

# PCSTrac Advanced Tracking Solutions for Retailers

**S**mall package tracking data is plentiful. Ocean, LTL, and FTL carriers have been providing EDI transit information to TMS systems for ages. Pool distribution is a bit trickier. “We find that retailers tend to struggle with visibility of the store delivery process. This is particularly prevalent when utilizing a pool distribution model, which has become common for retailers with scale,” Alex Sampera, Director of Business and Product Development, PCSTrac.

From a financial and operational perspective, pool delivery is effective, but technical proficiency ranges wildly among providers. This culminates in poor visibility for retailers about their store delivery process, which in turn leads to issues with confirming chain of custody, limited in transit information, and no means for calculating accurate provider performance metrics. “Whilst an important benefit of pool delivery is time specificity of deliveries, retailers still have no mechanism to track whether their providers are hitting windows, short of asking them directly for data,” elucidates Sampera.

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With the firm’s product base, the team at PCSTrac helps to bridge this gap and

facilitate carton level tracking from the retailer’s DC through delivery at stores. The firm enables pool providers with the mechanism to scan cartons throughout the process—if they do not possess the capability. Otherwise, PCSTrac standardizes and interprets their data. Retailers in turn gain access to the data in a centralized platform, which allows them to automate inventory reconciliation processes, reduce time spent investigating delivery issues, and access detailed carrier performance metrics. Chandra Kasakevich, COO of PCS states, “In a nutshell, you’re seeing milestones for every time a carton is touched.”

Two important trends particularly influence the design of the firm’s product base—mobile hardware, and omni-channel fulfillment strategies. “We’re piggybacking on this with our Mobile Scan technology, which can be used by any mobile device,” says Sampera. Mobile Scan essentially turns any mobile device into a carton scanner, allowing for POD delivery scanning whether your delivery provider has the capability or not. On the other hand, the Mobile Scan platform is also built with the challenges pertaining to execution in omni-channel fulfillment in mind—inventory accuracy, in particular. The Mobile Scan POD data feeds directly into the retailers’ inventory application for immediate inventory population.



Alex Sampera

Additionally, PCSTrac’s StoreTrac platform provides store level employees a simple, effective view of their upcoming delivery schedule. Being a labor planning mechanism at its core, the application gives the store a top-level view of upcoming deliveries, the associated carrier, status of the shipment, carton/unit quantities, and detailed SKU contents.

The quintessential differentiating factor of the company is flexibility. With basing the development efforts of the company on direct customer input, most of the modules built by the team at PCSTrac have been initiated as custom projects.

The firm has taken these projects and transformed them into scalable, robust applications that fit with any retailer.

Over the years, the firm has expanded its scope beyond outbound transportation, providing visibility for DC Bypass programs, consolidation programs, DC-DC activity, store transfers, and returns. “We’ll continue to innovate based on the needs of our customers and build additional functionality on the existing platforms,” says Sampera.

For Sampera, who is otherwise an avid musician, getting together with a group of musicians and improvising never fails to excite him. “I’d like to think that we take the same approach with our customers. We’re constantly brainstorming and re-inventing our approach based on the ideas that we generate collaboratively,” he concludes. 