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## Port to Purchase: Purolator Speeds Stock to Store Shelves



Industry Sector:  
**Retail**

### Company Profile:

A Canadian retailer that provides its customers with a wide range of well-priced fashions and housewares, is the shopping destination for consumers in both small towns and larger city centres. With a focus on the environment, this retailer looks to provide its customers with a specialty line of affordable products that are environmentally sustainable.

### Business Situation:

For many retailers, speeding up the delivery of stock from overseas shipping containers to store shelves is critical and this retailer needed to shave critical weeks from their business cycle.

### Solution:

Overseas containers full of inventory for retail stores are delivered from Vancouver, British Columbia's port to Purolator, which divides up products by purchase order and ships it out to individual stores by courier the same day. This streamlined process cuts critical time from the normal distribution model and returns sales dollars faster.

### Benefits:

- Two weeks is cut out of the distribution cycle by eliminating rail transportation of goods from Vancouver to Toronto for sorting.
- Products are stocked more quickly ensuring items are on the shelves when customers want them.
- The Purolator's modern facilities in Vancouver give customers the capacity to handle multiple containers daily.
- Purolator's shipping software tracks courier packages every step of the delivery process.

### Summary

The time it takes for stock arriving from overseas at Vancouver, British Columbia's port to land on store shelves translates into dollars either saved or lost for Canadian retailers. By integrating distribution and shipping from the time containers arrive at port, Purolator shaves critical time off delivery schedules and gets inventory selling faster.

### Company Profile

A haven for well-priced family fashions and footwear, as well as a wide range of kitchen fashions, bed and bath accessories, furniture, toys, housewares, health and beauty products and stationery, this Canadian retailer sells to customers in both rural communities as well as larger urban centres. This retailer is also conscious about the impact it is having on the environment and is looking to provide its customers with a specialty line of affordable products that are environmentally sustainable.

Whether stocking a store in metropolitan Toronto or a small rural community in Western Canada, the retailer needs to get products on store shelves quickly, and keep inventory stocked for sale.

## Challenges & Solutions

Many retailers pay for their goods when they arrive at the port in containers. Traditionally, companies transport these containers to a distribution centre, verify the stock, address cartons for each store and then ship it out by their courier or distribution network.

The priority is getting stock from the container to store shelves without unnecessary delays. By working with Purolator, this retailer was able to cut critical time out of its distribution model and is continuing to

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work with Purolator to further reduce shipping times to get shelves stocked and goods sold faster.

## Time Means Money for Retailers

In retail, the sooner a product is on a shelf, the sooner that first sale is made, and when it comes to fashion items like apparel, accessories and footwear, the prime selling season is when the fashion is hot off the runway and new to the store. As each season progresses and fashions near the end of their eight-week shelf life, customers start looking for discounts.

**This retailer was able to cut critical time out of its distribution model and is continuing to work with Purolator to further reduce shipping times to get shelves stocked and goods sold faster.**

For this retailer, its clothing arrived Vancouver's port where containers were transferred to a rail car bound for Toronto. In Toronto, goods were sorted at a central distribution centre, and then shipped back to stores, including ones in Western Canada. This meant would arrive in stores anywhere from 10 to 20 days after they arrived in Canada, which doesn't include the 17 to 20 days it takes to ship goods from overseas.

Purolator intercepted inventory at Vancouver's port, emptied product from each container and shipped it out to stores the same day. This meant no more rail trip to Toronto, the company saved a critical two weeks and is getting shelves stocked in 18 to 22 days instead of 28 to 42 days.

## On the Road to a Sustainable Environment

With business principles founded on protecting the environment, it's not surprising this retailer was also looking for ways to reduce the carbon impact made by the transportation of merchandise from the port in Vancouver to its stores across Canada.

With Purolator, unnecessary travel was eliminated cutting both carbon emissions and greenhouse gases. Purolator has committed to reducing the environmental impact of logistics and courier deliveries, which makes them a strong partner for the environmental-conscious retailer. Purolator is the only national courier in Canada to use hybrid electric vehicles in its curb-side delivery fleet, reducing the impact of fleet fuel usage and vehicle air emissions.

## Stocking Stores Fast

As a retailer whose inventory is more than half apparel, and as a company that distributes more than hundreds of thousands of cases a year of products to stores in small and large communities across Canada, they needed a distribution partner with a network that could deliver directly to everywhere they have a store, often within one to two business days.

With time and speed to market critical for making sales, Purolator has the reach this company needs to make sure product is always in stock.

## Purolator Easily Handles Client Containers

In addition to a broad geographic network that seamlessly reaches all of this retailer's locations in Canada, Purolator has a modern distribution facility in Vancouver that provides a large capacity for handling incoming client containers. This large facility allows the company to bring in more containers than they could have handled in their own internal facility. Additionally, since Purolator is a cross dock, all containers than come in one day go right back out without delay.

And, those extra days mean money to retailers.

At the store level, Purolator is delivering to their doors more often, which means staff have smaller shipments to unload and get on the shelves. Since store staff have to get merchandise on display the day it arrives, coping with smaller shipments makes managing new inventory easier in the small spaces they have available for sorting new products.



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## Reduced Handling Cuts Damage, Saves Costs

With Purolator, this retailer brings containers directly to the conveyor system at Purolator's distribution hub where packages are sorted, labeled and sent immediately to stores. That means the amount of handling of any one good is dramatically reduced.

**With time and speed to market critical for making sales, Purolator has the reach this company needs to make sure product is always in stock.**

Streamlining the material handling not only saves labour costs for retailers, but it also cuts the potential for damage. Less damage means fewer mark downs and higher selling prices.

## Technology Connects Retailer to Stock

Aside from the extensive Canadian distribution network, reduced handling of goods, and the time savings realized when leveraging the Purolator port services, this retailer appreciates gaining access to leading technology that is critical for any distribution service to work seamlessly.

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## The Future

For this retailer, there are plenty of opportunities to further cut distribution time and save money when shipping from overseas.

By using Purolator's new integrated shipping and container facility in Richmond, BC, the time to get product from overseas to store shelves is being reduced. This modern 53,000 square foot facility has the capacity to triple its size and features innovative semi-automated material handling equipment designed to sort products faster while reducing the risk of damage associated with handling packages manually. The facility's proximity to the Vancouver port and airport make it an ideal spot to offer customers customized solutions for getting products from the port to their final destination faster than ever before.

For more information about how Purolator can partner with your organization to exceed your customer's expectations, call a Purolator Representative today at **1-888-529-9777**