

Automate returns and exchanges,
reduce costs and enhance
customer satisfaction

IBM Sterling Reverse Logistics

Benefits

- Improve the utilization of inventory
- Minimize reverse logistics processing costs
- Improve return and repair cycle times
- Maximize service network profitability
- Improve responsiveness to customers
- Recover costs and/or meet regulations by recycling goods
- Improve compliance with European Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipments (WEEE) initiatives

Related Offerings

- IBM® Sterling Order Management
- IBM® Sterling Warehouse Management System
- IBM® WebSphere Commerce

IBM® Sterling Reverse Logistics automates returns processing and guides the user through pre-defined steps to ensure the same level of customer service is achieved every time. Various returns processes such as individual customer returns, complex bulk returns and return dispositions, as well as a repair-and-return process can be pre-defined and efficiently managed, reducing costs with a simultaneous increase in inventory visibility that can add to sales volume as well as profit totals. Timely management of customer returns delivers an improvement in inventory availability, as well as an opportunity to realize the benefits of increased customer satisfaction.

If your enterprise experiences any of the following situations, you need the Sterling Reverse Logistics solution.

- High levels of returns
- Managing different types of return processes (consumer returns, bulk returns, repair/salvage services, and more)
- Higher costs in returned inventory (either high cost goods, or high volumes of returns)
- Supporting separate processes for handling of recyclable materials, hazardous materials, and more
- Poor customer satisfaction levels with existing returns processes
- Inability to accept returns from different sales channels

- Problems achieving customer satisfaction service level agreements
- Implementing processes to separate items for the European WEEE initiatives.

Leverage returns as a source of supply

You may be unaware of the amount of inventory tied up in your current return-and-repair process. High-value products and parts may sit for weeks before they are sent for repair or returned to stock. Such parts often require no repair at all, and could immediately be resold to another customer.

Sterling Reverse Logistics enables you to effectively track items throughout the return-and-repair process, and automates the procedure that returns items to stock, and can automatically reclassify the item as refurbished. Moreover, real-time status updates from service-and-repair personnel allow you to use the reverse logistics cycle to its best advantage as an ongoing supply source.

Setup processes automate separate recyclable or hazardous materials. Companies are increasingly looking at separating certain materials like hazardous materials to comply with regulations, or recyclable materials for recovering costs or complying with regulations. Combining the features of the Sterling Warehouse Management System with our reverse logistics solution, you can set up tasks to automatically separate the processing of hazardous or recyclable materials.

Easily configurable workflows can handle returns according to any order or product-related attribute.

Improve the customer experience

Sterling Reverse Logistics enables the creation of return orders directly from the original order, providing a complete history of the order life-cycle, which allows the CSR to provide knowledgeable assistance to all customers no

matter what channel was used in the original purchase of the item. Various appeasements can also be defined to allow users to offer alternatives to returning the item, therefore reducing the cost of returns while still ensuring the satisfaction of the customer. Automated processes and global visibility of orders improves the quality of customer service, while eliminating inventory buffer stocks and costly manual processes.

Capability	Description
Configurable returns processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily configure returns processing based on any product-related attribute • Effectively manage multiple channels of product disposition (repair, dispose, destroy, re-sell, and more) • Use rules to set up different return locations for different types of items • Guide the user through the entire returns process, ensuring consistent customer support • Provide customer-specific appeasements to reduce the cost of returns
Control all orders related to return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link returns with all other related orders (original sales orders, replacement order, repair order, and more) • Automatically create advanced exchanges from the original return • Coordinate dependencies among multiple order types
Real-time visibility and exception handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track return order execution in real time • Provide customers and partners with role-based status updates of return-and-repair orders • Proactively resolve exceptions throughout the reverse logistics process
Repair cycle control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automatically generate repair orders • Expedite repairs as needed to meet mission-critical customer requirements • Effectively interact with third-party repair vendors
Closed-loop processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automate the process for returning items to stock • Include appropriate returned or repaired items in ATP calculations
Execution in return center/warehouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support multi-step receiving process • Inspect incoming returns and manage or direct the return by disposition • Generate different tasks based on different types of items (recyclable, hazardous materials, and more) • Return items to 3rd party vendors

About Sterling Commerce

Sterling Commerce, an IBM® Company, helps organizations worldwide increase business agility in their dynamic business network through innovative solutions for selling and fulfillment and for seamless and secure integration with customers, partners and suppliers. More information can be found at www.sterlingcommerce.com.