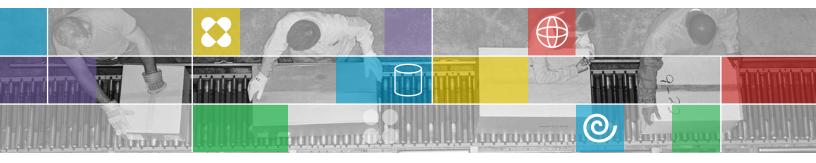**IBM**

Help improve efficiencies and reduce costs.
Become an on demand business.

IBM software solutions for the wholesale distribution industry

Highlights

- **Integrate your entire supply chain to help reduce costs and improve margins**

- **Gain better control over inventory and manage merchandise more efficiently**

- **Web-enable your business with security-rich, customizable online applications**

- **Take advantage of complete solutions for the entire distribution spectrum from suppliers to customers**

- **Leverage affordable, easy-to-use solutions that are designed especially for mid-sized wholesalers**

Solutions designed for distribution needs

As a wholesale distributor, your profitability hinges on your ability to source the precise items customers want and deliver those items when they need them. Delivering products at a low cost and accurately managing demand can help secure your competitive position. But increasing costs and competition can make this a challenge for many mid-sized distributors. To overcome them, you need to solidify relationships with customers and trading partners. As payroll costs erode your net earnings, you need to find ways to improve productivity and lower labor expenses. And you need to make sure time is spent efficiently by scaling resources to your most profitable customers. Managing your enterprise resources, supply chain and customer relations efficiently is essential to respond to these growing pressures.

The right mix of technology solutions can help you meet these challenges and become responsive and efficient in predicting and responding to customer and market needs — helping you deliver e-business on demand™.

IBM and IBM Business Partners understand the pressures mid-sized distributors like you face from demanding customers and the market. We also understand IT. And that combined knowledge gives us the expertise to deliver solutions designed specifically for the business you're in. IBM provides the middleware. Your local IBM Business Partner provides applications and services specified to your needs. Together, we provide a solution that is custom-designed to work for you.

Middleware is Everywhere. | Can you see it?

Integrated business solutions

IBM and our network of Business Partners offer proven, affordable, industry-leading business integration solutions designed specifically for managing mid-sized distribution businesses. These feature-rich software solutions assist your distribution operation with end-to-end integration—building IT resources around core systems and databases that support users and applications across your business. The result is a well-planned IT infrastructure that integrates applications and processes, delivers greater resource efficiency and provides 24x7 availability.

Solutions aimed at your core business

To maintain your competitive edge, you must answer increasingly sophisticated demands from a growing list of suppliers and customers by providing a broad product mix—in near real time. Continually improving relationships with suppliers, buyers and other partners is also paramount to improving margins. In addition, you face increased competition looking to snag loyal customers.

IBM business integration solutions provide a wide range of software that can help you meet customer demand—while keeping them from the grasp of the competition. Capabilities include:

Wholesale distribution challenges	IBM solutions
Deliver extended services online, in real time	**B2B e-commerce solutions** Use secure, customizable Web applications to integrate, collaborate and build strong relationships with customers and trading partners, integrate business processes with core business operations, provide a consistent view of your business with 24x7 availability
Improve operational efficiency to decrease costs	**Inventory, warehouse and shipping management solutions** Improve sales analyses, forecasting, demand planning, warehouse space and labor utilization, and shipment scheduling and planning
Improve profit margins	**Customer and product profitability solutions** Use business information to identify the most—and least—profitable customers, products and sales channels, tailor promotions to greatest sales opportunities, improve customer retention and attrition
Improve direct customer service	**Customer-service call-center management solutions** Build complete profiles of customers to understand their profitability, preferences and service history, improve service quality and efficiency, present a unified, consistent view of your company to all customers

- *Business management systems that support financial management and customer service, as well as miscellaneous operations, including vendor billbacks, specialty rebates and vehicle maintenance.*
- *Warehouse and labor management systems that help control order accuracy, space allocation, product location and labor utilization.*
- *Purchasing and forecasting systems that help improve inventory management to improve cost-efficiency.*
- *Order-management systems that help sales and customer service representatives build orders more efficiently and accurately.*

- *Electronic data interchange, enabling you to transfer business documents such as invoices, purchase orders and advanced shipment notices to and from trading partners across different formats and systems.*
- *Business intelligence to help you identify and respond to purchasing trends early — so you are ready to respond to fluctuations as they happen.*
- *Computerized software shipping systems that turn your shipping department into a profit center, featuring customizable features to streamline shipping operations and minimize costs.*

Standards-based solutions designed for mid-sized distributors

IBM solutions for mid-sized distributors are based on IBM Express Portfolio software offerings. IBM Express Portfolio offerings are designed specifically to meet the needs — and budgets — of mid-sized companies. Based on award-winning DB2®, Lotus®, Rational®, Tivoli® and WebSphere® software from IBM, these packages feature:

- *Rich functionality that can be easily customized to address unique industry needs.*
- *Simple, wizard-driven installation and templates that help you get started quickly.*

- *Streamlined administration, allowing skilled employees to focus on other revenue-generating tasks.*
- *Modular designs offering the flexibility to choose additional features as your needs grow.*
- *Technologies based on open industry standards, giving you the freedom to integrate them with current and future investments.*

Flexible and scalable, IBM Express Portfolio offerings give you features, functionality and affordability scaled to meet your business needs — now and in the future.

IBM and IBM Business Partners add further value by offering affordable services from installation, deployment and configuration to training and education. And flexible financing options give you the freedom to take advantage of business integration solutions today.

For more information

To learn more about business solutions for wholesale distributors, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit:

ibm.com/software/smb

Open standards, feature-rich functionality
Distribution solutions are based on IBM Express Portfolio offerings, providing:
• Open standards-based technologies — easing integration with new and existing investments, without migrating all applications to one platform • Industry-proven Java™ support — enabling simplified resource management and reduced IT costs • World-class expertise and a worldwide network of IBM Business Partners — providing comprehensive business information management services, as well as hardware and software support and services
IBM Express Portfolio offerings provide many feature-rich functions for distribution solutions, including:
• Affordable B2B and B2C e-commerce Web-site creation capabilities • In-office or remote access to messaging and collaborative applications • Portal capabilities for employees, trading partners and customers to share content and applications • Application-to-application connectivity, providing a foundation on which to build and develop integration solutions • Relational database and synchronization capabilities for remote access

IBM ®

e business on demand ™

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