



# The Hidden Strain of Manual Order Management and How to Move Beyond It

Uncover the misalignments, frustrations, and hidden costs holding IT, Ecommerce, and Operations teams back, and the strategies brands can use to **overcome them.**

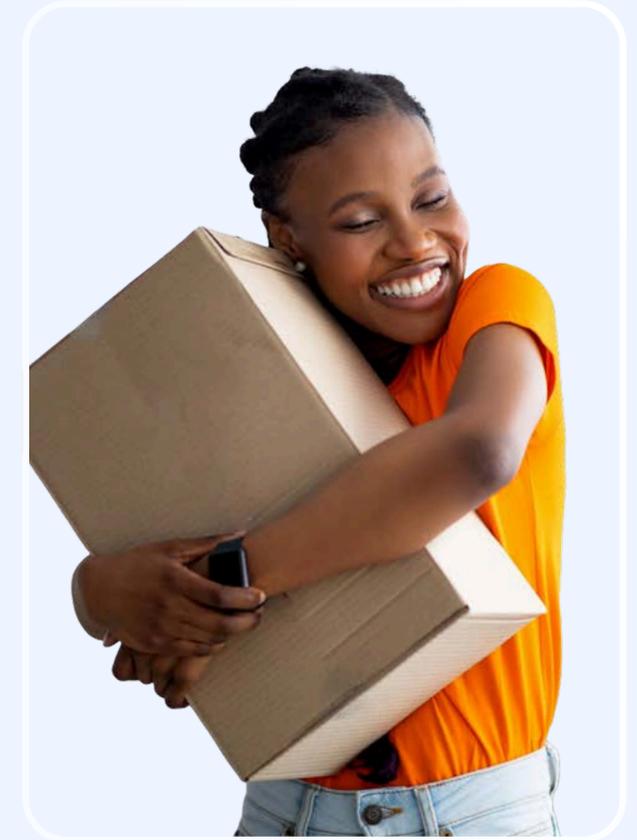
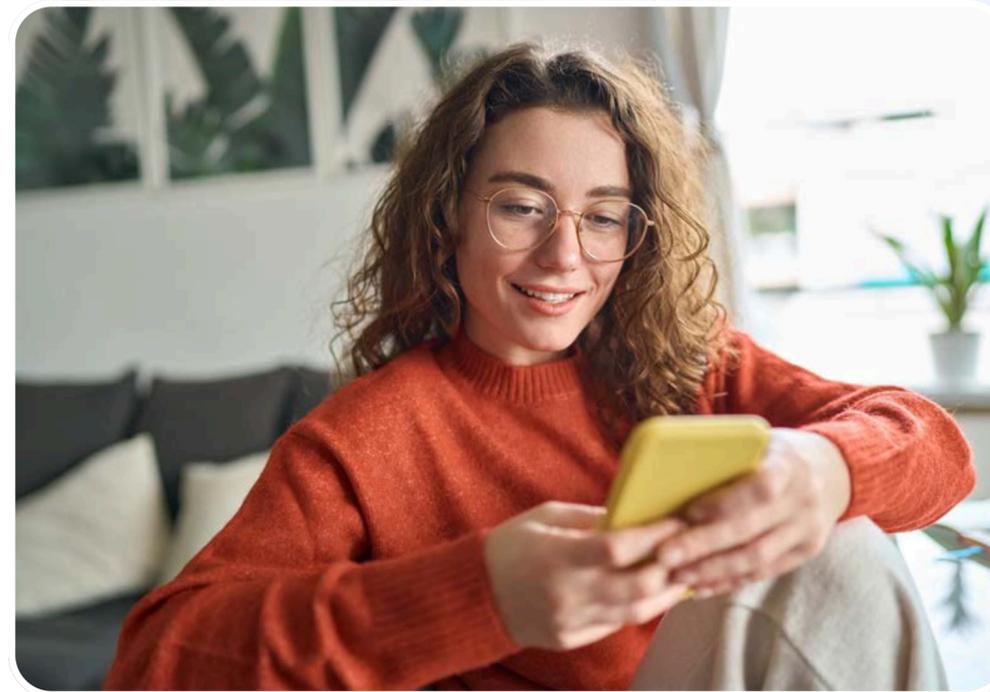


# Introduction

As shoppers demand faster delivery, real-time updates, and flexible fulfillment options, the post-purchase experience has become just as critical as the path to checkout. Today's brands aren't just delivering products: they're delivering promises. And in a D2C landscape, **fulfillment is no longer a back-office function**. It's a frontline brand experience that can make or break customer loyalty.

To meet those expectations, order management has evolved into a shared responsibility. Ecommerce teams launch campaigns that surge demand. IT keeps the infrastructure running. Operations ensures every item is picked, packed, and shipped on time. But as responsibilities blur across departments, new challenges emerge: overlapping KPIs, disconnected systems, and decision-making bottlenecks.

**Collaboration is no longer a nice-to-have, it's a requirement.**



# What This Study Aims to Uncover

This report explores the real-world experiences of IT, Ecommerce, and Operations leaders – who are currently leveraging legacy systems to manage orders – **to answer three key questions:**



## Where do goals align or conflict among leaders responsible for order management?

We examine how different teams define success, what KPIs they're chasing, and where internal misalignment affects progress.



## What's the true cost of poor inventory and fulfillment execution?

We go beyond anecdotal frustration to understand the operational, financial, and brand impact of disconnected processes and systems.



## What's standing in the way of smoother operations, and what is the path forward?

We break down the biggest barriers to efficient, scalable order management, and show you how to overcome them.



# Who We Surveyed

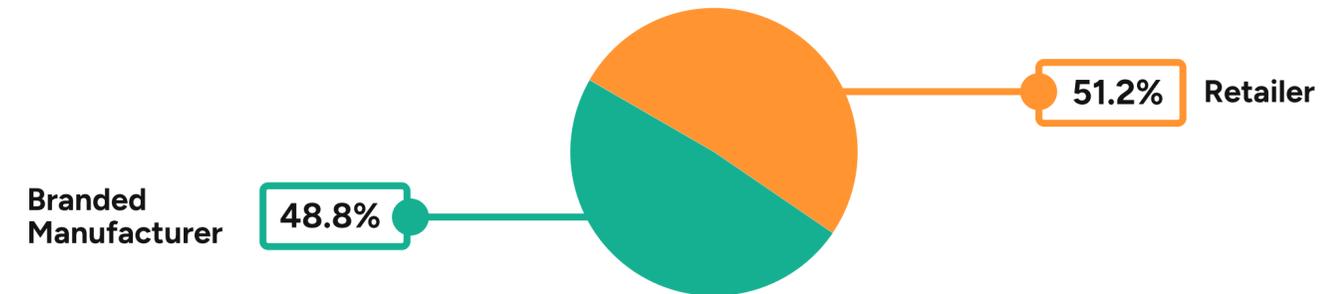
To better understand the day-to-day realities of those tasked with order management, we surveyed IT, Ecommerce, and Operations leaders at mid-sized D2C brands.

**Notably, none of the respondents currently use a dedicated Order Management System (OMS).**

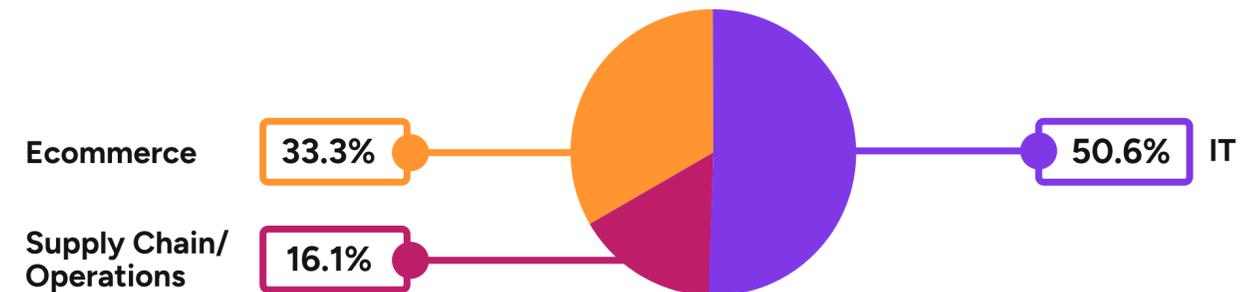
Instead, they rely on a mix of ERPs, ecommerce platforms, manual processes, and internal tools.

Here's who we surveyed →

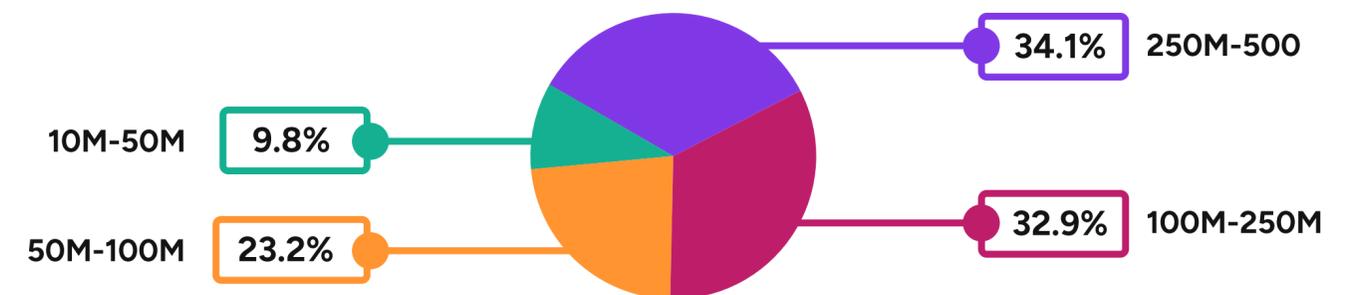
## Industry Breakdown



## Department Breakdown



## Revenue Range Distribution

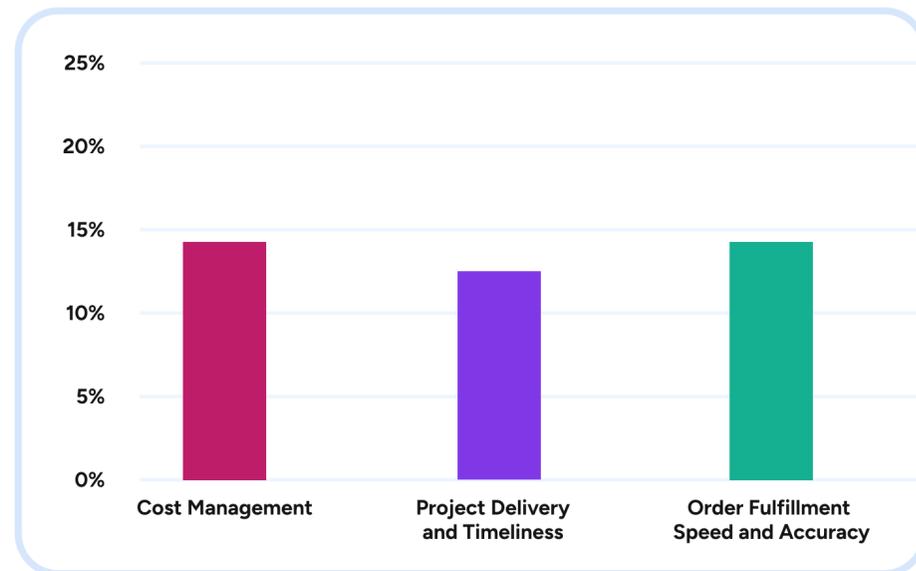


# The Shared Goals (and Hidden Friction) in Order Management

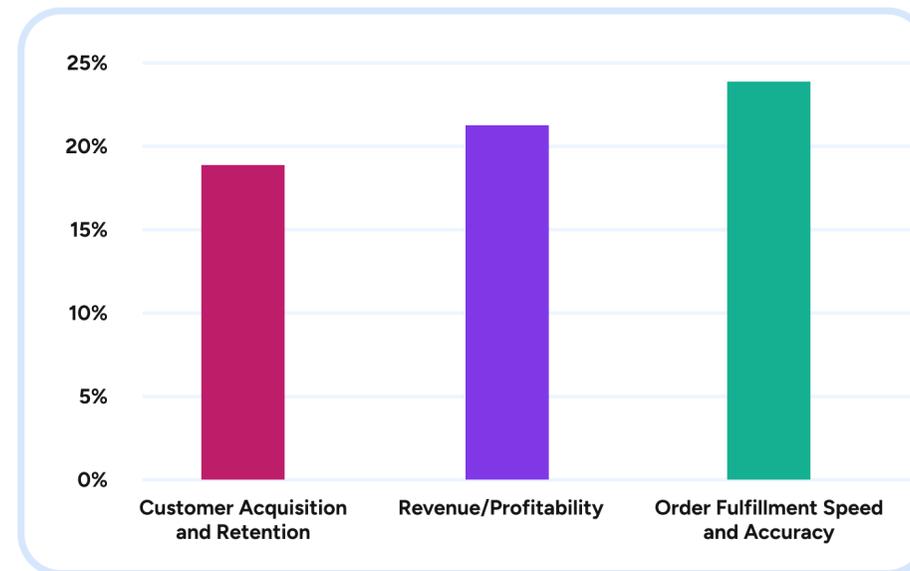
Order management isn't just a systems issue, it's a cross-functional challenge that touches nearly every team. While fulfillment might live in Operations, the experience it creates impacts customer retention, revenue growth, and IT's ability to keep systems running smoothly. In this section, we explore the top KPIs by department and how competing priorities can create internal friction that stalls progress.

## Primary Order Management-Related KPIs for IT vs. Operations vs. Ecommerce

Top 3 IT KPIs



Top 3 Ecommerce KPIs



Top 3 Operations/Supply Chain KPIs



**Note:** Responses reflect aggregated mentions across open-ended answers.





# Where Priorities Align and Conflict

Priority	Ecommerce	IT	Operations
Cost Management		✓	✓
Customer Acquisition & Retention	✓		
Operational Efficiency			✓
Order Fulfillment Performance	✓	✓	✓
Revenue Growth	✓		
Project Delivery and Timeliness		✓	



## Key Insight

All teams see Order Fulfillment Performance as vital, but their priorities differ. Ecommerce focuses on revenue and customer experience, IT emphasizes cost control and stability, while Operations values efficiency. These differing goals can clash. What's good for the customer may burden Operations, and cost-saving efforts can limit innovation. Without alignment, companies risk poor investments, slow progress, and friction across teams.



# The Path Forward



## Align KPIs Across Teams

Shift from department-specific KPIs to shared goals. For example, connect Ecommerce's conversion metrics with Operations' efficiency targets by focusing on fulfillment profitability. Shared success metrics reduce friction and foster collaboration.



## Create a Cross-Functional Decision Framework

Bring IT, Ecommerce, and Operations together when making tech and fulfillment decisions. Shared ownership speeds up buy-in, improves accountability, and ensures solutions support both immediate needs and long-term growth.



## Use IT as a Connector, Not a Gatekeeper

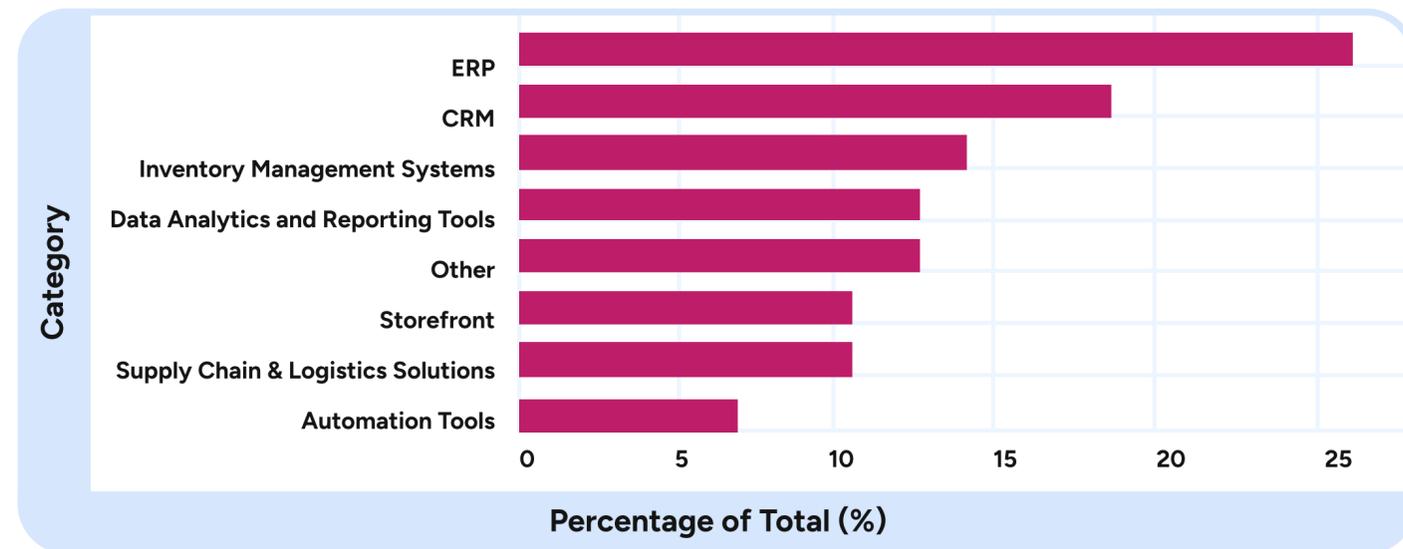
Position IT as a strategic enabler that helps other teams grow without compromising stability. Involving IT early leads to scalable, flexible solutions that balance innovation with infrastructure needs.



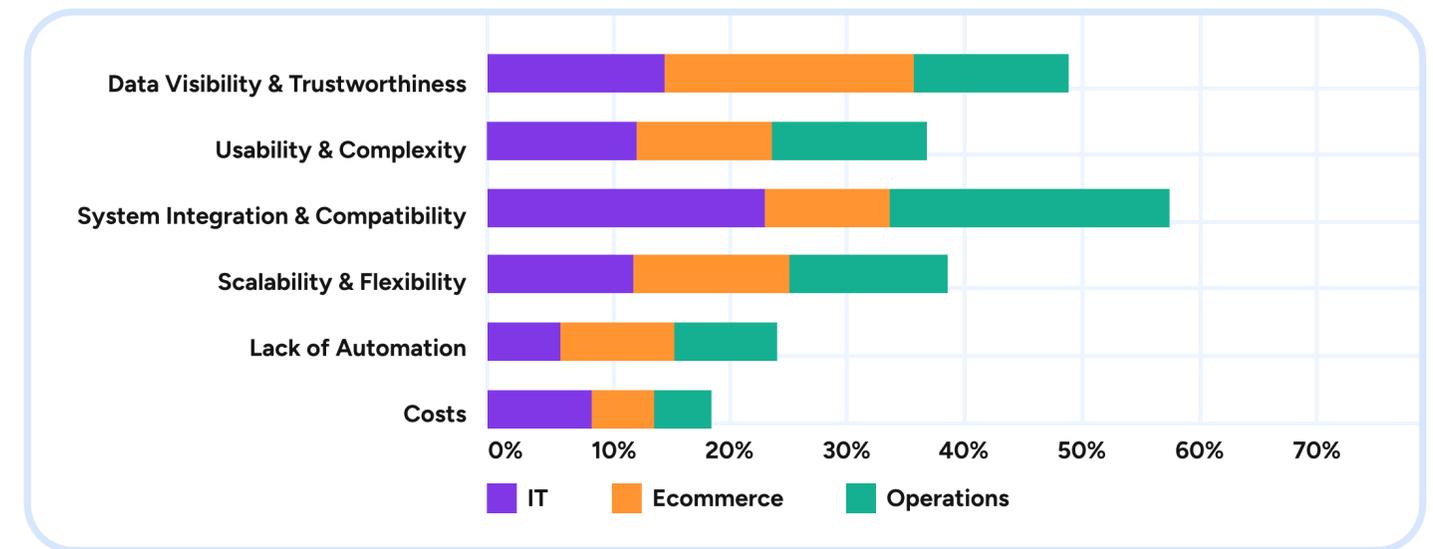
# What's Working and What's Not

When companies struggle with fulfillment, it's rarely due to a lack of tools. It's due to the wrong mix of tools. Many brands are still relying on a patchwork of ERPs, ecommerce platforms, CRMs, and homegrown solutions to manage orders. This section uncovers what teams are using, what's creating the most frustration, and how to know when it's time to evolve.

## Most Commonly Used Tools to Handle Order Management, When a Brand Doesn't Have a Dedicated OMS



## Biggest Frustrations with Current Tech



**Note:** Responses reflect aggregated mentions across open-ended answers. To ensure equal representation across departments, response counts were normalized by department.



## 🔑 Key Insight

Most respondents still rely on ERPs to manage orders, which isn't surprising. They're often embedded as the "domain of truth" for inventory, financials, and operations. But ERPs lack the flexibility needed for today's omnichannel demands. As brands bolt on storefronts and other tools, systems become fragmented and gaps emerge that ERPs alone can't solve.

**Nearly 60% of respondents cited System Integration & Compatibility as their top frustration, with Data Visibility & Trustworthiness close behind.** These issues go hand in hand: poor integration leads to bad data, which impacts productivity, decisions, and customer experience. Without addressing root causes, businesses risk increasing complexity and inefficiency as they grow.

### 🕒 REDUCING TECH DEBT BY DESIGN

## Solution Spotlight

Deck Commerce helps brands escape the cycle of patchwork systems and mounting technical debt. With over 70 prebuilt integrations and flexible APIs, our platform connects directly to the tools you already use, without the complexity of custom builds.

### 🕒 THE ARCHITECTS OF TECH DEBT

## Top IT Concern

IT leaders are buried in integration challenges and scalability issues. Their biggest pain points, System Integration & Compatibility and Scalability & Reliability—signal deep infrastructure problems. Many systems are held together by workarounds, creating constant maintenance demands.

// One of the biggest challenges is dealing with integration issues between various systems, which can lead to data inconsistencies and delays.

### 🕒 BLIND SPOTS AND BOTTLENECKS

## Top Ecommerce Concern

Ecommerce leaders struggle with data issues. Without reliable, real-time data, often due to poor integrations, they can't plan effectively or deliver seamless customer experiences. These blind spots directly impact revenue and campaign performance.

// "Maintaining data quality can be a significant challenge. Discrepancies in data entry and integrating with other systems often lead to inaccuracies, affecting decision-making."

### 🕒 EFFICIENCY ON EMPTY

## Top Operations Concern

Operations teams face daily delays and inefficiencies when systems don't sync. Their top issues, Integration and Data Visibility, result in higher costs, manual work, and slow fulfillment. They need tools that boost execution without adding more complexity.

// The biggest challenge is integration complexity, leading to inefficiencies and miscommunication between systems and teams.



# The Path Forward



## What is a Feature vs. a System Problem

Some issues, like slow performance or missing automation, might be fixed with better use of current tools. But if your team spends more time fixing systems than fulfilling orders, your tech stack might be the root problem.



## Understand If You're Ready for an OMS

For brands managing growing complexity, an OMS can be a game-changer. If your tools can't handle rising volume or shopper expectations, it may be time to switch. A modern OMS cuts friction, saves time, and supports growth.

Take Our Quiz to Find Out if You're Ready for an OMS [➔](#)



## Tackle Integration First

Even without a new system, your tools need to work together. Clean integrations improve data accuracy, reduce errors, and speed up fulfillment. Simple steps, like adding connectors or reducing manual entry, can deliver big improvements.

MODERNIZE WITHOUT STARTING OVER

## Solution Spotlight

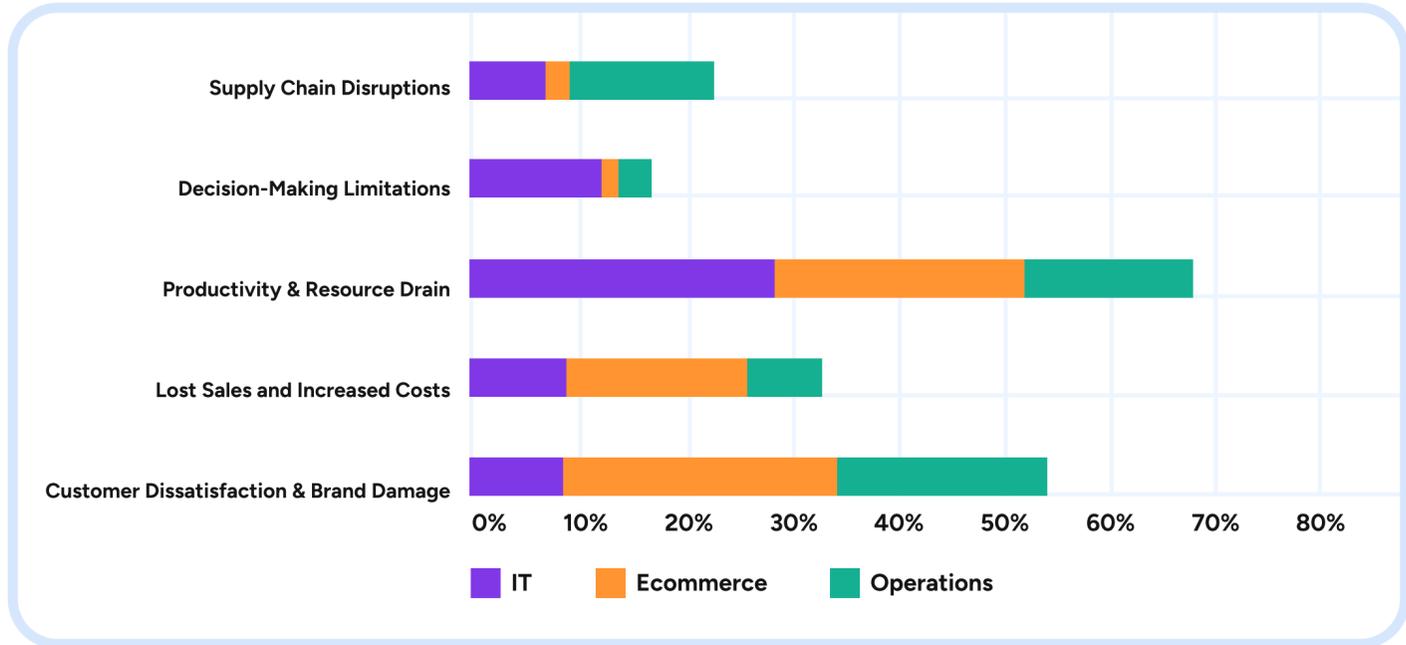
Deck Commerce helps brands modernize operations without a full rip-and-replace project. Our modular platform plugs into your existing systems, giving you the automation, visibility, and reliability you need to scale, without disrupting what's already working.



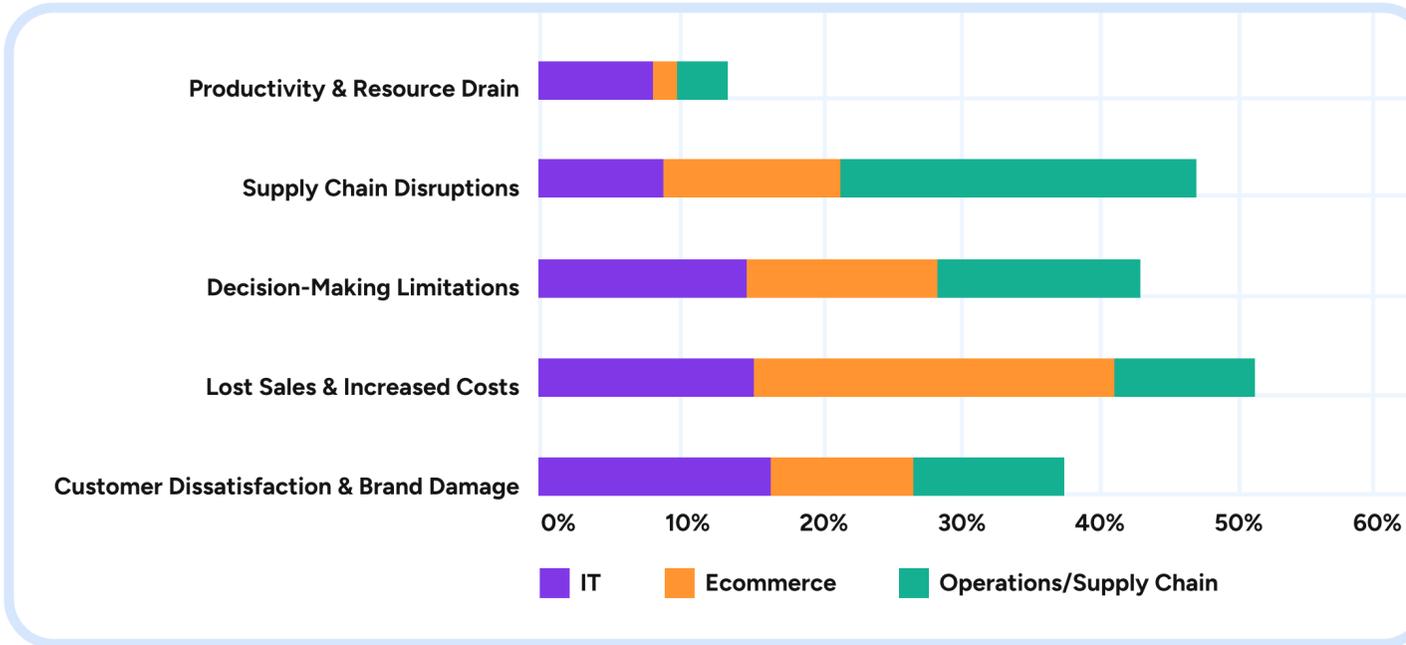
# The Real Cost of Inventory and Fulfillment Issues

Inventory visibility and fulfillment accuracy are two sides of the same coin, but they create very different kinds of business pain. This section explores how these problems show up across departments and the downstream impact they have on team performance and profitability.

## How Order Delays/Inaccuracies Impact Objectives



## How a Lack of Inventory Visibility Impacts Objectives



**Note:** Responses reflect aggregated mentions across open-ended answers. To ensure equal representation across departments, response counts were normalized by department.



## 🔑 Key Insight

Leaders clearly draw a more direct line between poor inventory visibility and revenue loss, citing missed sales, excess carrying costs, and over/understock scenarios as top challenges. In contrast, order fulfillment inaccuracies tend to impact revenue more indirectly – through reduced productivity, strained resources, and customer dissatisfaction. This suggests that while inventory issues trigger immediate business pain, fulfillment issues slowly chip away at brand loyalty and margins.



### 🔴 MORE SYSTEMS, MORE STRAIN

#### Top IT Concern

IT teams feel the downstream impact of fulfillment issues. Constant maintenance leads to productivity drains and adds to tech debt, keeping teams in reactive mode and limiting their ability to innovate.

“Fulfillment issues create a ripple effect, forcing me to spend extra time coordinating with various teams to resolve issues.”

### 🔴 EVERY OPERATIONAL MISS IS A LOST SALE

#### Top Ecommerce Concern

Visibility gaps and fulfillment errors directly affect revenue and customer trust. Inaccuracies lead to delays and poor experiences, making ecommerce the first to feel the fallout.

“Continuous fulfillment or inventory issues can harm the brand's reputation, requiring additional marketing efforts and resources to rebuild trust with customers.”

### 🔴 STUCK IN REACTION MODE

#### Top Operations Concern

Ops teams are bogged down by fulfillment issues. When inventory data is wrong, planning fails, errors pile up, and momentum stalls.

“Lack of accurate inventory data affects the speed of response to market changes.”



# The Path Forward



## Focus on Root Cause, Not Just Symptoms

If you're constantly reacting, it's time to step back and look upstream. Are inaccurate forecasts, siloed systems, or manual processes driving the issues? Solving those underlying issues prevents the same fires from flaring up again and again.



## Treat Inventory & Fulfillment as a Team Sport

Inventory and fulfillment impact every department. Unite teams to map pain points and define success together. Cross-functional input leads to faster alignment and better decisions.



## Evaluate if It's Time for an OMS

If you're juggling more complexity, growing demand, or rising shopper expectations, your system could be holding you back. An OMS can streamline workflows, reduce errors, and scale with your business.

[Take Our Quiz to Find Out  
if You're Ready for an OMS](#) 

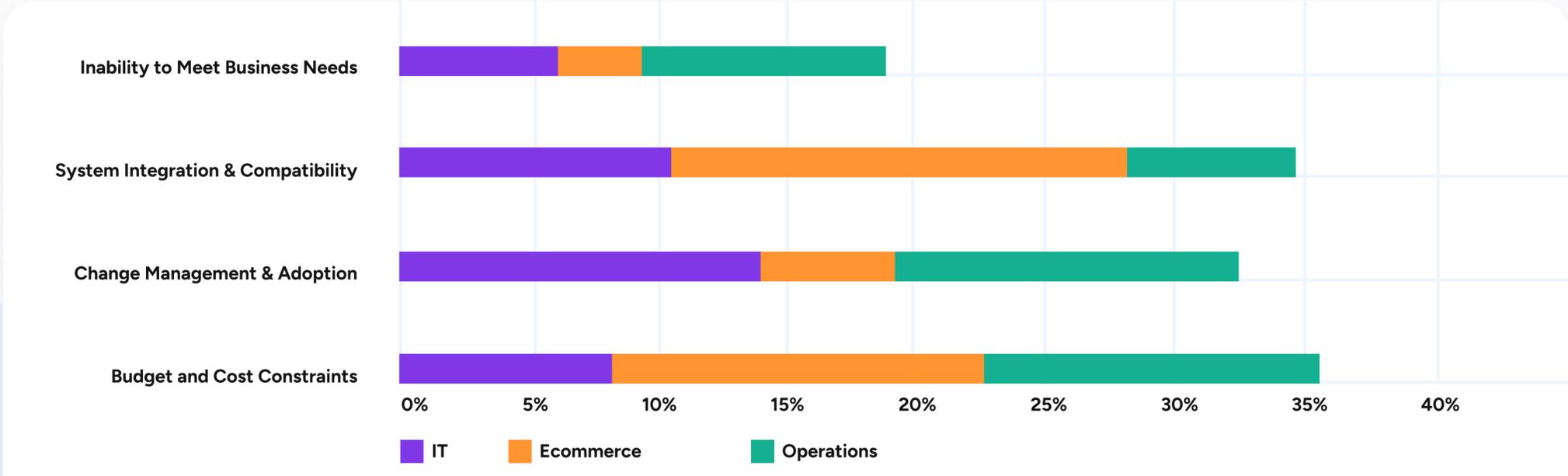




# Key Roadblocks for OMS Adoption

If the pain of manual order management is so clear, why haven't companies adopted an Order Management System? The answer lies in a mix of cost concerns, integration fears, and change resistance. This section breaks down the most common barriers – and how to move past them.

## Biggest Roadblocks for Those Who've Considered Purchasing an OMS



**Note:** Responses reflect aggregated mentions across open-ended answers. To ensure equal representation across departments, response counts were normalized by department.



## 🔑 Key Insight

Budget and Cost Constraints is the most common roadblock to OMS adoption. Right behind it are System Integration & Compatibility and Change Management & Adoption. Budget and Change Management follow closely, reflecting concerns over cost, effort, and disruption. These challenges are connected: complex integrations erode trust in data, slow adoption, and make ROI harder to prove. The result is delayed decisions. Not from lack of need, but from fear of fallout.

### 🕒 DELAYS COME AT A COST

## Solution Spotlight

Every week spent juggling disconnected systems is a week of lost insights, missed revenue, and growing technical debt. The longer teams wait, the harder it becomes to untangle the complexity. Leading brands are starting to treat OMS as a strategic enabler, not just a back-end tool, and they're gaining speed, clarity, and control because of it.

### 🔄 CHANGE IS THE HARDEST PART

## Top IT Roadblock

IT teams worry most about adoption: how rollout impacts bandwidth, who owns it, and how stable the existing architecture remains. Integration comes second, but still looms large.

### 👁️ BLIND SPOTS AND BOTTLENECKS

## Top Ecommerce Roadblock

For Ecommerce, integration and budget are top concerns. If the OMS doesn't connect cleanly or deliver fast ROI, it's hard to justify. These teams rely on reliable, real-time data and any disruption cause by poor integration risks revenue.

### 💰 COST IS THE CLIFF—BUT ADOPTION IS THE UPHILL BATTLE

## Top Operations Roadblock

For Operations teams, it's a tie: Budget and Change Management. These leaders are tasked with making sure fulfillment runs smoothly every day. They need confidence that new systems will work right away, without disrupting workflows or performance.



# The Path Forward



## Acknowledge Integration Anxiety. Then De-Risk It.

Show how an OMS fits into what already exists without breaking it. Highlight how pre-built integrations and established workflows can be used to make the most of your current tech stack, while still having the flexibility to adapt as your business grows.



## Make the Business Case for ROI, Not Just Cost

Highlight not just what the OMS costs, but what it saves: less manual work, fewer errors, happier customers. Remind teams: doing nothing also has a cost, and it grows daily.



## Prepare for Change Management Early

Map the change journey before rollout. Identify who's affected, where resistance might show up, and what support they'll need. Secure a cross-functional champion to keep things moving.



FORGING A PATH FORWARD

# Aligning Teams for Smarter Order Management

Silos slow everything down, especially order management. The most effective organizations don't just align their systems, they align their people. IT, Operations, and Ecommerce need to work from the same blueprint to evaluate new tools, prioritize investments, and scale smarter. Start by identifying shared goals like speed, accuracy, and cost efficiency, and build your business case around those.

Use a cross-functional steering group to evaluate solutions, document pain points by team, and connect functional KPIs to business-wide outcomes (like customer LTV or average fulfillment cost). The more aligned your internal teams are, the easier it becomes to align your tech stack.

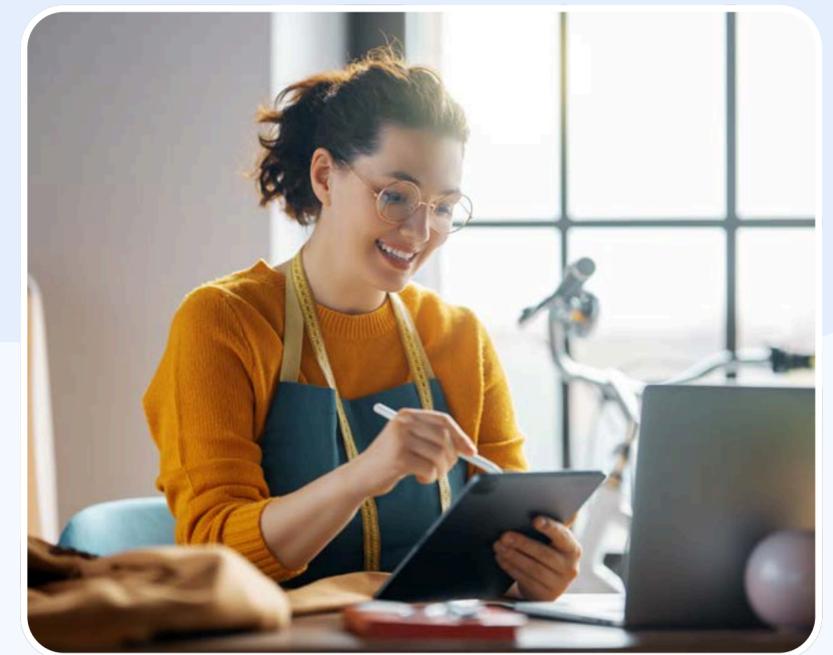


# Conclusion

As this report highlights, order management is not a siloed operational function. It's a cross functional driver of customer experience, profitability, and long-term growth. Yet despite its importance, many brands are still navigating fulfillment with disconnected systems, limited visibility, and competing departmental priorities.

The good news? These challenges are solvable. Across Ecommerce, IT, and Operations, leaders are already asking smarter questions: What's the cost of doing nothing? Where are we duplicating effort? What's keeping us from scaling? These questions are a signal that order management is moving from an afterthought to a strategic priority.

By investing in systems that bring teams, data, and workflows together, brands can move faster, serve customers better, and reduce the friction that slows everyone down. Whether you're reevaluating your tech stack or just rethinking internal processes, one thing is clear: **now is the time to treat order management as a competitive advantage.**



## Ready to take the next step?

**Deck Commerce has helped global brands process more than 100 million orders with speed, accuracy, and flexibility.** We know what it takes to turn order management into a strategic advantage. If you're ready to reduce complexity, improve performance, and support your team with tools that scale, let's talk. Set up a conversation today and see what's possible when your systems and your teams are working in sync.

[Get Started](#)

