

FMI Wholesaler Committee Priorities

(fielded October 2020)

What are your key priorities, concerns, and/or issues which affect you as a wholesale distributor?

7 Companies Responded

Wholesaler Priority Issues:

- Access to Labor
- Adoption of New Technologies
- Changing Consumer Shopping Behaviors
- Willingness of labor to work full shifts/competing with federal unemployment
- Government Regulation and Policy
- Ability to align retailers for efficiency and effectiveness in delivering product
- Supply Chain Performance and Challenges

Supply Chain Challenges:

- Access to warehouse labor
- Driver availability and regulations
- Order fill rates from suppliers (on time in full)
- Service levels to stores
- Demand forecasting
- Truckload utilization (inbound and outbound)
- Limiting technological advances due to restricted building access and travel limitations.

Disaster Planning and Preparedness:

- We were not prepared
- Some were slow to react
- Predict better prepared for any future pandemic
- Problem-solving: good to excellent given the access to information from medical community



Health and Safety of Team Members

- Early adopters of health screening (temperature taking; symptom monitoring)
- Good communication to employees of CDC guidelines
- Invested in technology and protections
- Established safety protocols
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Product Supply Challenges

- Alternate sourcing and substitute items
- Diversification of store brand suppliers
- Better DC-to-Retail allocation systems and processes
- Better retail demand analytics to follow retail throughput instead of store orders
- Supplier alignment on acceptable allocation method that compensates for retail performance (instead of historic performance)
- Better Procurement, warehouse, and fleet management system with capabilities to bypass DC's and redirect Loads; separate categories in real time

Collaboration and Communication with Supplier Partners

- Good, but there are opportunities for improvement

Investments in New Technology (automation, robotics, AI/ML)

- All report plans to invest in new technology

Benchmarking Research Needed:

- Limited metrics on fill rates/service levels
- Warehousing Education and Research Council (WERC) DC Best Practices
- Understanding talent acquisition/retention with pay rates

Miscellaneous Issues (not categorized): (7 mentions)

- Acceleration of digital
- Acceleration of online shopping
- Better transparency to root cause of service level issues
- Antitrust reform
- Health/wellness/employee and consumer safety
- One "big win" topic for each wholesaler
- Opportunities for collaboration between share group companies.

