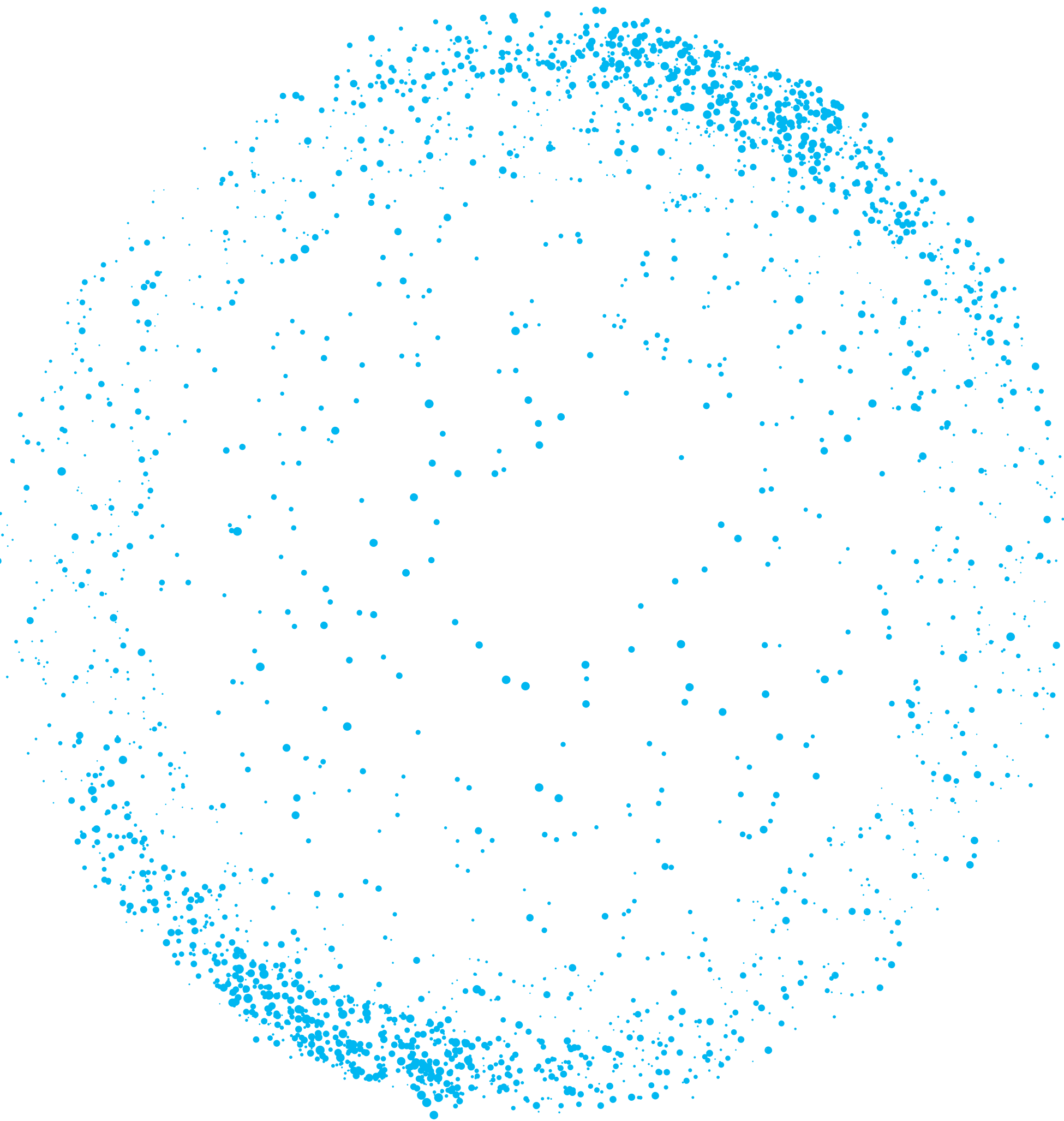


7 winning inventory strategies for your peak season

Intelligent inventory optimization
for peak performance





01	Intelligent inventory optimization for peak performance
02	Optimize inventory in real time
03	Keep your customer promises
04	When positioning inventory, expect the unexpected
05	Scale quickly in response to demand shifts
06	Turn insights into action with an analytics workbench
07	Simulate and rebalance for inventory precision agility
08	Turn returns into revenue

Intelligent inventory optimization for peak performance

For retailers, inventory optimization is critical every day of the year. But, during peak season, inventory moves faster than at any other time.

Customers are more demanding, timelines are critical, and operating efficiently and intelligently drives massive bottom-line benefits. In this intense environment, managing inventory effectively is the difference between winning at peak and missing out on big opportunities.

So how can you maximize the value of your inventory, position it accurately and make realistic customer promises? Blue Yonder has defined seven key strategies for peak success.





02

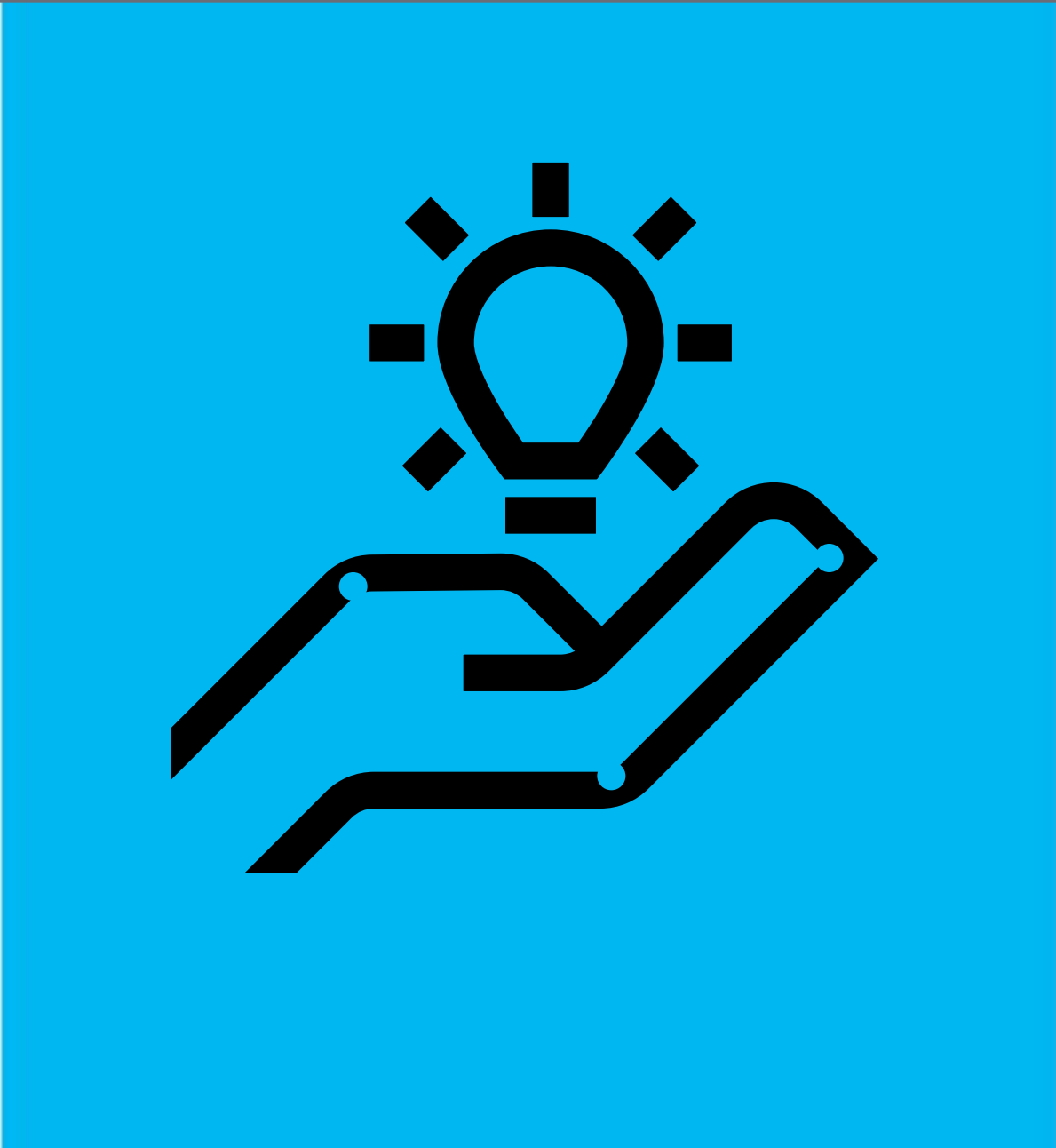
Even as retail e-commerce revenues and order volumes grow, delivery estimates continue to be unreliable due to increasing supply chain disruptions. Too often, consumers report that orders arrive too late, or at a different time than expected.

During peak season, delivery reliability is especially important. You need to understand consumers' specific delivery expectations and make reliable delivery promises. By setting a cautious delivery date, you're limited by your slowest possible delivery estimate.

Why set ambitious — and perhaps impossible — deadlines for your supply chain when intelligent solutions are readily available to personalize availability and delivery commitments on an order-by-order basis?

An advanced order promising solution ingests real-time data on what's in stock, where inventory is located and how long it will realistically take to deliver a product to the customer's location. Instead of applying a blanket delivery policy, you and your shoppers benefit from intelligent, personalized and credible delivery deadlines for every order.

Consumers can see an accurate “get it by” date before they order — e.g., “order in the next 30 minutes to get it delivered by Tuesday.” This clear delivery messaging also drives urgency. An added benefit? Customers can be connected to real-time store inventory if they want a product sooner. That means more purchases, across more channels — right up to the last moment of peak season.



When positioning inventory, expect the unexpected

03

Seeing where inventory is located in real time is one thing, but knowing how to arrange your stock across stores and distribution centers is another. What happens when the must-have item of peak season goes viral — and sells faster than expected? The cost of out-of-stocks can be as much as 8% of revenue, so how can inventory be arranged — and dynamically rearranged — to accommodate the unexpected?

The answer is advanced machine learning (ML) tools that optimize inventory positions across your full network. Intelligent digital capabilities ensure you have optimal levels of safety stock in place to meet demand spikes, no matter which channel demand is coming from. Advanced digital solutions in returns management are also invaluable in getting must-have items back into inventory and available for resale as quickly as possible.

Thanks to digitalization, you can fulfill demand effectively from anywhere in your network by drawing on in-store stock to fulfill online orders, offering curbside delivery or buy online/pickup in store (BOPIS), and seamlessly integrating micro-fulfillment centers. You can also give shoppers the ability to reserve products. That flexibility ensures you can meet consumer demand at the most urgent moments of peak season, as well as diffuse the impact of demand spikes so you don't run out of stock in any single location.





Scale quickly in response to demand shifts

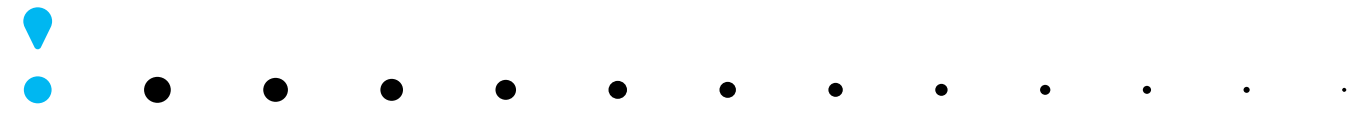
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Achieving peak performance during peak season requires more than just operational efficiency. It demands scalable, fast and accurate order management systems that easily accommodate high order volumes, without compromising the shopper experience.

- In addition to delivering real-time inventory visibility, your order management system should allocate capacity and adjust workflows in real time as demand shifts. Intelligent sourcing ensures every order is fulfilled from the optimal location — factoring in logistics costs, labor availability, stock levels, delivery capacity and other data.

- Scalable order management empowers you to master demand shifts and disruptions with agility and precision. You can not only build brand loyalty, but also reduce operational costs by minimizing inefficiencies and waste during the most critical time of the year.

Turn insights into action with an analytics workbench



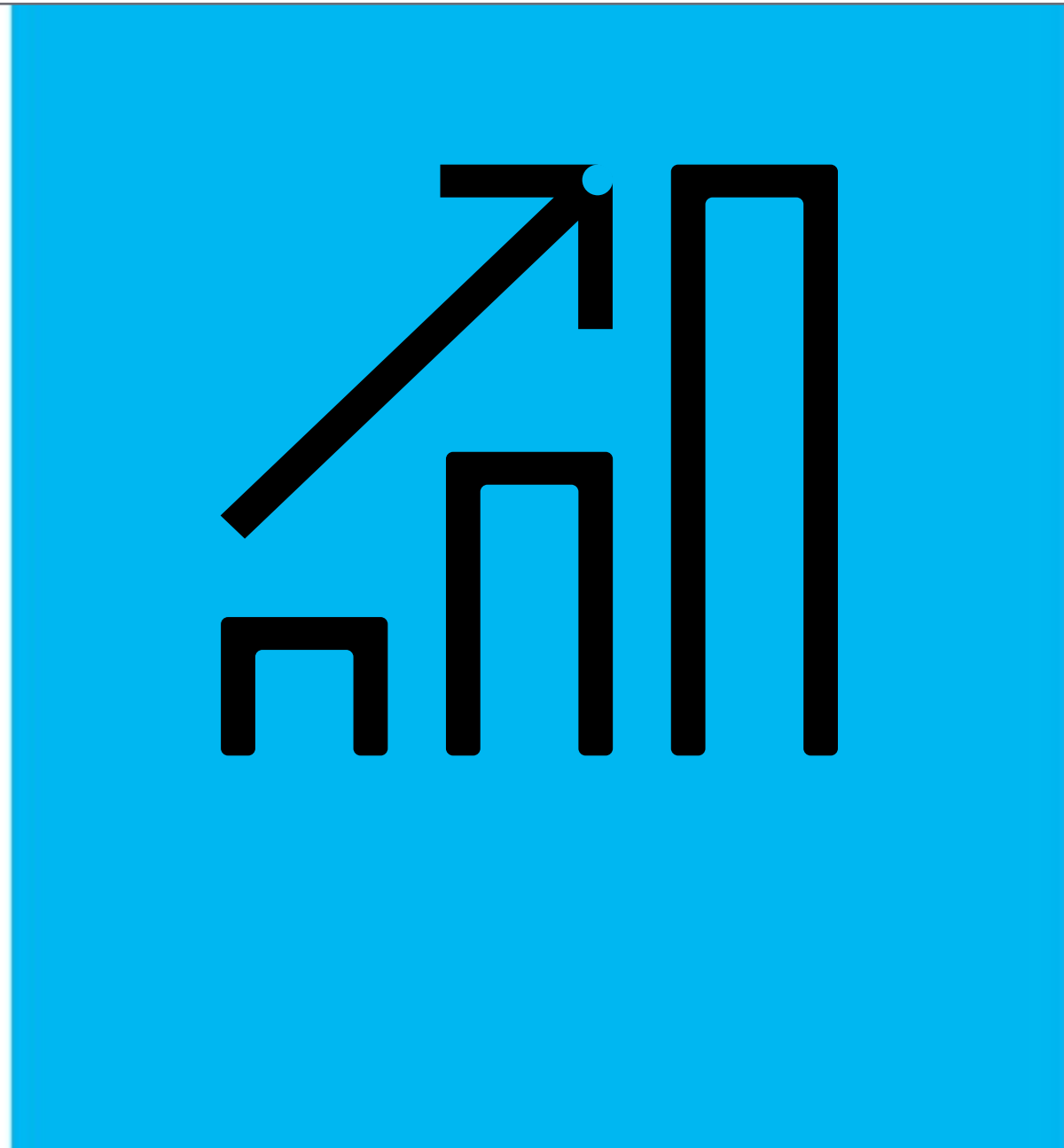
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Making the right decisions during peak season requires complete visibility into key metrics across your supply chain. An analytics workbench provides a unified suite of analytics modules, giving you access to insights on inventory, sourcing, capacity, orders and commerce performance—all in one interactive dashboard.

By integrating data across systems, tools, and both internal and external sources, retailers can ensure that every stakeholder works from the same source of truth.

Personalized, role-based insights allow your teams to isolate and filter data by function or problem area, enabling proactive exception management and fact-based decision-making.

With a rich library of pre-built reports, an intuitive interface and seamless integrations across the supply chain ecosystem, an analytics workbench transforms raw data into actionable strategies that maximize efficiency and profitability.



Simulate and rebalance for inventory precision agility

06

In today's fast-paced retail environment, the ability to anticipate and adapt to shifting demand patterns is critical. Advanced simulation and rebalancing capabilities for fulfillment sourcing empower retailers to test different inventory and fulfillment strategies before making real-world decisions.

- By leveraging digital twin environments, retailers can model what-if scenarios to predict outcomes, refine sourcing and allocation rules, and optimize order sequencing dynamically. In addition, an intelligent rebalancing solution helps automatically re-allocate your inventory and fulfillment swiftly in the face of any disruptions. Advanced rebalancing capabilities create a cognitive feedback loop, allowing your business to react swiftly to supply chain disruptions, rebalance demand in real time, and ensure that every order is fulfilled with maximum efficiency and minimal cost.

With these cutting-edge capabilities, retailers can pivot beyond traditional planning cycles, making data-driven, proactive decisions that drive peak-season success.





Turn returns into revenue

07

Returns are inevitable, especially after peak season, and they come with high costs — as much as 30% of a product’s original price. But returns can also represent an engine for revenue growth, particularly if they’re channeled to stores. Driving additional store traffic often creates incremental purchases. And, when inventory is returned to stores in good condition, it can be used to replenish store stock for high-demand items. This can help eliminate over-replenishment and instantly turn returned inventory around for sale again — before peak season is over.

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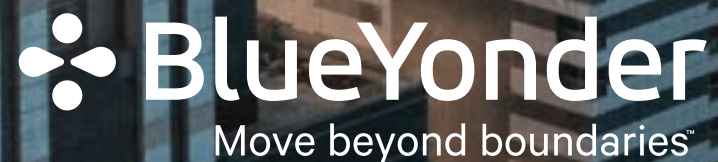
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Whether items are returned to stores or warehouses, returns management speed and precision are absolutely critical in creating a new sales opportunity. Digital solutions help by creating discipline, visibility and control across the entire returns cycle. When consumers initiate their return digitally, retailers know the product is coming back, when it will arrive and its general condition. That enables them to plan the labor and other resources to handle otherwise unpredictable post-peak return volumes.

When returned items are received by the retailer, digitalization enables a precise, fast process for checking their condition, issuing refunds, sorting merchandise and positioning products for resale, whether in the warehouse aisle or the retail shelf.



Thank you for reading

Gain a peak-season advantage with intelligent inventory

Having true end-to-end visibility and control over your inventory is a game-changer for retail success — in every season. From accurately planning stock levels across your stores and distribution centers to intelligently fulfilling each order at the perfect intersection of speed and cost efficiency, digital solutions from Blue Yonder provide a huge competitive edge. They can take your performance to a new peak.

To discover how you can adopt a more intelligent, adaptive inventory approach during your peak season, visit blueyonder.com

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