SUMMIT
BUSINESS SYSTEMS
REACH NEW HEIGHTS

CHECKLIST · DISTRIBUTION & WHOLESALE

Year-End Inventory Count Readiness Checklist

A printable countdown checklist for distributors: the four-weeks-out, one-week-out, count-day, and post-count steps that make the year-end physical count a verification instead of a discovery.

DISTRIBUTION & WHOLESALE · CHECKLIST

Twelve months of small misses, unrecorded breakage, mis-picks, returns that never got processed, all come due on count day. The companies that dread the year-end count aren't worse at counting. Their count is doing a job the system should have been doing all year.

This checklist won't fix that by December. It will make this year's count clean, defensible, and fast, and the last section is about making next year's count boring.

Four weeks out

- [ ] Count date and freeze window confirmed with operations and sales.
- [ ] Count teams assigned, with one experienced counter per zone.
- [ ] Cycle counts run on A items now, so count day isn't their first look in a year.
- [ ] Obsolete and damaged stock identified, segregated, and queued for write-off approval.

One week out

- [ ] Cutoff rules written and circulated: what counts as received, shipped, and sold during the freeze.
- [ ] In-transit inventory documented, both directions, with paperwork attached.
- [ ] Open returns and RMAs processed so they aren't counted twice or not at all.
- [ ] Locations labelled and count sheets or scanners tested end to end.

Count day

- [ ] Receiving and shipping genuinely closed for the freeze window.
- [ ] High-value items counted by two people independently.
- [ ] Recount threshold agreed in advance (by dollar variance, not just quantity).
- [ ] Damaged goods recorded as found, not tidied away mid-count.

After the count

- [ ] Variances investigated before adjustments post, not after.
- [ ] Adjustments posted with an audit trail: who, what, why.
- [ ] Root causes logged by pattern: mis-picks, receiving errors, unrecorded damage, theft.
- [ ] Valuation method applied consistently and signed off with your accountant.

Making next year boring

- [ ] Perpetual inventory with real-time transactions, so the system records stock as it moves.
- [ ] A cycle counting program that touches A items monthly and everything at least once a year.
- [ ] Variance trends reviewed quarterly, so December becomes verification instead of discovery.

SUMMIT
BUSINESS SYSTEMS
REACH NEW HEIGHTS

Questions about any of this?

Summit Business Systems has been implementing ERP for Ontario businesses since 1991. We are an Acumatica Gold-Certified Partner based in Barrie, working with construction, field service, distribution, and professional services companies across the province. If you want a second opinion on anything in this checklist, we give straight answers.

summitbusiness.com/contact · info@summitbusiness.com · 1-877-840-6890