

# JOHNSTONE SUPPLY MAKES ORDER PICKUP AN EASY WIN FOR CONTRACTORS



When contractors are extra busy, the Apex Will-Call Solution helps keep them productive and avoid showroom lines.

**During peak times, customers weren't getting the fast, easy order pickup they expected.**

In the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) business, contractors know they'll be busy in summer and winter. Another thing they can count on? When the weather's bad, they'll be working nights and weekends to keep up with all the repair calls to fix busted furnaces or air conditioners.

In Denver, HVACR distributor Johnstone Supply experiences this "feast or famine" as well. During cold snaps or heat waves, they'll often have more than a dozen employees working at their service counter to handle the rush of contractors. Other employees are taking orders on the phone all day. But in recent years, many of those orders have been coming in through Johnstone's e-commerce website and mobile app.

## Fast and Easy Ordering

E-commerce has been a huge time-saver for contractors who want to avoid downtime spent waiting to be helped in the showroom. Instead, they order online and their items are waiting for them when they arrive.

Johnstone Supply knew their e-commerce program had big potential. "Having that e-commerce growth is instrumental to our overall growth as a company," said Ben Callahan, e-Commerce and Promotions Manager. A good e-commerce system also helps set them apart from their competitors and attract new customers.

## When Pickup Hits a Speed Bump

There was just one concern with Johnstone Supply's e-commerce program: During peak times, customers weren't getting the fast, easy order pickup they expected. They still had to go into the busy showroom and wait for someone to bring them their order.





Johnstone wanted to help contractors save time while reducing congestion at its service counter. For Callahan, the obvious choice was order pickup lockers, which were becoming increasingly popular at major home centers and other retailers.

their way. Within a few short months, demand for self-serve pickup was so high that sometimes there was a wait for locker compartments. Since the solution is easily scalable, Johnstone could quickly add two additional lockers.

**In 10 months,  
the Will-Call  
Solution handled  
more than 2,000  
pickup orders.**

### Do-It-Yourself Order Pickup

Callahan heard about another Johnstone Supply location that had introduced Will-Call Locker Solutions from Apex Supply Chain Technologies®. They provide fast, self-serve pickup for contractors, and are easy to integrate with existing software and workflows. They also use a cloud-based data platform that provides real-time information on order loading and pickup activity.

Callahan worked with his Apex sales rep to configure an initial system that provided a variety of compartment sizes based on the company's most frequently ordered products. Soon, Johnstone Supply had introduced four Axxess™ 6800 Lockers on their loading dock to provide quick, 24/7 access for customers.

As the new service caught on, more contractors discovered how quickly they could pull up, scan their order code, take their order and be on

### A Growing Opportunity Gets Bigger

Next, Johnstone found that more contractors were requesting will-call pickup for large equipment, like furnaces and compressors. Callahan made a call to his Apex sales rep to discuss his options, and soon added two ICS™ 1000 Cage Solutions next to the lockers. The ICS cage provides a secure, self-serve solution for both big equipment orders and large quantities of smaller supplies.

In the first 10 months, Johnstone's Will-Call Solution had handled more than 2,000 pickup orders, proving that there was an unmet need for serving busy HVACR contractors who didn't have time to wait.

During some particularly nasty weather in the fall, Johnstone received more than 300 e-commerce orders in just one month. According to Callahan, "Those 300 customers were in and out and back

on the job. That helps them with their first-time call completion rates...and it's going to help them increase their bandwidth."

### Demand for After-Hours Pickup

“

This gives them a safe, secure method for after-hours pickup.

”

— Ben Callahan,  
e-Commerce and  
Promotions Manager

Another advantage for Johnstone's customers is they can pick up their order whenever their schedule has a break. Since working nights and weekends is often the norm, they can't always make it to the showroom during regular hours. Now, they can order by phone or online, choose "locker pickup," and swing by at night or early in the morning before their first job.

"We're seeing about 25% of our pickups outside regular business hours. Before, we would have an emergency opening guy stay after to help them with their product. This gives them a safe, secure method for after-hours pickup," said Callahan.



## REAL RESULTS

Growing self-serve and after-hour pickups\*

» FAST ADOPTION  
**2,000+**  
Locker Pickups

» NEW CUSTOMER GROWTH  
**116 NEW**  
COMPANIES  
Used The Lockers

» EXTENDED SERVICE HOURS  
**25% AFTER-HOUR PICKUPS**  
Outside Regular Hours

\*Based on first 10 months of use

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## More Reasons to Expand the Program

Now that e-commerce customers are picking up their orders on the dock, walk-in customers are enjoying fewer lines and faster service in the showroom. In addition, the pickup lockers have reduced pressure on employees working at the service counter, allowing them to spend more time consulting with customers who need

help. Johnstone is evaluating other ways they might use Apex self-serve solutions to increase efficiencies and reduce costs across the operation. Callahan said, “With Apex’s line of solutions, the possibilities are endless. From the dock to the door to the showroom to the warehouse, we’re going to look at the next evolution.”



Customers pull up to the dock, scan their unique order code and pick up their order in seconds.

To learn more about self-serve Will-Call Solutions, visit [ApexSupplyChain.com/WillCall](https://ApexSupplyChain.com/WillCall), email us at [info@apexsupplychain.com](mailto:info@apexsupplychain.com), or call 800.229.7912 to visit our Customer Experience Center.

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