CASE STUDY · WOMEN'S APPAREL

How Ashley Stewart Put DTC and B2B Under One 3PL and Cut Fulfillment Costs 12%

A women's fashion retailer with about $250M in revenue was splitting ecommerce and wholesale across two warehouses while its 3PL kept mis-picking orders. A structured evaluation moved both channels to one New Jersey partner and cut fulfillment costs 12%.

Fulfillment costs down 12%

AT A GLANCE

Company	Ashley Stewart, women's fashion (about $250M revenue)
Channels	Shopify Plus DTC, Walmart Marketplace, wholesale and retail
Catalog	About 12,000 SKUs across sizes and colors
Region	New Jersey / Northeast
Before	DTC at one 3PL, B2B in a separate warehouse
Timeline	About four months, intake to signed contract (Dec 2024 to Apr 2025)

BY THE NUMBERS

12%
lower fulfillment cost

2 → 1
warehouses running DTC and B2B

12,000
SKUs moved to the new partner

Background

Ashley Stewart is a women's fashion brand with roughly $250 million in annual revenue, selling through its own Shopify Plus store, Walmart Marketplace and wholesale and retail accounts. Apparel is one of the hardest categories to fulfill well: a 12,000-SKU catalog of sizes and colors means every pick is an opportunity to ship the wrong item, and every wrong item is a return, a refund and an unhappy customer.

The challenge

Two problems were compounding each other. First, the brand's 3PL kept mis-picking orders. In apparel, a mis-pick is rarely just a reship: it is a return label, a restock, a customer service ticket and often a lost repeat customer.

Second, ecommerce and B2B lived in two different warehouses. That meant split inventory, two receiving processes, two sets of data, and retail orders managed apart from everything else. Every inventory decision had to account for which building the units were in.

The team also wanted an operation that would not fall over when labor got tight. They had specifically looked for automation so that a labor shortage would not turn into a service problem.

What mattered most: Ashley Stewart's Decision-Making Criteria

Every 3PL Bridge evaluation starts by turning the team's pain points into weighted Decision-Making Criteria. Operators are then qualified and compared against those criteria, not against a generic checklist. These are the criteria that shaped Ashley Stewart's decision.

Criterion	What it meant for this brand	Importance
Pick accuracy on a high-SKU apparel catalog	Size and color variants picked right the first time, with accuracy measured and reported.	●●●●● 5/5
DTC and B2B under one roof	One inventory pool and one partner for ecommerce, wholesale and retail.	●●●●● 5/5
Retail compliance	EDI, routing guides and labeling that keep chargebacks off the invoice.	●●●●● 5/5
Labor resilience	Automation and staffing depth so service holds when labor is tight.	●●●●○ 4/5
Total cost, including parcel	A normalized monthly total on real order data, not a rate card.	●●●●○ 4/5
Platform integrations	Shopify Plus and Walmart Marketplace connected from day one.	●●●●○ 4/5
Northeast location	Close to East Coast customers and store and wholesale destinations.	●●●○○ 3/5

Importance on a 1 to 5 scale, where 5 could decide the outcome on its own.

How the evaluation worked

3PL Bridge scoped both sides of the business: ecommerce order profiles plus a separate B2B questionnaire covering retailer requirements, so operators priced wholesale on the same detail as DTC. We then qualified New Jersey operators that already ran apparel at volume and already had retailer integrations, routing guides and compliance in place, rather than operators who would have to build them.

Proposals were put on the same basis so the brand could compare a true monthly total. During final negotiation the team chose to ship on its own carrier accounts, and the comparison let it see exactly what that choice was worth before signing. The contract was signed in April 2025, about four months after intake.

The result

One partner now runs DTC and B2B under one roof, with retailer integrations, routing guides and compliance already in place. Inventory lives in a single pool instead of two buildings, and fulfillment costs came down 12%.

What other brands can take from this

- If your DTC and wholesale inventory live in different buildings, price a single-site operation before you assume two partners are cheaper. Consolidation often removes duplicate receiving, storage and management overhead.
- In apparel, ask every operator for its measured pick accuracy on size and color variants, not a promise.
- Choose operators that already ship your retailers. Building routing-guide compliance from scratch is where chargebacks come from.

Questions brands ask

Can one 3PL handle both DTC and B2B retail orders?

Yes, if it already runs both. Ashley Stewart moved ecommerce and wholesale into one New Jersey operation with retailer integrations, routing guides and compliance already in place, which removed a second warehouse and cut fulfillment costs 12%.

How long does it take to switch 3PLs for a large apparel brand?

For Ashley Stewart, about four months from first intake to a signed contract, including a separate B2B pricing review and contract negotiation.

Written by 3PL Bridge with Ashley Stewart's approval. Operator names are kept private. Published November 2026.