HANDSHAKE
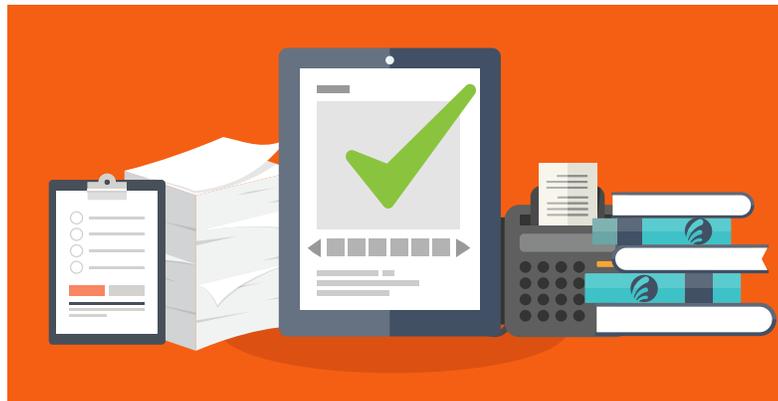
From Paper to Digital:
How 7 Brands Saw Results

Learn why these manufacturers & distributors transitioned to mobile order writing with Handshake.

Manufacturers and distributors are combating order writing inefficiencies with digital technology.

In a recent 2015 Wholesale Sales & Technology Trends Survey, manufacturers and distributors were asked to rank their biggest challenges in the order management process. Surprisingly, their number one challenge wasn't backorders, shipping inaccuracies, or production delays. Their number one challenge was order writing inefficiencies.

These inefficiencies stem from manual processes like paper order writing and other high-touch methods like Excel spreadsheets and PDF forms. Illegibility, human error, and delayed order submission from the field to the back office are common. More distressingly, however, sales reps tend to spend too much of their customers' time writing orders, and too little time having strategic, consultative sales conversations.

To combat these inefficiencies, many manufacturers and wholesale distributors have been investing in digital technology, arming their reps with order writing applications on smartphones and tablets.

Combining customer data, a digital product catalog, and an order writing interface, Handshake is one of the apps helping reps save time and make bigger sales. By syncing order data automatically from the field to the back office, it's also helping businesses reduce operational costs, eliminate errors, and safeguard order data. Let's take a closer look at the different ways Handshake has helped brands improved sales and operations.

The Top 3 Challenges in the Order Management Process:

1.
Order Writing inefficiencies

2.
Sales rep access to inaccurate information

3.
Backorders

Better customer experiences lead to more, bigger orders.

Saving Time: Writing Orders Faster & Seeing More Customers

One of the biggest benefits of mobile order writing software is simply the speed with which sales reps are able to write orders. No longer burdened by cumbersome paper product catalogs, price sheets, and forms, reps can build an order with just a few taps on a mobile device.

The result of this, of course, is that sales reps can see more customers in the same amount of time. After investing in Handshake, luxury eyewear brand Linda Farrow saw their sales reps writing orders up to 4x faster and accommodating two to three additional appointments into the day, driving more business for the brand.

This is especially helpful at trade shows, where maximizing time with buyers--both new and existing--is of premium importance. Liberty Art Fabrics, a leading textile manufacturer, was able to use Handshake to serve more customers on the trade show floor. According to Matt Gailer, Head of IT - Wholesale, "With Handshake we processed orders quicker and lost fewer customers to queuing as a result--the fashion industry is not always known for its patience!" Indeed, after investing in Handshake, Liberty Art Fabrics saw a 47% increase in trade show business.

Writing Bigger Orders: Increasing Average Order Value

A huge downside to paper processes is simply how unwieldy and cumbersome they are. To showcase products, reps are required to either carry samples into each meeting or resort to flipping through a bulky catalog.

The problem with this approach is how difficult it is for sales reps to give customers a comprehensive view of their product offering. Handshake improves this experience by arming reps with a digital product catalog that's highly visual and easily searchable.

Handshake Results

4x

Orders are written
4x faster

2+

Reps can see
2-3 additional
customers each day

47%

47% Increase in trade
show business

Selling multiple brands and product lines has never been easier.

For toy manufacturer and distributor Childsmart, these Handshake features have actually resulted in a 20% increase in average order size. Childsmart Inventory Manager Mary Licandro explains, "In the past, we might have had nine different rocking horses in our catalog, but you wouldn't really be able to see the differences between them. Obviously, sales reps can't carry samples of every product, but we've found that when buyers are able to quickly see all the products and images in one digital interface, they tend to add more products to their order."

Accommodating Complexity: Writing Orders for Multiple Brands

Writing orders for multiple brands on paper can be a huge challenge. Take American Crafts, for example. The company has over 4000 active SKUs under ten owned and licensed brands.

In order to organize their rapidly expanding collection of products, American Crafts was using an order form that didn't fit on one page. According to American Crafts' VP of Marketing Grant Madsen, the company's "product line has grown so much in the last couple years that the order form just became an unwieldy beast."

The order form was essentially an order booklet––with all products listed by brand and category on multiple pages. At trade shows like the Craft & Hobby Association Mega Show, American Crafts would have up to 10 different booths (one for each brand), with a dedicated data entry staff person sitting behind a curtain, typing each order by hand into their ERP system.

Since investing in Handshake's mobile order writing software, however, each of American Crafts' product lines is easily navigable. Where before, reps would have to open up a catalog or use printouts to walk a customer through all their available products, they can now use Handshake to simply swipe through all the different categories in the system, build an order, and automatically send the order to the back office for processing.

> **"**
>
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>
> **"**
>
> **Mary Licandro**
> Inventory Manager, Childsmart

HANDSHAKE

Handshake is replacing data entry by automatically syncing orders with back office systems.

Reducing Costs: Eliminating Submission Delays, Data Entry, & Errors

Manual order writing creates a host of problems when it comes to the submission and order entry process:

- Order submission delays are common when sales reps must manually send them in for processing, which can result in shipping delays and unhappy customers.

- Data entry monopolizes time and resources.

- Human error in the data entry process can cause errors and mis-shipments.

Many manufacturers & distributors must contend with these costly issues every single day. Take leading fragrance manufacturer Tru Fragrance, for instance. Selling through trade shows and store visits, Tru Fragrance's independent sales reps would each write upwards of fifty orders per week on paper. To submit those orders, they would either fax them or take a photo of each order form and email it to the back office.

As a result, team members in the company's Customer Care department would often receive orders at the very end of the week, forcing them to get through mountains of data entry every Friday night. "Our back office staff would spend about 10 to 12 hours entering orders into NetSuite each week, leaving them little time to work on other important tasks," says Director of IT John Goliak.

Fast-growing accessories brand Kitsch faced similar challenges. According to Co-Founder Jeremy Thurswell, handwritten orders were causing data entry errors that represented a significant drain on resources. "We were sending the wrong products to the wrong addresses," says Thurswell. "At that point, we had to spend time emailing reps, either letting them know that a PO had been filled out incorrectly, or trying to confirm what they'd written."

"Our back office would spend about 10 to 12 hours entering orders into NetSuite each week, leaving them little time work on other important tasks."

John Goliak
Director of IT,
Tru Fragrance

Order data will never get lost in a shuffle of paper.

With Handshake, both companies are now able to get orders from the field to the back office in seconds rather than days, and because orders are synced directly to back office systems, there's less need for data entry.

Since integrating Handshake's mobile order writing and order management solution with their NetSuite ERP system, Tru Fragrance has cut down data entry manhours by 50%. Similarly, Kitsch has been able to reduce hours of daily data entry work to mere minutes, and orders are shipped error-free.

**Safeguarding Order Data: Maintaining a Digital Record**

With orders written on paper, the risk of losing important data is high. Janelle Shufelt, Client Relations Manager at luxury tabletop accessories brand RabLabs, once felt that fear acutely, especially at trade shows, where they were writing a high volume of orders. "We printed out copies of our price list and checked off what each buyer wanted. After the show, I would carry those orders onto the plane. We were terrified that if my luggage got lost, all our orders would be gone."

With Handshake, orders are written digitally and synced with back office systems, and there's no risk of order data getting lost in a shuffle of paper.

Transforming Order Writing and Processing

It's time for manufacturers and wholesale distributors to prioritize technology. Forward-thinking companies are already forging ahead, investing in mobile order writing solutions that are improving efficiency, growing sales, and ultimately creating a better customer experience.

The Lifecycle of an Order: Manual Process

Order Writing

Fax

Data Entry

Processing

Shipping
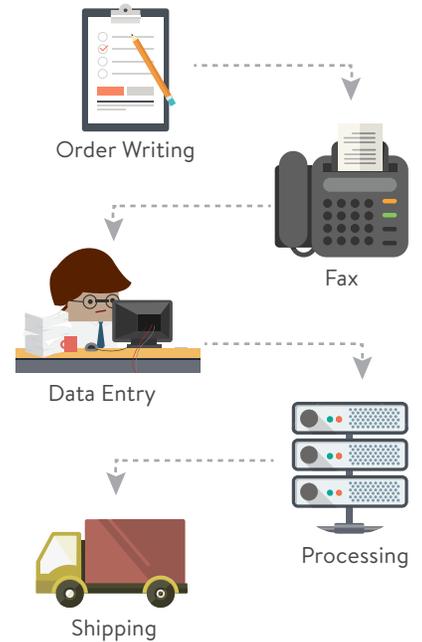
The Lifecycle of an Order with Handshake

Order Writing

Office Sync

Shipping

Mobile order writing technology is helping businesses stay competitive in the on-demand economy.

While adopting new technology may have been daunting in the past, new off-the-shelf SaaS solutions like Handshake are making the implementation process easier than ever before. Manufacturers & distributors are not only increasingly arming their sales reps with mobile order writing technology, they are also making key investments in integrated platforms like B2B eCommerce to give customers even more autonomy in the ordering process.

As businesses prioritize efficiency and respond to customer demands for speed and more strategic value from sales reps, these technologies are becoming necessary to compete in today's market.

Want to learn more about how Handshake can help your business stay ahead of the competition? Contact us today.

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From Paper to Digital: 5 Key Benefits

Saving Time

Writing Bigger Orders

Accommodating Complexity

Reducing Costs

Safeguarding Order Data