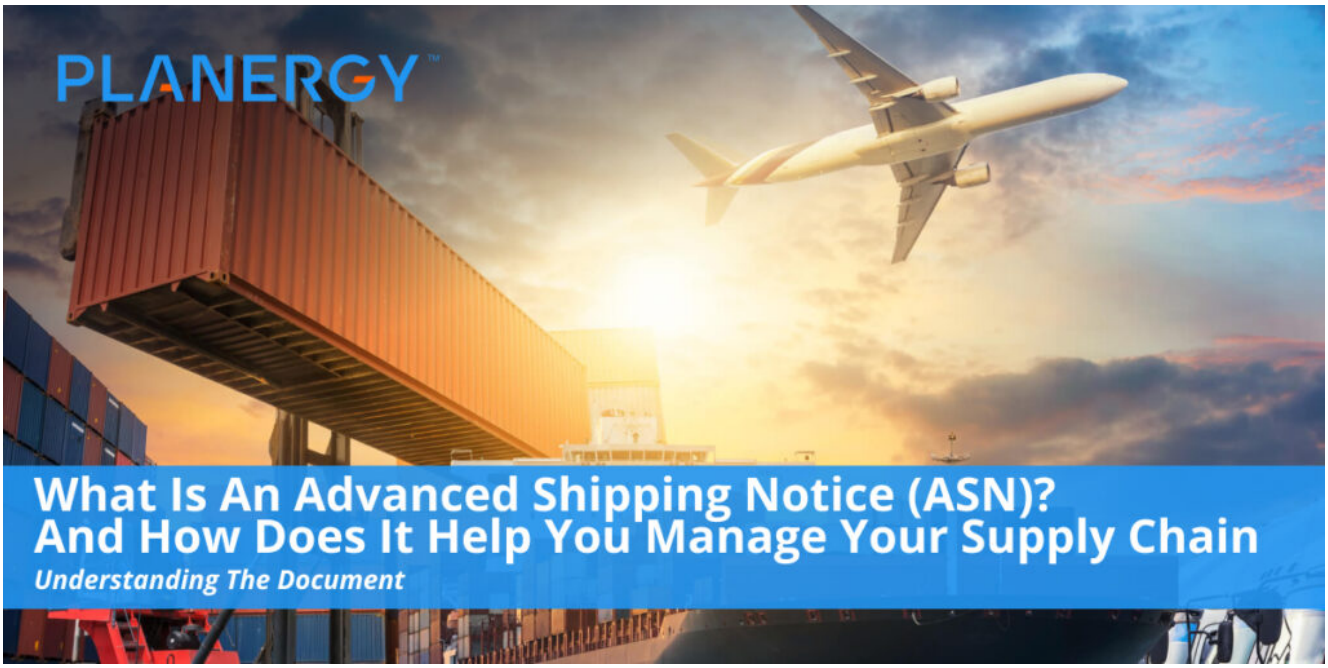
What is an Advanced Shipping Notice (ASN)? And How Does It Help You Manage Your Supply Chain



With the fast pace of today's market, distributors and retailers look for real-time updates on their order status. Reasons for this include:

- Maximizing their open to buy budgets
- Managing inventory without compromising customer satisfaction
- Removing the need to carry safety stock

When buying organizations are confident that their orders are filled and on the way as they were promised, they have order visibility as needed.

To establish clear order visibility, several documents have to be shared between vendors and retailers usually via electronic data interchange, or EDI.

However, no EDI document is more important than the advanced shipment notices (may also be referred to as advance shipping notice or advance ship notice) or the ASN.

What Information Does the ASN Include?

The information may vary slightly determine on the trading partner requirements, but it generally includes:

- Order information, including the order number
- Delivery Date and Time
- Location Information
- Pallet Codes
- Product Details
- Physical Characteristics of the Delivery, such as the Type of Packaging, and
- Carrier information

If the vendor and retailer are on EDI systems, it's possible to automate this exchange of information, without the need to fax, email, or manually enter anything into the system.

Without the EDI, the ASN isn't as useful. Without an EDI system, the ASN may not get to the right people. They may not get the right information at the right time, and human error may cause incorrect data input.

The ASN Process

1. A shipment authorization is made to the supplier, usually in the form of a purchase order, but may also be presented as a planning schedule or shipping schedule.
2. The supplier sends the ASN to the receiving organization when the order is shipped.
3. The ASN then goes through the Receiving Open Interface for verification. Intransit and purchasing supplies are updated for successfully validated ASN lines. For each accepted line on the ASN, intransit supply is increased and purchasing supply is reduced. In the event that there's an error or discrepancy that causes the data to be not be accepted, an Application Advice, containing the most likely cause of the error, goes to the supplier. At that point, the supplier can send a new, corrected ASN.
4. The goods arrive at their destination. The ASN can be used to create

receipts.
5. During the receipt transaction process, shipment vs. receipt quantities are compared. If there are any discrepancies, an Application Advice is sent to the supplier.

How the ASN Helps

The ASN document helps buyers answer these questions:

- What order(s) have shipped?
- Which items are being shipped? How many have been shipped?
- When should the order arrive?
- Is the shipment the full order?
- Does the shipment have barcodes for easy receiving?
- What is the tracking number? Who is the delivery company? (This is helpful for dropship orders.)

The ASN contains important information for retailers, distributors, and in some cases, consumers. The vendor sends an ASN to the retailer to let them know that the order they placed is now on its way to the requested delivery location. The retailer can use the ASN for increased order and inventory visibility whether it is shipped to a store, distribution center, or directly to a customer. It helps keep the supply chain tight, increases efficiency, and addresses customer expectations. You may also hear an ASN referred to as an outbound ship notice, an outbound ship manifest, DESADV, or by its technical name, EDI 856.

> *With EDI, the ASN can be built in to your supply chain management automation so that you never have to worry about keeping up with the documentation.*

Benefits of an ASN

The ASN has many benefits, not just for suppliers, but for buyers and the end consumer, too.

Order Visibility

The ASN is a multi-purpose document. When the order is sent to a warehouse,

distribution center, or store, it provides the recipient with an estimated shipment arrival time.

After the shipment arrives at the store, distribution center, or Warehouse, it allows for the receiving team to use a barcode scanning to make for quick and easy receiving into the warehouse management system (WMS).

It also helps with unloading and sorting. It can be used to help prepare for flow through or store allocation from the receiving dock to the shipping dock or out to the store or customer.

When items are shipped directly to a customer through dropshipping, it also includes shipment information such as the tracking number for USPS, UPS, or FedEx. The document can also be used to finalize collecting the funds from the consumer's debit or credit card.

Communicates Details of Online Orders

This document is particularly helpful for retail and distributor clients that use eCommerce order management especially drop shipping. The shipping and tracking info for packages is sent with an ASN to the retailer. The retailer then shares the data with the consumer to check the delivery status of their package.

During the holiday shopping season, the ASN is imperative as customers flood websites with e-commerce orders and empty the shelves in brick-and-mortar stores.

They have to be sure their gifts will be delivered in time and with the rise of online shopping, order visibility is never more important than it is now. And offers the retailers and distributors the data they need to proactively manage inventory and confidently handle when and how orders will arrive.

Insights the ASN provides impact open to buy budgets, customer satisfaction and can reduce inventory which all helps to boost a retailer's bottom line.

Confirms the Final Order

Though at first glance the ASN may seem like it's just a shipment confirmation document, it's more than that. It is also the final confirmation that the order has

been fulfilled.

With this information, buyers can easily adjust their open to buy budgets confidently. And, they can update inventory systems to accurately reflect incoming inventory.

Before the shipment is sent, suppliers can include barcodes on all of their boxes, cases, and crates and include that information within the ASN.

When the shipment arrives, the data from the shipping notice can be used to quickly check the goods and accept the delivery. It's as simple as scanning the items as they come off the truck and confirming that everything is where it needs to be.

Using the right software makes using ASNs easy. You never have to worry about it, because the platform will automatically handle them for you.

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