



## The role of your label supplier in mitigating costs and ensuring timely deliveries

Supply chain security is always a major concern of business leaders, but it's gained new attention as the pandemic strains shipping systems.

While nobody can prevent the next set of unforeseen circumstances, the right label supplier can help make sure it doesn't cut off your packaging supply, cause downtime or impact your budget.

Work with the experts to manage inventory, find alternative materials and enhance your ordering process so you can meet demand, even when competitors can't. With the right preparation and execution, the next supply chain pinch could be your opportunity to stand out.

### Go with a big safety net

The most basic challenge that our clients face is unpredictable demand. Even the best forecasts include a margin of error. The unpredictable nature of the pandemic drastically widened the margins while making supply more difficult at any rate.

Work with a top-five major label producer with facilities across the nation to get the flexibility of diversifying your business across multiple label manufacturers. And with us, you get far more efficient logistics and deliveries than smaller operations can offer.

[Our network of facilities](#) has material ready to ship throughout the nation. Your deliveries are never far away, no matter how they're printed. We balance material inventories across a broad range of clients. And you get support from our supply experts when issues arise. Multiple locations with digital, flexographic and hybrid printing options at your disposal give you the ability to choose the best process based on your demands and deadlines.

[Plate-free digital printing](#) is most efficient for low-volume orders because it eliminates upfront tooling costs. But for big orders, [flexographic's high-speed throughput](#) can negate the added cost of plates. Our [hybrid option, known as Digital Impact](#), eliminates plates, rolls and screens to lower tooling costs. Its silver [cold foil capabilities](#) can achieve custom foil colors with fast turnaround.

### Take the guesswork out of inventory

Take advantage of our [vendor-managed inventory \(VMI\) programs](#) to optimize packaging order and storage services. Our supply chain experts work closely with your team to analyze historical sales data and market factors to forecast future demand, aligning production and delivery around anticipated needs.

You can't turn product into profit without a label on it. Align the pace of production with label printing through the ups and downs of demand.

You'll always have enough labels to get products from the plant to store shelves without eating the label storage costs during slow times. We help determine label order quantities and scheduling, then assume responsibility for warehousing and delivering those labels.

## **Become a part of our forecast network**

Raw material supply is a complicated global equation. Save yourself the math and work with a partner that has an extensive, well-established strategic supply network. You can become a part of our broad in-house network and access forecasts for various materials, such as paper and film stocks. Our procurement experts combine macro-economic indicators and in-house datasets to forecast vertical markets and your product categories. You'll be better prepared for market shifts while the competition scrambles to meet demand.

## **Plan B: Quick material and printing alternatives**

Label production can be much more flexible than the contents of your actual product. If there's a shortage of one material, we'll look at the tolerances of your products and shipping operation to find the best available alternative.

For example, perhaps a major retailer needs to run an unplanned emergency promotion that triples your demand overnight. We'll analyze internal scheduling and available material alternatives, then shift production between plants, even if it takes reconfiguring the presses to make deliveries on time. Then the process will be added to our dataset to help prepare for future surprises.

## **Enhance RFIs: Prepare for uncertainty and development**

Requests for information (RFIs) look for data on a printing supplier's operational capabilities, supply assurances and projected costs. But [RFIs can get you a lot more than that](#) if prepared correctly. The RFI process helps lay the foundation of packaging partnerships, and solid relationships can mean the difference during supply chain fiascos.

To get accurate estimates on costs and scheduling, you'll need to prepare information like a complete inventory of products, label design details, material requirements, annual demand and expected order frequency.

Ask what else your brand wants to accomplish in the future. What roadblocks lay ahead, and which questions remain unanswered? To find the best option for your long-term growth, think about

sustainability, cost efficiencies and shipping logistics.

Look for flexible planning processes, production capabilities and scheduling. Consider how often information like ingredients could be subject to change. Ask about operating timetables, work shifts and mandatory downtime that could impact your schedule.

This process is especially important for volatile markets like food and beverage that regularly contend with sudden demand shifts.

Remember to ask about other promotional directions for your brand. For example, a lawn and garden brand wanted to educate its customers about using its grass seed and other lawn care products. We incorporated NFC labels at the store display level so customers can opt into regular, educational notifications.

Don't miss out on opportunities to consolidate orders, explore new technology and establish an inventory management relationship. [Let's rethink your brand's approach to label bidding](#) and protect your company from supply chain tie ups.

## **Make big plans with label providers**

Your label provider can be an invaluable partner to [bolster your procurement](#) and production systems. Meet with your label supplier regularly throughout the year to discuss potential vulnerabilities in your label process, plan for future growth and stay ahead of the market shifts.

Understand the problems that create additional supply risk, especially if you're scaling up new business or responding to new opportunities. Don't let poor label supply hold back your production goals. Our experts can keep your costs down and your packaging materials well stocked.

[Let's talk](#) about how we can protect every link in your supply chain.