

SkillNet Profile

Type: System Integrator
Founded: 1995
Location: Cupertino, CA
Revenue on Oracle: 60%
Public/Private: Privately held
Size: 75+ employees
Geography: North America, Europe, Asia

Key Verticals: Retail expertise in eCommerce, Store Operations, CRM, Multi-channel Retailing, Merchandising & Supply Chain.

Number of customers: Over 50 retailers worldwide.

Expertise:
* Oracle Fusion Middleware
* Oracle Retail Store Systems (360Commerce, RPOS, RSIM)
* Oracle Retail Enterprise Systems
* Custom J2EE applications
* E-Commerce, CRM

URL: www.skillnetinc.com

Solution Details:

SkillNet's StoreHub™ solution has been built with the endpoints of Retek Point of Sale, Oracle Portal and Blue Martini e-Commerce/Clienteling application and can be adapted to other endpoints. A key aspect of StoreHub is that it is based on standard IXRetail schemas. The International XML Retail Cooperative (IXRetail) builds on the ARTS* Data Model to develop standard XML schemas and message sets, to ease application to application integration within a retail enterprise. The metadata for the processes of the SkillNet StoreHub solution are based on these retail industry standards, so different endpoints can be glued to the process without extensive changes.

StoreHub's business processes, including the Stockout Management process, are facilitated by near real-time integration between Point-of-Sales systems in the store, back end Store Inventory Systems, Merchandising/Product Catalog systems and CRM systems, Portals and Clienteling systems. The integration allows a retailer to respond more efficiently to ever-changing business scenarios and customer-demands.

A snapshot of the standardized StoreHub process for managing stockouts is shown in the diagram on the next page. A store employee, faced with a customer with a preference for an out-of-stock item can offer the customer the

SkillNet StoreHub™ solution built with Oracle BPEL Process Manager addresses Stockout Management in Retail

In the retail industry, stock-outs can account for as much as 8.33% of customer footfalls and up to 11% of the total sales of high selling items. A stock-out can lead not only to a one-time loss of sale; it can result in a lost customer who may switch over to a competitor. To minimize stockouts at the store level and thereby to remain competitive and retain customers, retailers must first gain near real-time visibility into inventory and order status, and then offer options to shoppers and employees in stockout situations. In order to offer these customer-retention options, it is required to streamline the process in the context of an SDL (Substitute Delay Leave) framework. This also necessitates efficient management of products and orders; and integration between store operational systems such as POS, Store Inventory, Store Task Management, eCommerce, Merchandising, Warehouse Management and Clienteling applications, as well as seamless process execution and automation.

SkillNet's StoreHub solution built with Oracle BPEL Process Manager provides pre-fabricated process templates that address common retail challenges, such as Stockout Management. This solution provides retailers with a jump-start to the optimization of store operations and processes.

SkillNet's StoreHub™, honed through extensive work with retailers, addresses the urgent challenge of Stockout Management. By leveraging Oracle BPEL Process Manager, the solution allows retailers across categories and tiers to quickly integrate the three facets of their existing operational environment - store operations, workforce management and customer-related processes in the context of a critical customer retention focused business process.

Vidya Damle, CEO, SkillNet Solutions, Inc.

* ARTS: The Association for Retail Technology Standards, is a division of the National Retail Federation, and is a retailer-driven membership organization dedicated to creating an international, barrier-free technology environment for retailers.

following options:

- Hold or ship the item from the same or nearby store when new inventory arrives – this triggers the “Publish Hold Request Process” flow. The customer information fields, product information, and quantity ordered by the customer are retrieved from the Point of Sale system. The data comes in XML format (standard IXRetail schemas) and is typically a payload of 1-2K bytes. The next step is to create the hold request task in the Store Portal, which involves the BPEL process to invoke a web service of the Store Portal connector. The customer data is then checked in the CRM system and if the customer does not exist in the CRM system then the customer record is created and updated accordingly. When the fresh inventory batch arrives in the store back-office, the back-office employee would update the status of the task in the Store Portal. This would trigger a “Follow-up” request to be generated in the In-Store CRM system for the store associate to contact the customer.
- Service the customer from a different channel i.e. trigger the “Create Web Order Request Process”, which would create a web order with the captured details and the order fulfilled through the e-commerce channel.

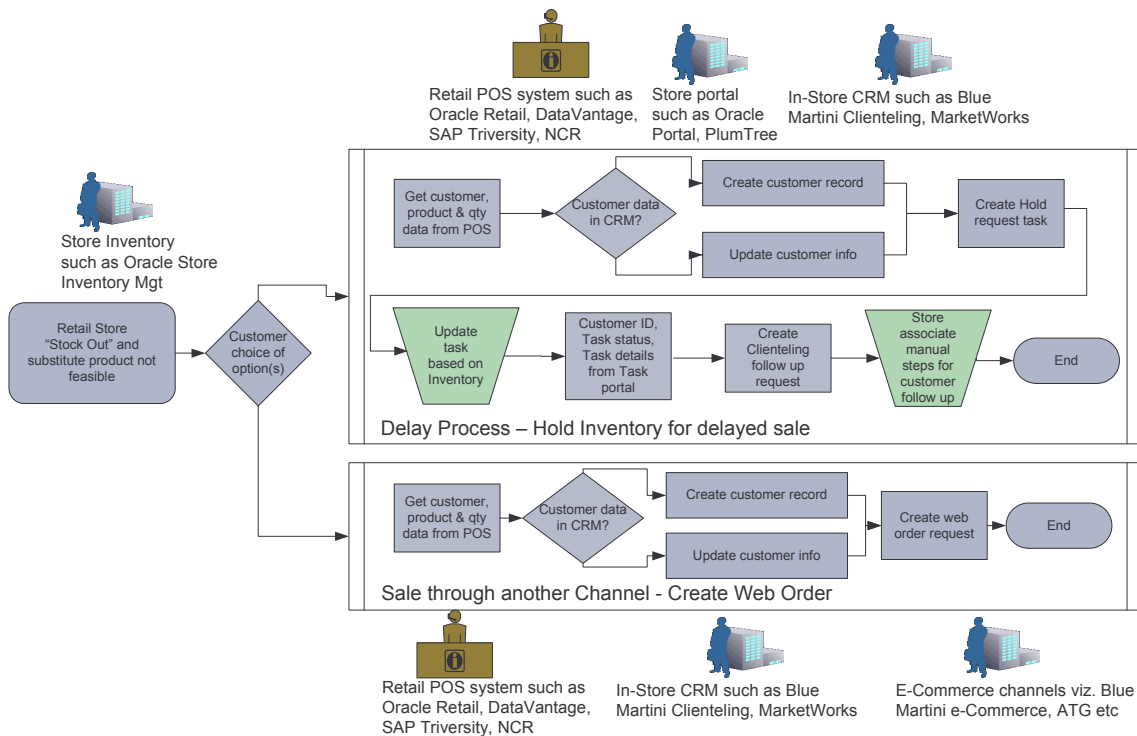


Figure: SkillNet StoreHub’s prefabricated Stockout Management process for the retail industry

The number of stockout order transactions may vary from a few per day to several hundred per day. The industry standard metric for stockout occurrences is 8.33% of total sales across all retail categories. StoreHub is a scalable solution that can run on BPEL Process Manager installations on a single processor server or on complex grid architectures depending on the size and transaction volume of the customer. It is designed to handle a large range of size of transactions – from small retailers with few stores to large retailers with thousands of stores spanning geographies. It leverages BPEL Process Manager’s web service orchestration, XSL Transformation utility to map fields between end point enterprise application points and exception flows incorporating human workflow steps for accurate and comprehensive exception handling.