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THE WINCANTON SUPPLY CHAIN INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR



Winner – Shop Direct

Shop Direct supply changes enhance speed and service

The need for a super-efficient supply chain cannot be overstated in contemporary retail. Nor these days can attempts to streamline the supply chain be approached without bearing all aspects of business in mind. Shop Direct's entry, the judges felt, excelled in both areas.

The initiative was all about speed and reliability. Shop Direct set out to improve speed of service across all its brands and departments, and to create more choice and more certainty for its customers.

To do that it launched a significant initiative, 'Delight', designed to use technology to enhance and transform every step of the fulfilment and delivery process. It was an ambitious project that introduced a number of key features into the business.

As a result customers can now use a diary booking service to choose the most convenient time for deliveries; standard service is three days as opposed to five; a number of in-house services such as furniture assembly are now on offer and the customer contact strategy has been revised.

It was the breadth of change that impressed the judges. One said: "It really feels like it's looking at every area of the business as one. It's the way you have to approach the supply chain, but it's very hard to do so well."

In a supply chain model of such scale, even the subtlest change can have a major effect. As part of its initiative Shop Direct, working in conjunction with ArrowXL, has reduced the amount of storage space it needs and the picking required for products by adopting a 'pull' supply chain model. By using IT to make the process more intelligent, the retailer has become able to send products out in selected waves to distributors, rather than in bulk.

As a result of an overhaul of the way it runs its supply chain, the retailer managed to process tens of thousands of extra orders compared with the previous year, reduce its return rate and late deliveries, and improve customer satisfaction.

One judge remarked: "It was a very strong



entry, with good, clear evidence. It had very clear things it set out to do and strong evidence that it achieved them."

In a time of retail change, Shop Direct, which has its origins in mail-order, has moved with the times. It can be a challenging journey, but

one that the judges agreed Shop Direct has navigated exceptionally well. One said: "As services such as click-and-collect grow, it's got to be done right. Returns are a big problem in that area, a big challenge, and I think Shop Direct is managing that". **BEN COOPER**

Wincanton

As a market leader in the retail supply chain, Wincanton provides innovative solutions that enable retailers and manufacturers to gain competitive advantage through their supply chains across multiple channels.

Combining best-in-class operating solutions with a suite of fully integrated systems platforms, we implement risk-free start-ups and manage robust and consistent supply chains that deliver award-winning service for both retailer and the end consumer.

Our expertise in order, inventory, carrier and returns management, combined with our commitment to deliver flexible, scalable, reliable and collaborative transport and warehousing solutions, makes us a unique partner in helping our customers face increasingly complex supply chain challenges.