

PUBLIC GOODS AND AMWARE TEAM UP TO HANDLE 500% ORDER SPIKE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC



Public Goods sells quality household products that are healthy, sustainable and ultra-affordable. Most sales are online at publicgoods.com, but in early 2020 the company began national distribution to a major retail chain.

As if opening up a new sales channel wasn't enough of a distribution challenge, something else happened in this timeframe – the Coronavirus pandemic shutdown hit hard. Supply lines from Asia were massively delayed, while shelter-in-place protocols led to a 400–500 percent spike in Public Goods online orders – a spike that lasted for months.

“We relied on Amware to provide the fulfillment expertise we needed while the world was on fire.”

Initially, order backlogs developed across the company's fulfillment network, which includes Amware Fulfillment's Phoenix distribution center. These backlogs were a concern for Public Goods and its director of operations, Lloyd Ellman, so the Public Goods and Amware teams collaborated on an action plan to

return quickly to Pre-COVID operating metrics, even in the midst of the crisis. That action plan included:

- Additional staff and 2nd shift
- 3 new pack lines
- Streamlined packaging process

“Within a couple of weeks, we essentially doubled our capacity to process orders within a day after receiving them,” says Ellman, “while many of the giant corporations struggled to adjust to the volume surge and continued to take a week or more to process new orders.”

Keys to Success

Several factors contributed to Public Goods' stellar fulfillment performance during the COVID-19 crisis:

- **Constant communication.** “This was an area where Amware really shined,” says Ellman. “We were in constant touch, which allowed near-real-time decisions on things like funding overtime and equipment purchases.”
- **Strong sense of urgency.** “Amware went beyond standard service levels to receive certain products and make them available for sale within a few hours, not the usual 24-hour window,” says Ellman. “They really internalized our sense of urgency.”

- **Creativity.** “Amware's response to the huge volume spike was not just about throwing bodies at the problem,” says Ellman. “They pushed us to rethink processes.”
- **Multi-Channel fulfillment expertise.** Amware helped onboard a major national retailer in the midst of explosive online order volumes. Public Goods leaned on Amware's systems and extensive knowledge of routing guide compliance to get this done with next to no chargebacks.

Results

Amware's flexible fulfillment solution enabled Public Goods to address a desperate need among customers for rapid delivery of household essentials – and to grow its business in the process.

“During an international crisis, in two weeks we were able to get back to our normally high metrics for receiving and shipping, while competitors struggled mightily,” says Ellman. “Amware was a key part of our COVID-19 response. They are in the top tier of the many partners we work with in terms of systems, responsiveness and overall professionalism.”