



# Better Communication Around Supply Availability at the Rack

[www.dtn.com](http://www.dtn.com) • 800.660.2675

© 2019 DTN, LLC, all rights reserved. "DTN" and the degree symbol logo are trademarks of DTN, LLC.

Few things cause more frustration at the rack than when a customer arrives to get product, only to find that the product isn't available.





Many suppliers and their customers still rely on manual methods and assumptions for this critical task. If a customer sees they have an allocation in the supplier's allocation viewer, they assume the terminal has what they need.

How many times have customers dispatched trucks to your rack when the product wasn't there?

As a supplier, it's no secret that your demand forecast reports and supply don't always go as planned. Your customers may pull more product than you anticipated, you may not keep enough safety stock on hand, or you face a dreaded pipeline disruption — planned or unplanned. When any of these interruptions happen, many suppliers are forced to operate reactively to customer inquiries via phone or email — which is rarely a fast, easy, or ideal process.

### Maximize your lifting control solution

Today's technology gives you more power to track, communicate, and allocate. An advanced lifting control solution provides the ability to efficiently communicate

product availability at proprietary or third-party terminals. With real-time data you can better anticipate product demand and manage inventory, as well as prioritize volume for your own retail, committed supply contracts, and top customers.

When you have to react quickly due to a disruption, an ideal lifting control solution should help you communicate the news to internal teams and external customers for immediate supply availability updates.

### Fast communication benefits everyone

Clear and instant communication about product shortages or outages makes a huge impact on the efficiency of your customers' operations, as well as your own. Respond faster to changing conditions at a specific terminal — and notify your customers about them — with just a few keystrokes.

Sharing supply availability externally and internally helps you strengthen your customer relationships and retain tighter control over your product.





## Communicating supply externally

Keep customers updated on product availability to help prevent them from sending trucks when product is out.

- Manage expectations for better efficiency and customer satisfaction
- Provide immediate knowledge if they need to switch terminals — saving them time, money, and trouble
- Prevent unexpected costs and frustration
- During a scaling event, ensure that everyone gets some product by allocating and communicating a certain percentage to all customers

## Communicating supply internally

During a supply issue, internal communications are as critical as external messaging, especially for large organizations.

- Increase communication, employee morale, and efficiency by quickly addressing potential issues
- Improve the accuracy of scorecard reporting
- Establish a repository of historical events
- Improve future forecasting and know when inventory should be held
- Proactively alert sales people about outages — before they learn about them from customers

### Key communication channels

When customers determine which suppliers to partner with, price is not the only factor.

Proactive communication — especially the ability to communicate through multiple channels — helps differentiate suppliers and delivers greater value. Specifically, a cutting-edge lifting control solution should quickly and efficiently communicate supply outages to impacted customers in a number of ways.

### Supplier's allocation viewer

Customers can receive product supply notices via your allocation viewer when making buying decisions. However, the key is to ensure this data is an up-to-the-minute view of current conditions. When customers know their allocation status instead of just product availability, they can proactively manage dispatching decisions and make other arrangements with you.

### Alerts

Proactive alerts sent via email or text will notify your external customers and internal teams when supply availability is unexpectedly out or has changed. Whether the customer is at a desk or on the move, instant texts and emails on supply availability will keep everyone on the same page. And when an event is over, customers will receive automatic notifications that normal business can resume.

### Knowing is half the battle

Knowing your supply availability at the rack is important, but it doesn't do any good if that information can't be communicated out efficiently. Sharing supply availability externally and internally, as well as through multiple channels, helps you strengthen your customer relationships, retain tighter control over your product, and gives your customers real-time data for better decision making.

### Advanced lifting control

An advanced lifting control solution has the ability to efficiently communicate product availability at proprietary or third-party terminals. With real-time data you can better anticipate product demand and manage inventory, as well as prioritize volume for your own retail, committed supply contracts, and top customers.