



7 Signs It's Time to Upgrade Your Inventory Management Software



Is your inventory getting away from you?

If inventory plays any role in your business, you should know that smart inventory management is crucial to both maintaining your current level of sales and future growth.

However, it's easy to let the important things slip and fall into workarounds and habits that actually reduce efficiency and results. Let's face it — you know that entering the same info over and over again in Excel sheets or using sticky notes to track order details aren't efficient business practices.

While you may have an inventory management system or software, you might be feeling the side effects of having outgrown your old system. Here are seven signs it might be time to upgrade your inventory management software.



SIGN #1

You spend more time trying to find items than selling them.

While you might have been able to get away with occasionally leaving your desk or playing telephone with other coworkers to find items, this “exception” has become the bulk of your daily activities. You could be spending that valuable time elsewhere, optimizing sales or strategizing future growth and closing that big deal.



SIGN #2

You can't see your computer screen through all the post-it notes.

Again, keeping track of an occasional customer follow-up task didn't seem like a big deal early on. But now, you're overwhelmed with customer information and don't have a way to organize it into anything meaningful. Even worse, you're dropping the ball on following up with customers because it's simply too much for a person to remember and track.



SIGN #3

You're on version 100 of the spreadsheet you use to track counts... and you're not sure everyone else is using the same one.

While updating and sharing spreadsheets may have worked for a while, you're quickly noticing how time-consuming it is to simply make sure everyone is on the same page. You've emailed the inventory spreadsheet back and forth so many times, there's no guarantee it's accurate.

User-friendly inventory management software should provide a centralized hub for inventory, orders and customer data. By upgrading to a centralized program, everyone who needs to see current counts would be able to stay updated in real time.



SIGN #4

At the end of the day, you have too many orders sitting in the loading dock or still in your shop.

Because you're using spreadsheets and paper, there are no automated reminders or visibility into where each order is in your fulfillment process. Or maybe you have software, but it's complicated and doesn't show you the specific data you need to effectively track orders. Either way, you're not confident that all your orders are getting shipped.

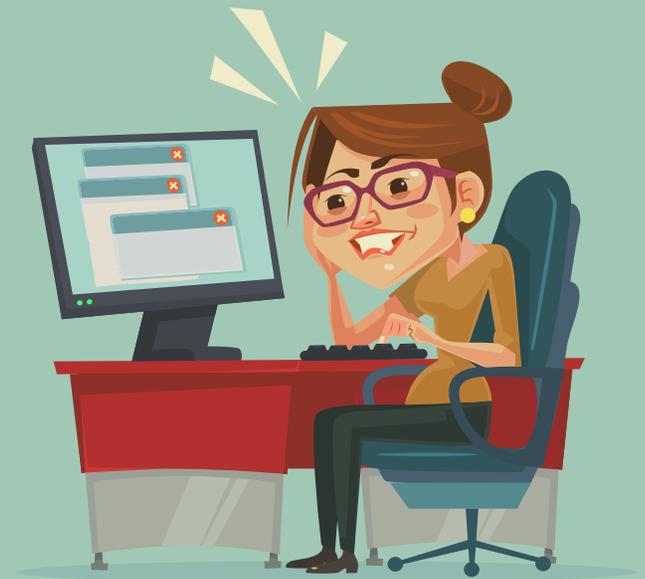


SIGN #5

If you're not in the office, no one else can fulfill an order.

Since you are basically the order fulfillment process, you can't really take a day off. Again, there's no automated process of fulfilling an order or visibility to show you that they're getting done.

It's clear: you need software that can take your order fulfillment process and automate it to the point that any of your trained employees can handle. Software with workflow creation abilities allows you to automate what orders can go out without executive review. That way, you only see the orders that need your attention, and the rest is out the door.



SIGN #6

You're sure you could sell more if only you could keep up with demand.

The good news is you've got plenty of demand. The bad news is you can't keep up. You hate being out of stock on items. You're positive your company could be getting better margins and continue growing if you could just get your inventory under control.

With the right software, you can split orders so one backorder doesn't stop a whole order. You can also use reorder points to have purchase orders generated to vendors whenever you start to run low on a product.



SIGN #7

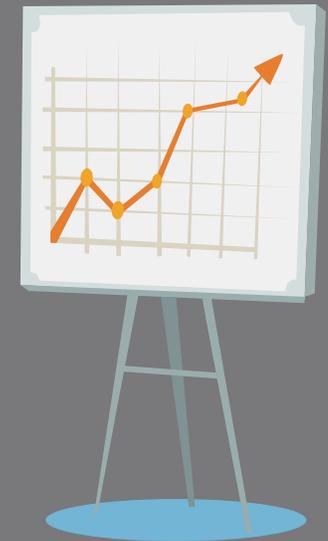
You're wondering which items you're actually making money on.

You'd love to know what products are bringing in the most profit. Sure — you see the orders going through, but it would take hours to compile the data necessary to track the kind of customer trends you want to be able to see.

The reality is you need powerful-yet-intuitive software. You don't have time to learn a complicated inventory management software, but in order to grow your business you'll need to see those priceless consumer trends. This

is where an updated and user-friendly software system comes into play.

Easy-to-read graphs and searchable spreadsheets within your software would give you the ability to keep track of monthly sales from each customer. Upgrading to more powerful software could allow you to simply plug in order entries and see a concise visualization of percentages of returns, quotes, orders, and invoices.



ALL SIGNS POINT TO...

If any of these scenarios describe your current situation or what you see on the horizon, it's likely time for you to upgrade your inventory management software. In today's economy, there's nothing more valuable than time — and if you're wasting time correcting inventory errors or trying to track down items, that's not money well spent. While upgrading software costs money and takes some learning, you'll be amazed at the ways your business can grow without cumbersome processes holding it back.

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