

# TOP 10 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DTC FULFILLMENT PARTNER

Choosing a fulfillment partner can be a daunting task. Fulfillment is the last touchpoint before your customer receives your wine, and it's crucial to get it right. With many companies claiming to offer similar services, how do you separate hype from reality? Here, we outline 10 key questions to ask potential fulfillment partners to help you find one that's right for you.

## 1 / Are you constantly improving your technology?

In an era of rapidly increasing consumer expectations, it's never been more critical to be fast, efficient and accurate with your orders. Your customers demand it. Make sure your fulfillment partner is committed to innovation to keep you ahead of the curve.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- When did you last update your warehouse management system?
- Do you use paperless technology in your warehouses to reduce errors?
- What plans do you have for enhancements this year?

## 2 / How do you handle client service and support?

High quality, dependable customer service is paramount when choosing any business partner. Make sure your fulfillment provider has the right people and processes in place to handle all issues quickly and efficiently.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- Describe my relationship with your client services team on a day to day basis.
- Do you offer dedicated account managers for each client?
- Do you provide phone support? What are your hours?
- What are your SLAs (Service Level Agreements) regarding client service response times?

**DID YOU KNOW?** WineDirect has a strict policy to respond to any client inquiry within 4 hours. Most are responded to within half that time.

## 3 / How will you help me delight my customers?

You know better than anyone that keeping your customers happy and interested in your brand is the most important thing your winery does every day. Your fulfillment partner should be as focused on delighting your customers as you are.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- How quickly do you provide order tracking information once a package is processed?
- Do you offer automatic customer emails, delivery exception alerts and real-time SMS updates?
- Can my customers request order redirects online?

## 4 / What is your order accuracy rate?

Mistakes happen, but high order accuracy and quick action if something does go wrong are two of the top things you should demand from your fulfillment partner. If their accuracy rate is low (less than 99%), vague, or worse, “we don’t know”, then look elsewhere.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- What is your order accuracy rate?
- What processes do you have in place to ensure a low error rate?
- If you do make a mistake, how do you make it right?

**DID YOU KNOW?** In 2016, WineDirect’s order accuracy rate was 99.98% across more than 1.2 million packages shipped.

## 5 / How will I track my inventory and manage my orders?

A good fulfillment provider should make it easy for you to provide great customer service and efficiently manage your orders. Be sure to ask about their order tracking capabilities and online account access.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- Do you have an online portal where I can view order details in real-time?
- Do inventory levels update in real-time?
- Can I redirect orders online without having to contact your support team?

## 6 / How quickly will my customers receive an order confirmation and their wine?

Thanks to ecommerce giants like Zappos and Amazon, 2-day delivery has become the norm. If your wine takes a week or more to reach its destination, you run the risk of lost sales and unhappy customers.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- What’s your same-day shipping cutoff?
- What’s your average time-in-transit?
- Do you offer bi-coastal warehouses to reduce shipping time to the east coast?

**DID YOU KNOW?** WineDirect has a 1pm same-day shipping cutoff, the latest in the industry, and can reach 90% of wine buyers in the US within 2 days.

## 7 / Do you integrate with my ecommerce software?

Integrating ecommerce & fulfillment systems streamlines your workflow & makes it easier for you to deliver a great customer experience.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- Will my orders flow through automatically from my ecommerce software to fulfillment?
- Do you support automated shipping update and order exception emails?
- Can you auto-sync products and inventory with my ecommerce software?

**DID YOU KNOW?** WineDirect’s ecommerce and fulfillment tools are fully integrated so you can spend less time processing orders, and more time making your customers happy.

## 8 / How will you handle growth?

Your winery's ability to grow and keep up with the demands of an expanding customer base is imperative to your success. What works for a few hundred shipments may not work when you have thousands. Your DTC partner must be equipped to help your winery scale up.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- How many packages do you ship on average every day?
- How often do you experience service failures due to high volume?
- What wineries larger than me do you service?

## 9 / Do you offer additional opportunities to help me sell my wine direct to consumer?

In addition to serving your existing customers, does your fulfillment partner help you find new ones? As the wine industry becomes ever more competitive, a good DTC partner should be committed to helping you identify new channels to acquire customers.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- Do you have any online marketplace partnerships where I can sell my wine?
- What programs do you have in place to help me acquire new customers?

**DID YOU KNOW?** WineDirect makes it easy for you to sell your wines on marketplaces including Amazon, eBay and Vivino.

## 10 / How easy is it to get up and running?

The last thing your growing winery needs is for sales to get bogged down by a slow and difficult transition with a new fulfillment partner. Make sure they have a plan in place to get you up and running quickly and smoothly, including training for your staff.



### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- How long does it take to go live once I decide to make the change?
- What is your training program for my team?
- Will I have to “go dark” and interrupt shipping during the transition?

# Start shipping better today.

Contact our team to find out how WineDirect can help your winery delight your customers and succeed with DTC.

**VISIT [WINEDIRECT.COM/](https://www.winedirect.com)  
**GETSTARTED**  
or call 800-819-0325**