



How to Roll Out a Large Scale Last-Mile Solution

Executive Summary

Last-mile logistics is a critical part of the overall customer experience. Yet, it is hard to do right. Many organizational capabilities that need to come together to give customers the great experience they deserve.

The right software can help companies that take customer experience seriously elevate their logistics to a new level. DispatchTrack has rolled out our last-mile logistics software to substantial enterprise customers with up to 4,000 trucks and 1,200 distribution centers in 180 days with 98% compliance.

This white paper lays several learnings from helping our customers get the most out of our software. We hope you can leverage these tips to improve your last-mile logistics.

Key Success Factors for a Successful rollout



1. Identify clear, time-phased business objectives



2. Provide strong leadership



3. Roll out slow, then accelerate quickly



4. Set the right expectations



5. Have a small expert team drive the rollout



6. Get the system setup right



7. Ensure data quality



8. Bring in third-party logistics partners

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1. Identify clear, time-phased business objectives

It is crucial to establish business objectives for 30 days, 90 days, and 180 days after the rollout starts. The objectives can relate to such things as inventory, cost, customer satisfaction, or timeliness. Having these objectives in place will help with communication as well as with prioritizing use cases.

From our experience, customers who struggle sometimes focus on the most challenging 5% of their requirements. If the 30- or 90-day objectives can be met by fulfilling the other 95% of the requirements, we strongly recommend going ahead and get early wins. These wins create momentum for the rollout.

2. Establish strong leadership

Having a strong business leader is essential for success. This leader must be someone who has decision-making authority and can establish the path forward while, at the same time, communicating openly and clearly what the benefits are for the company and everyone involved.

3. Roll out slow, then accelerate quickly

We recommend starting slowly, then accelerating quickly. Consider doing two pilots before rollout: one pilot with a very straightforward distribution center and one pilot with a very complex distribution center.

By using two drastically different pilots, you can learn what challenges you can face in even the easiest cases. And you can demonstrate that you can handle the most difficult cases. Once both pilots are successful, you can build training materials and use cases to cover all situations that may arise. This effort enables a quick rollout to your remaining sites.

4. Set the right expectations

It is essential to set the proper expectations among staff and handle objections correctly. We have seen two different cases:

Case A



The company already owns a last-mile logistics system and is migrating to a modern one.

In Case A, common objections and issues typically deal with unlearning existing procedures and then learning new and improved procedures.

Case B



The company is operating using pen and paper and does not have experience with using software for last-mile logistics.

In Case B, expectations are different. Paradoxically, we have experienced that the most challenging issues to address have to do with the expectation that the software will do absolutely everything and automate all processes. In reality, the software is a tool that still needs to be operated by humans to achieve maximum effect.

5.

Have a small expert team drive the rollout

Change management is another critical area. Rolling out a last-mile logistics solution is an organizational change that requires the efficient preparation and support of the work of the relevant teams.

For large-scale rollouts, we recommend organizing a cross-functional in-house team of subject matter experts. The core of the team should be made up of one IT expert, one training expert, and one logistics expert.

This expert team gets trained by us, the software partner, on all aspects of the system. When learning new things, we have found that logistics personnel are often more comfortable discussing business problems and needs with their colleagues than external vendors. So, be prepared for that. Make sure there is a way to inform external vendors what those business problems and needs are.

6.

Get the system setup right

A strong focus should be placed on setting up the system correctly. Setting up the initial parameters for all trucks and drivers is the foundation for a well-functioning system. Examples of required information include start location, loading capacity, driver skill sets, etc. Once the system is set up correctly, the route optimization and scheduling functionalities can operate at optimal levels.

7.

Ensure data quality

Data quality is a measure of the condition of data based on factors such as accuracy, completeness, consistency, reliability, and whether it's up to date. Bad data can have significant business consequences as it is often identified as the source of operational hiccups, inaccurate analytics, and ill-conceived business strategies.

When it comes to integrating systems, data quality needs to be solid. A last-mile logistics system is typically integrated into either the point-of-sale system or the warehouse management system. Regardless of the integration, there needs to be a single source of truth with consistent data formatting across all sources.

A common point of failure that deserves extra attention is the information quality in sales orders. Information such as the customer's name, physical address, phone number, type of phone, and email address are not always filled in. If this is the case, clean up the data. This information is required for enabling automated and easy communication.

Setting up the initial parameters for all trucks and drivers is the foundation for a well-functioning system.

8.

Include third-party logistics partners

Most companies rely on 3PL partners to some extent, and 3PLs are a key customer group for DispatchTrack. That's why it is important to consider how the system will be rolled out to them. A successful rollout means that these partners are trained on your system and can use it seamlessly.

Having functionality like proof of delivery, billing, and settlement integrated into your overall process helps both 3PLs and retailers out.

What's not on the list?

You may have noticed that driver training is not on the list of the most challenging tasks. It is essential to train drivers on the new Standard Operating Procedures that come from a new tool. This training is often viewed as a challenging obstacle.

In our experience, the reality is quite the contrary. We have learned that drivers, when presented with an easy-to-use application on their smartphone, are eager to adopt new technology. This is especially true when the application truly helps them in their work and makes it easier to communicate with the dispatcher, communicate with customers, and provide a great customer experience.

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Partner with DispatchTrack

At DispatchTrack, we take great pride in helping our customers become and remain successful. We know that our customers care deeply about their customers' experience, and we mirror that deeply in our values. If you are considering implementing last-mile logistics software, we would love to talk to you. Please reach out and email us at sales@dispatchtrack.com.

About DispatchTrack

DispatchTrack is the leading end-to-end software for last mile logistics, and services over 180 million deliveries per year for companies ranging from 3 to 4,000+ trucks. Companies in industries such as furniture/appliances, 3PL, building supplies, food distribution, grocery delivery, medical supplies, and auto-parts use DispatchTrack to provide excellent delivery service experiences and to optimize their operations. Our NPS score of 70 shows that customers love the long-term relationships we develop and truly be their partners.



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