

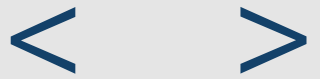
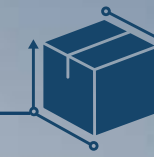


DESCARTES™

TURN YOUR LAST-MILE DELIVERY OPERATIONS  
**INTO A COMPETITIVE WEAPON**

GET STARTED >

# Overview



With the growth of ecommerce expected to continue at a vigorous pace, B2C and B2B companies are focusing on last-mile delivery strategies to ensure their brands remain competitive.

The rise in ecommerce has placed an increased emphasis on the last mile in the supply chain due to the critical role it plays in the total customer experience. Top performers across multiple industries recognize that providing efficient and flawless last-mile deliveries can differentiate their brands from competitors.

Last-mile service providers, including couriers, carriers and private fleets, are being challenged to meet rapidly-changing expectations from both shippers and customers seeking faster, more accurate and cost-effective deliveries.

To help meet evolving customer demands, providers are adopting technology solutions that combine advanced route planning, execution and optimization with real-time tracking, mobile apps, client notifications, telematics and data analytics. By embracing advanced technology, last-mile service providers are elevating the customer experience and overcoming operational challenges, thereby turning their delivery operations into a competitive weapon.



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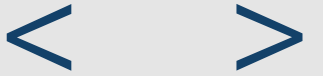
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The phenomenal growth of ecommerce and increasing customer expectations for delivery service are placing even greater demands on last-mile operations for both B2C and B2B companies. Because B2B and B2C requirements can vary greatly, managing conjunctive last-mile deliveries has never been more challenging or crucial to companies across all industries.



## Challenges

Challenges facing last-mile service providers include:

- **Delivery consistency:** Keeping delivery time promises is extremely important to maintaining a good customer experience.
- **Cost containment:** Delivery efficiency is critical for providing the services customers demand without impacting financial performance.
- **Delivery precision and responsiveness:** Customers now demand tighter delivery windows and shorter lead times which increases last-mile planning complexity and coordination.
- **Real-time communications:** Real-time delivery status updates are expected by today's customers and required for offering a competitive buying experience.



## Trend 1: Technology Advancements

Last-mile delivery technology and the use of data it generates are quickly evolving. Capabilities that were considered leading-edge two years ago are common today. As a result, innovative delivery service providers are readily accepting advanced technology and breaking from traditional logistics thinking to elevate their performance above the rest of the pack.

Most leading last-mile delivery strategies are made possible with advanced route planning and execution, real-time tracking, mobile, telematics and data analytics technologies. Advancements in technology are allowing last-mile service providers access to more customized solutions to meet their specific requirements.

For example, courier companies have traditionally operated with technology designed for the needs of the larger LTL market. However, their special requirements can now be addressed by a true courier platform that can handle:

- Large-scale inbound parcel induction
- Sortation and cross docking capabilities
- High stop counts for each route
- Dynamic exception handling capabilities



## Trend 2: Delivery as a Competitive Edge

Ecommerce leaders that view delivery as a competitive weapon are succeeding on the strength of their delivery capabilities. In fact, when combined with value-added services, delivery has become a significant revenue generator. Advanced technology is enabling best-in-class delivery operations to simultaneously:

- Improve customer experience
- Boost driver productivity
- Increase revenue

*In this eBook, we will explore how technology is enabling companies to transform last-mile operations and create an end-to-end delivery experience that provides a competitive advantage.*

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# The End-to-End Customer Experience



Dramatic increases in online buying have amplified the importance of last-mile delivery because it's a significant part of the overall buying experience. Consequently, last-mile service providers are constantly challenged to meet evolving expectations from both the shippers who need reliable, real-time data and consignees looking for status updates.

Here is a summary of four major delivery customer personas, including what they value and require:



- **Convenience matters:** value tight time windows versus speed
- **Cost, cost, cost:** extremely cost-conscious; will take slowest service to save money
- **Time is currency:** cash rich/time poor; may have urgent needs and want delivery ASAP
- **Parcel mentality:** happy with fast delivery cycle; doesn't require definite time window

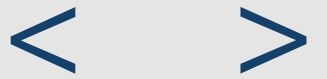
## Unparalleled Customer Experience

In today's world, customers want visibility and control over their deliveries -- anytime, anywhere, and from any location. To address these growing customer demands, top-performing delivery service providers have adopted an end-to-end engagement strategy driven by real-time delivery information that provides the ability to confirm delivery orders, notify a delivery is underway, track delivery progress and document the delivery.

Real-time delivery information provides numerous benefits:

- For example, when customers know the exact status of their delivery, they can be sure they're home when it arrives or make preparations if they will be away, e.g. unlock the fence or put the dog inside, reducing the number of failed deliveries.
- Delivery status and proof-of-delivery notifications can also significantly reduce "where's my package" calls to customer service. Some companies have seen their call center volumes reduced by more than 50%.

Ultimately, engaging the customer from purchase to post-delivery enhances the customer experience, improves delivery success and reduces the cost to keep customers informed.



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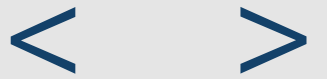
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# Digital Tools to Optimize Operations



Leading last-mile service providers are overcoming delivery challenges using optimization and automation technologies to:

- Increase delivery efficiency by streamlining processes
- Reduce costs by improving route planning & execution
- Enhance customer service with proactive communications

Today's most innovative and advanced logistics management platforms provide digital tools to help last-mile service providers improve planning and simplify processes -- from order management, dispatch and GPS tracking, to route planning and optimization and proof of delivery.

## Digital Tools Add Value

With scalable, cloud-based solutions, last-mile service providers can better manage and track their delivery operations, resulting in:



### FASTER DELIVERIES

Manage ETA's, optimize routes and provide delivery SLAs with 360 degree visibility for logistics operations, shippers and consignees.



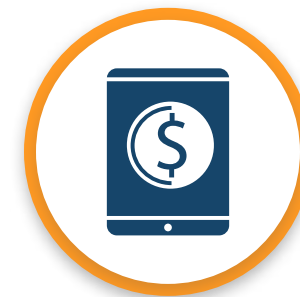
### BETTER SEQUENCING

Leverage automated processes for more effective dispatch, order processing and driver management to effectively reduce cost per delivery.



### ENHANCED PROOF OF DELIVERY

Digital signatures and photo confirmation can help organizations save time and money while providing stronger chain of custody support.



### QUICKER INVOICING

Eliminate paper and build integrated, digital workflows that automatically initiate invoicing in real-time.



### MORE SATISFIED CUSTOMERS

Give customers and CSRs access to real-time delivery information to minimize call center volume and enable first-call resolution.

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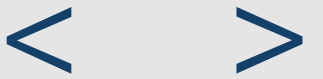
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When it comes to last-mile execution, the driver plays a pivotal role in the process. By empowering drivers with advanced mobile technology, last-mile service providers can positively impact both driver productivity and performance.

## Increasing Productivity



Mobile apps help drivers become more efficient by eliminating unnecessary mileage and streamlining processes with comprehensive delivery management applications. For example, apps on smartphones can provide intuitive workflows that help drivers through every step of the delivery process. Plus, because drivers are typically familiar with the smartphone experience, they can be more productive with fewer errors.

A user-friendly technology platform that allows drivers to use their own phones is especially important for last-mile service providers managing a fleet with a mixture of employee drivers and contractors or agents. Contractors and agents can hit the ground running without having to learn new hardware and software. For providers, this not only immediately helps with contractor productivity, it eliminates the need to rent or purchase new hardware, saving capital and operating costs.

Advanced mobile technology offers many benefits to last-mile service providers. Mobile app solutions are:

- **User-friendly**
  - Drivers can download the free app on smart devices
  - Familiar devices and intuitive user interfaces require minimal training
  - There's no learning curve for different hardware or complex software
- **Cost-effective**
  - The simple platform reduces training expenses and overall cost of ownership
  - Operational costs are lower with more efficient driver deployment
  - The number of driver stops is maximized
- **Service-focused**
  - Real-time visibility and accountability are provided throughout the entire pickup and delivery process
  - Customers receive immediate and comprehensive delivery information
  - Faster response times improve customer service and satisfaction

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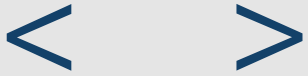
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## Improving Performance

Because the driver's role is so important to last-mile delivery, managing driver performance is a top priority for operations. Ideally, every driver will stick to the route plan, keep their delivery stop time to a minimum and immediately communicate when the route is not going as planned. Top-performing drivers routinely follow this protocol throughout the delivery process. However, others need additional tools and assistance to achieve performance goals.

A combination of real-time tracking, alerting, in-route driver performance KPIs and an intuitive, linear workflow can enable every driver to become a top performer. Mobile apps will help drivers adhere to the route and ensure customer expectations are met.

Here are some examples of how advanced technology tools can help management measure driver performance, identify potential areas of concern and offer guidance for improvement.

- Using real-time GPS tracking and intelligent dispatching solutions, managers can understand when drivers veer from the plan, correct the driver or address issues in real time.
- Analytics help during the debriefing process to show the driver where there are performance deviations and compare their performance to their peers.
- Because drivers supply much of the data during the execution of the route, leading delivery service providers grade drivers on their ability to accurately and timely capture delivery data.

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# The Power of Real-Time Visibility



Strong communication is essential for successful and efficient last-mile delivery operations, and technology provides the data and information that must be communicated for the best possible customer experience.

Advanced technology solutions with real-time visibility enable the flow of accurate delivery information and transparency to customers and logistics partners in real time. Real-time delivery information is crucial to meet evolving customer expectations as last-mile competitors continue to raise service and performance levels.

Having access to live delivery data allows last-mile service providers to identify potentially late deliveries and better manage customer expectations to enhance the delivery experience for customers. Plus, with accurate, real-time delivery information, they can automate administrative tasks and maintain real-time fleet information to improve overall delivery operations.

## REAL-TIME VISIBILITY PERMITS LAST-MILE SERVICE PROVIDERS TO:

### Expect the Unexpected

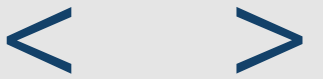
- Exceptions such as overages, shortages and damages (OS&D), refused deliveries, and delays due to bad weather, traffic jams and other unexpected situations, are all contributing factors when it comes to on-time delivery.
- Since even the best made plans can fail, last-mile service providers must have real-time visibility into exceptions immediately when they occur to quickly react.
- The high degree of visibility provided by real-time GPS, predictive ETAs and real-time traffic, allow dispatchers to proactively (even automatically) respond to service disruptions or delays, and immediately adjust a driver's schedule accordingly.

### Be Proactive

- It's important to keep customers advised of delivery status in a timely fashion.
- Make operational decisions based on actual data instead of tribal knowledge or intuition.
- Automated delivery notifications can proactively reach customers to advise them of a delay.
- Customers are often more forgiving of delays when they are contacted in advance.

### Boost Driver Productivity

- Equipping drivers with simple, user-friendly tools to complete day-to-day tasks will save them time and aggravation.
- When detailed delivery information is sent directly to drivers' devices, they can remotely update deliveries in real time, resulting in faster and more reliable deliveries.
- By leveraging automated tools to better manage drivers' allocated workloads and improve communications, last-mile service providers can impact profits and market share.



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# How Descartes ShipTrack™ Can Help



Descartes ShipTrack's innovative logistics management platform allows customers to better manage and track last-mile deliveries using real-time data.

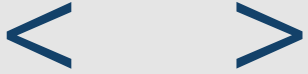
The scalable, cloud-based platform provides digital tools to improve planning and simplify processes, helping delivery service providers improve customer satisfaction, increase operational efficiency and boost driver performance.

ShipTrack's unique design allows it to be deployed and used in a wide variety of applications and industries, including manufacturing, distribution, retail and healthcare. One single platform can be configured for a small business to deploy a simple delivery tracking application for a few drivers, or for a large enterprise logistics operation delivering millions of parcels per day.

ShipTrack adds value to last-mile operations with differentiating features that give delivery service providers a competitive edge.

- Validation and correction for customer address data to improve route planning and delivery accuracy.
- Seamless integration of B2B and B2C packages into the same delivery route to gain efficiency.
- A Smart Dispatch feature that quickly finds the best driver for ad hoc pickups.
- A user-friendly mobile app that's compatible with iOS and Android operating systems and allows drivers and contractors to use their own smartphones, saving capital and operating costs.
- One-touch access to WAZE turn-by-turn directions via the mobile app to provide drivers with the quickest and safest route.
- Online access to real-time delivery information for customers and service reps to reduce call center volumes and improve the customer experience.

ShipTrack customers leverage these features to differentiate themselves and acquire new business. To learn how Descartes ShipTrack can help transform your company's last-mile delivery operations into a competitive weapon, visit <https://shiptrackapp.com/>.



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# About Descartes Systems Group



Descartes is the global leader in providing on-demand, software-as-a-service solutions focused on improving the productivity, performance and security of logistics-intensive businesses.

Customers use our modular, software-as-a-service solutions to:

- route, schedule, track and measure delivery resources
- plan, allocate and execute shipments
- rate, audit and pay transportation invoices
- access global trade data
- file customs and security documents for imports and exports
- complete numerous other logistics processes by participating in the world's largest, collaborative multimodal logistics community

Our headquarters are in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada and we have offices and partners around the world.

Learn more about [our solutions](#), and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).



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