

Rising to the occasion: A look at how warehouses performed during Covid

Nothing about the past year was normal, and DC operators felt the pinch as orders came flooding in from consumers scrambling to stock their homes with essentials. How did warehouses perform under the stress? Pretty well, it seems. Our annual warehouse and DC metrics study, conducted among DC VELOCITY readers and members of the Warehousing Education and Research Council (WERC), found that a third of respondents believed their response to Covid-19 “saved the day” for their companies. Here’s a snapshot of our 18th annual study’s findings:



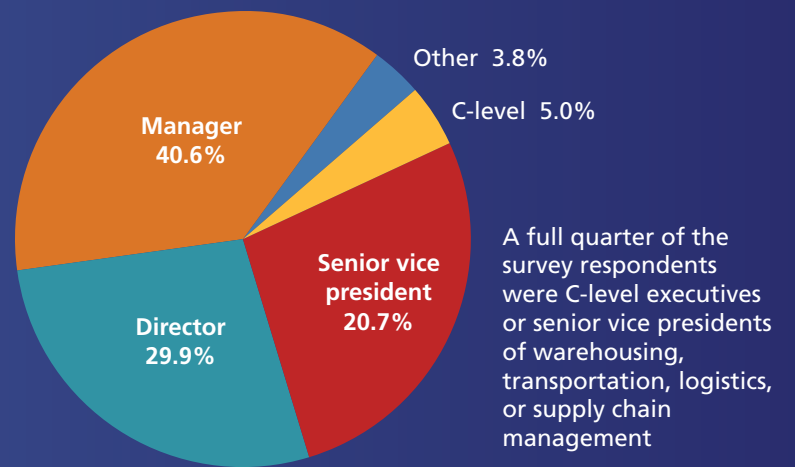
Top 12 most commonly used metrics, 2021

Metric	2021 rank	2020 rank	2019 rank
Average warehouse capacity used	1	1	2
Order picking accuracy (% by order)	2	3	1
Peak warehouse capacity used	3	5	3
On-time shipments	4	7	4
% of orders with on-time delivery	5	4	31
Shipped complete per customer order	6	2	32
Shipped outbound orders damage-free	7	6	33
Correct documentation	8	8	34
Dock-to-stock cycle time, in hours	9	10	9
*On time ready to ship (outbound operations)	10		
**% of supplier orders received damage-free	11	13	11
**Inventory-count accuracy (% by location)	11	9	5

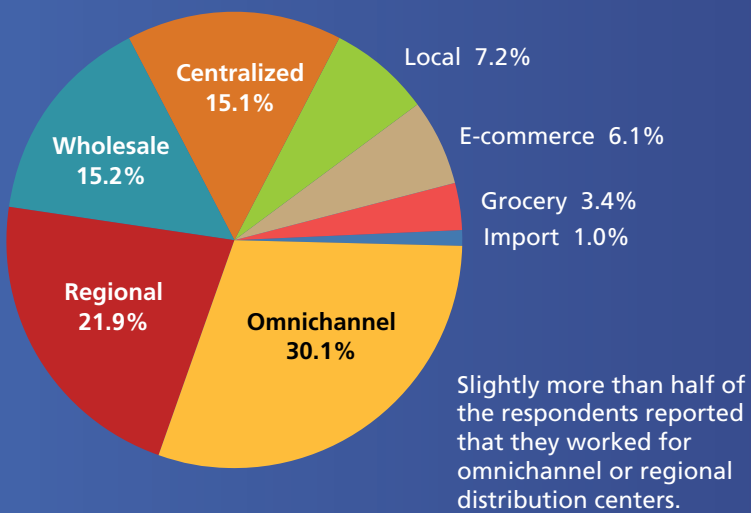
*New category
**Indicates a tie

The 2021 survey found that capacity- and order accuracy-related metrics are still the most commonly used warehouse performance measures, with “on-time shipments” moving up several spots in the rankings from the previous year.

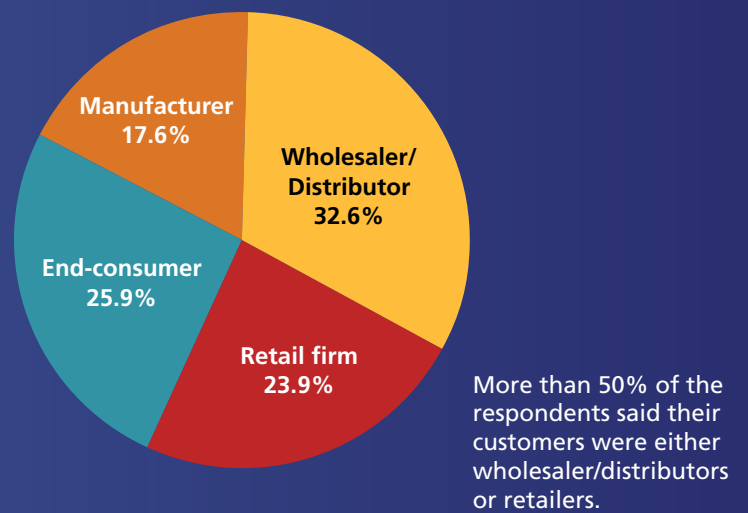
Survey respondents by title



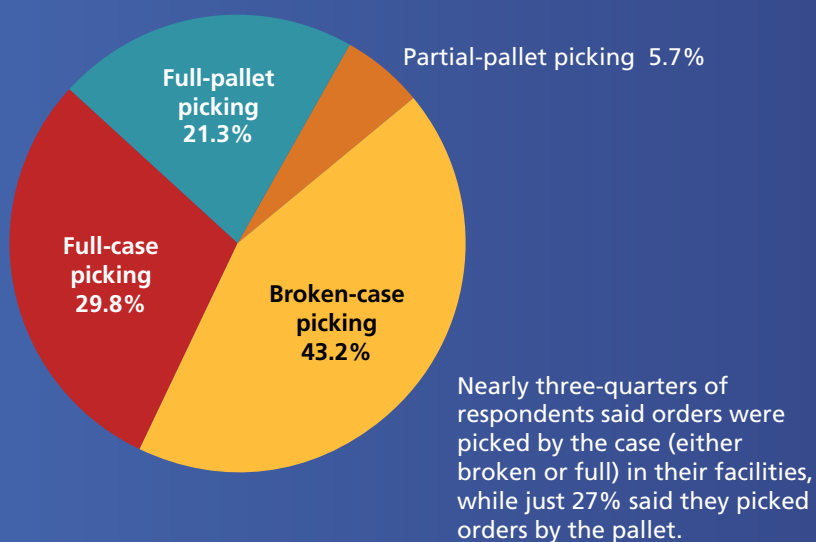
What type of DC do you operate?



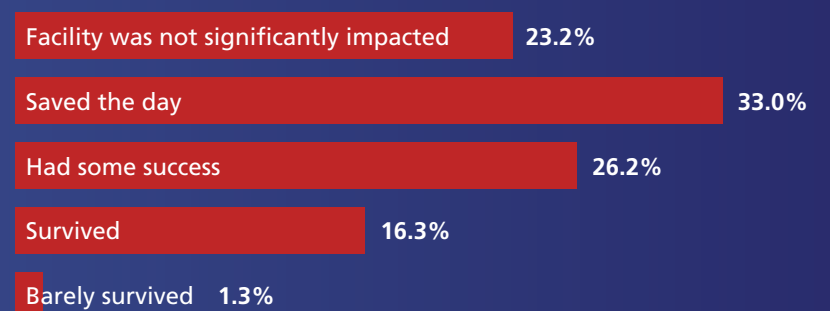
Who is your customer?



How are orders picked in your DC?



How would you rate your facility's performance in response to Covid-19?



While nearly a quarter of the respondents said their DC's performance was largely unaffected by the pandemic, a third said their operation's performance “saved the day” for their companies.

ABOUT THE STUDY: The annual DC metrics study is produced through a partnership between the Warehousing Education and Research Council (WERC) and DC VELOCITY. This year's survey was conducted by Joe Tillman, a WERC researcher and founder of TSquared Logistics; Dr. Donnie Williams, assistant professor at the University of Arkansas; and Dr. Karl Manrodt, a professor at Georgia College & State University. To see the full results of the survey, including performance and benchmarking data, go to www.werc.org.