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Priorities to improve retail inventory planning

Shopping patterns and customer expectations are constantly changing. To deliver more compelling, localized assortments, retailers can focus on these five inventory planning priorities.

Build a reliable data foundation

Implement a system that provides a holistic view of inventory, sales, orders, lead times, and product and location data across merchandising, stores, warehouses, and digital channels. Reliable, connected data can help support better inventory decisions.

Localize forecasting and inventory planning

Use store and channel demand forecasts that account for regional patterns and seasonality. Align assortments, service levels, and replenishment strategies with customer shopping preferences and demand.

Start with inventory that matters most

Segment inventory by value, sales velocity, demand predictability, and strategic importance. Prioritize merchandise and categories where improved availability and inventory productivity can help support meaningful business impact.

Pilot, validate, then automate inventory planning

Scope a project, establish baseline KPIs, and validate planning recommendations with users. As confidence and performance improve, consider increasing automation across forecasting, replenishment, and exception management to help accelerate business decisions.

Align teams around inventory goals

Establish executive sponsorship and clear accountability across merchandising, planning, supply chain, technology, and operations. Track availability, forecast accuracy, inventory turns, markdowns, and working capital to help drive continuous improvement.

Hear from retail leaders

Learn more about inventory planning and other retail best practices in on-demand sessions from Oracle Retail Cross Talk Summit.

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CRITICAL INSIGHTS

Explore retail strategies designed to help connect inventory planning with customer demand.
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