

Peak readiness checklist

Holiday peaks put major stress on distribution and fulfillment networks. With massive order volumes, reduced processing times and a scarce labor pool all pressuring operations to do more with less, how can you proactively prepare for the busiest time of year?



1

PLANNING

Upfront planning helps the entire operation work towards the same goal, with shared expectations. And when an emergency inevitably happens, proactive contingency planning eliminates guess work with established protocols.

- Revisit order projections to help forecast inventory and staffing needs
- Create emergency procedures for variety of scenarios and functional areas (i.e. What happens if you lose power? Or your WMS goes down? Or your label printer isn't working?)
- Tighten relationships with key suppliers and discuss their contingency plans
- Setup data capture and analysis models to benchmark peak performance (i.e. SKU velocities, labor, value-added services)



2

STAFFING

With unemployment at a 50-year low, competition for labor has never been tougher. Companies must ensure existing employees are stable and well-trained, while creating fast, effective onboarding processes for new staff.

- Offer refresher training for maintenance teams
- Cross-train warehouse staff in multiple functions
- Implement incentive programs to promote workforce stability
- Establish streamlined training processes for permanent and seasonal hires

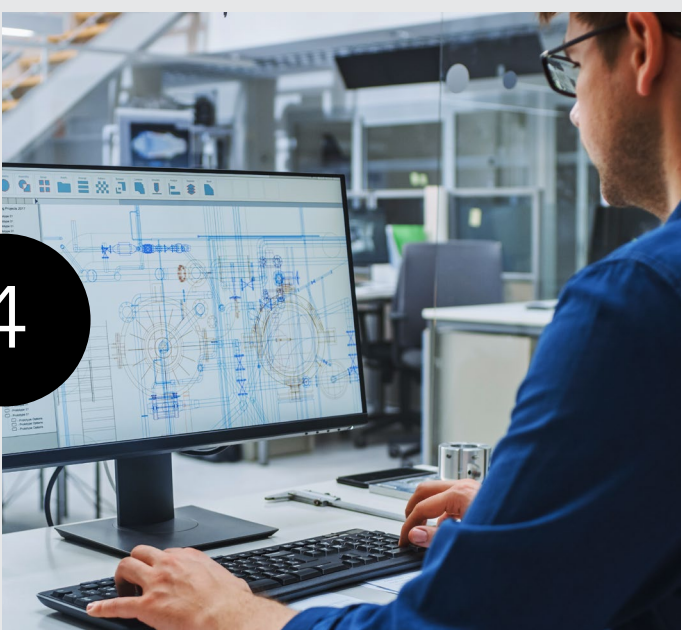


3

SYSTEM RELIABILITY

Equipment failures can shut down part or all of your operation, a dire situation at any point, but especially catastrophic during peak season, making system reliability a mandatory for a successful peak season.

- Conduct a reliability audit on material handling equipment
- Complete critical preventive maintenance tasks to avoid peak interruption (i.e. Lubricate bearings, update software systems, replace near-failure components)
- Review spare parts inventory to ensure adequate stock
- Use on-site or remote technical support with guaranteed response time from automation provider



4

OPERATION OPTIMIZATION

Shaving seconds from DC workflows can add up to significant cost savings. Do a thorough review of your distribution operation to identify small adjustments that can eliminate bottlenecks and increase productivity.

- Audit all operational workflows
- Do a "practice peak" to identify any issues in a less costly time of year
- Evaluate inventory slotting strategies to ensure adequate space and proper SKU placement
- Consider setting up fast pick lanes for high-volume movers

Ensure your operation is ready for peak. Contact the FORTNA Peak Support Team at lauramatsuoka@fortna.com or 1-888-367-8621.

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