

BIC SUPPLY CHAIN EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Sample response

This example (from an independent bookseller) is to help you to fill in the questionnaire.

1 Bibliographic information

Bibliographic information is crucial to an efficient book supply chain. You will need to consider how your business obtains and supplies data quality, accuracy, range, descriptive depth and timeliness together with efficient delivery methodology and usability by staff and customers.

Your score: 4

Description: As an independent bookseller we have online access to Gardners.com and Bertrams.com which are two excellent websites featuring these wholesaler's views of Nielsen's bibliographic database. We can also refer if necessary to other websites, for example Amazon.co.uk and Waterstones.com. We also have access to PubEasy.com which shows price and title availability at the major distributors. Staff use these websites in a very interactive way with customers, showing them items on the screen, product descriptions etc. 99% of customer orders are placed after ascertaining stock availability and price with wholesalers or distributors. New title buying uses online catalogues on the wholesaler websites. For out of print book searches we use Amazon market place, Alibris, Biblio and others but this is done without the customer present and as a separate piece of research. We then contact the customer with a price and the condition of the book.

We debated whether we could do any more bibliographically for the size and type of our business. We could subscribe to Nielsen and we would get some useful extra functions, but we get access to broadly the same data from the wholesalers. We could subscribe to Bowker and get a better view of international data but this would be of only very marginal benefit given our profile. There are some other services which we could consider e.g. BDS's new media service which could alert us to new books etc. But on balance we believe that we certainly score the maximum possible given the zero cost i.e. we use free services. The panel might wish to mark us up to 5 for this question as it is hard to imagine our providing a better service bibliographically. If we don't score a 5 we'd be very glad to hear about any solutions which we are missing.

Here is a possible range of definitions of scores 1 to 5 for the above question.

1. Still using printed publisher catalogues etc.
2. Using a simple bibliographic source e.g. using a CD ROM for bibliographic data.
3. Using CD-ROM from a competent supplier supplemented by one or more websites.
4. Using CD-ROM or relevant websites, BookNet Web/BDOL or PubEasy, with business processes which offer timely and complete information to staff and customers.
5. Integrated solution using data feeds from suppliers and offering actionable up to date information for staff and customers. Possible additional facilities such as customer-facing kiosk in store.

The focus is on benefit to the business and to customers. In the case of bibliographic data, timeliness, accuracy, range and descriptive depth are all key.