the right OMS is essential to success in the next phase of omnichannel retail.

To help you choose the best OMS for your retail business, here is a checklist of 8 questions you should ask potential technology provider candidates.

1.	Is your OMS cloud-based SaaS-based with regular occurring software updates?	YES	NO
2.	Is your OMS configurable?	YES	NO
3.	Can your OMS easily integrate with other systems?	YES	NO
4.	Does your OMS provide distributed order management, inventory visibility, store fulfillment and customer management functionality, out of the box?	YES	NO
5.	Does your OMS enable advanced returns management rules and functionality, out of the box?	YES	NO
6.	Does your OMS include advanced analytics and business intelligence, out of the box?	YES	NO
7.	Is your OMS provider a stable organization with strong financials?	YES	NO
8.	Is your OMS integrated into an end-to-end retail fulfillment suite that includes warehouse management and micro-fulfillment?	YES	NO



If you cannot answer “yes” to all of the questions on the checklist, it may be time to find a new OMS solution partner. **Here’s why:**

### 1 **Is your OMS SaaS-based with regular occurring software updates?**

Make sure the order management vendor you are considering is SaaS-based. Cloud-based technology means you get automatic (and more frequent) updates. There are fewer upfront and long-term costs and fewer staff resources needed to run the system. Also, make sure the solution you consider is not just a hosted version of an enterprise product. A hosted enterprise solution is not a true multi-tenant solution and will lead to higher total cost of ownership (TCO). You also want a vendor that is doing at least 4-6 updates a year. This ensures you are not only staying ahead with your order management software, but that you have fewer security concerns. Even if it is a SaaS-based technology, it doesn’t mean that the vendor will be doing regular updates to their software (especially if order management is not their main focus).

### 2 **Is your OMS configurable?**

Almost every system needs a bit of custom coding on the periphery, but the main system needs to be an out-of-the-box solution. If you have a system that is custom coded, you will need a developer to make changes. This affects your staffing resources. Not a big deal, except that **every time** you want to make an adjustment, you need to book time at your cost. It also means your implementation could be an extremely long and tedious process. Today’s organizations need to be agile so that they can quickly adapt to the rapidly evolving retail space. A configurable solution reduces time to market and allows retailers to be more disruptive.

### **Can your OMS easily integrate with other systems?**

Flexibility and interconnectivity are important. Yes, all order management vendors want you to move to their unified commerce system that only contains their own products. That’s a nice scenario, but most retailers live in the real world. That means you have to use what you already have. Or you may want to pick the best of breed technologies that will give you the biggest bang for your buck. Every order management system needs to think about working seamlessly in the retail technology ecosystem.

### 4 **Does your OMS provide distributed order management, inventory visibility, store fulfillment and customer management functionality, out of the box?**

An enterprise-level OMS system is essential to providing a seamless omnichannel experience. That means ensuring that the solution is able to flawlessly execute the following four functions:

**Distributed order management:** Your order management solution must give you the option to set multiple order routing rules that can meet the demands of complex network fulfillment.

**Inventory visibility:** Make sure you provide the most up-to-date information to your retail customers with inventory visibility. Showing your customer that you have the stock and where exactly that stock is located could save the sale.

**Store fulfillment:** The multitude of click and collect options available today, which include buy online pick up in-store (BOPIS), ship-to-store, curbside pickup, etc. are now table stakes for any omnichannel retailer. Your OMS should offer this functionality out of the box.

**Customer management:** Having one view of your customer (online, customer service and POS in-store orders) is important, not only for things like order adjustments, cancellations and appeasements, but to help catch returns abusers.

**5 Does your OMS enable advanced returns management rules and functionality, out of the box?**

You need the ability to offer your customers an optimal returns experience with features such as receipt-free returns, while making sure you can get returned items back on the shelf and out for sale as soon as possible.

**6 Does your OMS include advanced analytics and business intelligence, out of the box?**

Make sure that you can back up your order management decisions with advanced analytics. Data is key to continuously improving your omnichannel experience. And setting a business rule to a specific setting on only gut feelings is just not going to work.

**7 Is your OMS provider a stable organization with strong financials?**

In the past when on-prem was the only option, if your software vendor went belly up, you would still be able to function as an organization and continue to run the software until you needed to change it. In the world of SaaS, this is not a possibility. If the software vendor's lights go off, so does your operation. That's why it's important to select a vendor in a strong financial position.

**8 Is your OMS integrated into an end-to-end retail fulfillment suite that includes warehouse management and micro-fulfillment?**

Retailers are being forced to run more complex warehouse and distribution operations in addition to adding store networks into the fulfillment equation. Do you have a supplier partner with the expertise and suite of solutions that compliments order management to help you solve a myriad of supply chain operating challenges you may face in the years to come?

**Speak to a retail OMS expert**

