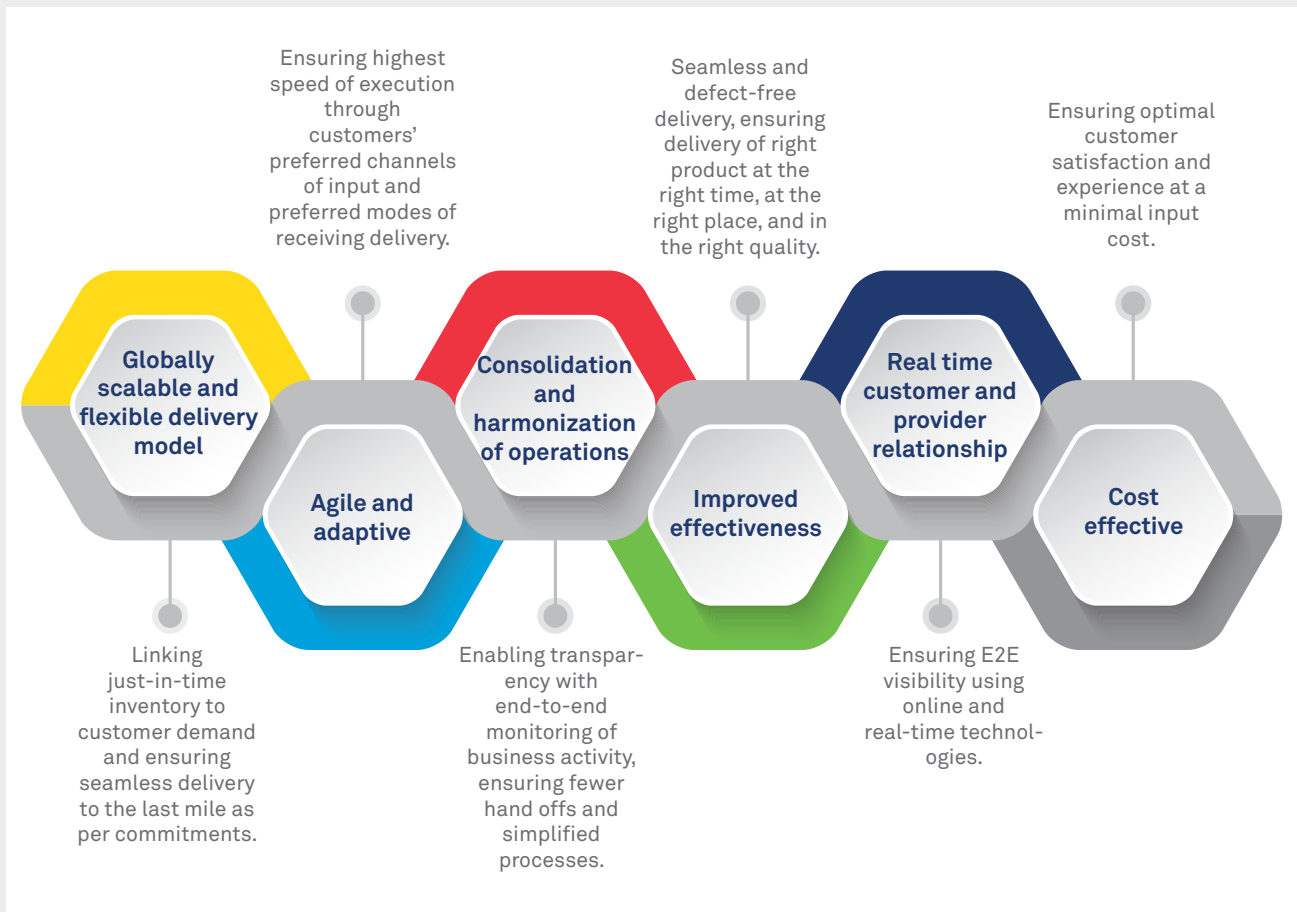
A black and white photograph of a male delivery person in a cap and uniform, smiling while holding a large cardboard box with a barcode. A female customer is standing next to him, looking at the box. The image is overlaid with a large red semi-circle on the left and several small colored circles (blue, green, yellow) on the right. The text 'The next generation of order management is simple and smart' is written in yellow across the middle.

The next generation  
of order management  
is simple and smart



**T**he growing requirement for the provision of customized products, while maintaining existing prices and high levels of support, is escalating the need for organizations to implement more efficient order management (OM) systems. To leverage the potential of efficient OM, a continuous focus on taking its processes to the next level is essential. The next generation of OM has to be simple, flexible, time-bound, easy to use, adaptable, and driven by technology.

OM will have to keep up with the trends and expectations of the market. Growing trends like the rising demands of the digital customer, increased customer base in emerging markets, the shift to value-based experience, demographic shifts in consumption patterns, and continued convergence between online and offline channels are driving organizations towards disruptive options. The future OM processes, irrespective of the industry, should be created based on the following design principles:



## Meet the Next Gen Order Management!

The next generation of OM should have an optimal blend of process and technology integration to fulfill increasing customer demand with minimal input costs. Here are the key features of the next-gen OM:

### Driven by analytics

Insights and analytics will form the basis of future OM process designs. This can be looked from two angles.

- Analytics to provide insights on customer behavior and purchasing decision based on macro-economic factors

- Analytics of historical data providing insights on future trends

While the first one will consider elements like consumer sentiments, economic and political stability, the second one will provide a more accurate data-driven insight on buying behavior, degree of responsiveness to a given product, payment patterns, input channel preference, satisfaction index etc.

All these insights put together will determine the future design of the OM processes. Analytics will help the organization make better forecasting which will have significant effect on inventory planning, demand planning, and just-in-time procurement to indicate how many people will

be required in the shop floor and back office to manage OM operations.

### Automated processes

With increasing pressure to optimize sales cost, a considerable effort is currently invested in technology to transform business processes. On the forefront of that is OM, one of the first processes to embrace automation. The traditional methods of receiving order entry inputs carry inherent risk of larger cycle times and accuracy issues.

Order entry inputs can now be automated through usage of Smart OCRs, which not only scan unstructured data format and convert these into structured data set, but also learns “what to find where” over a period. For example, if a customer provides the “Bill to” information on the last page of the purchase order, the system detects and scans the same the first time and gets trained to look for the information on the last page on the same format next time. This is made possible by leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI).

In a typical OM scenario, robots can do all the order entry if the information is provided in a structured format. Robots enhance accuracy and can work 24X7, which expedites the process. Thus, while robots can take on “copy paste” jobs, human intelligence can be better used for analytics-driven decision making. Automation is applicable across the landscape of order management.

**Next generation of Order Management should have an optimal blend of process and technology integration.**

### Self service-enabled

Self-service is fast, efficient, and provides information on the fly. Customers like to look, choose, order, track, and pay online. In a B2B scenario, buyers like to obtain quotes online,

have a complete visibility of the customer account, verify outstanding balances, and raise disputes. It also enables other facilities like obtaining a statement of accounts, downloading invoice copies etc. Self-service enablement is one of the most important features of the next generation OM.

### Powered by sensors

Internet of things (IoT) will transform the OM experience. Sensors attached to a pallet containing spare parts or consumer goods will automatically trigger a signal for creating purchase requisition once the inventory goes below a given threshold level. We can imagine a zero touch order processing which will automatically create the purchase requisition and transmit the PO via structured procurement platforms to the sellers. On the seller’s side, order will be automatically posted, which would generate the sales order and transmit the information back to the buyer.

### Led by location strategy

With increasing pressure on controlling OM operations’ cost, due emphasis should be laid on location strategies. Organizations often face the dilemma of where to operate from, is offshore or nearshore location strategy beneficial for OM contact centers? All the riders have to be evaluated carefully before taking the right decision. OM processing activities like taking orders, entering orders in system of records, creating a quote, responding to order status are widely advisable to be operated from an offshore low-cost location as it adds up to the cost if operated onshore.

### 360-degree visibility

Providing 360-degree visibility on business performances at a granular level will be the key feature for the next generation of OM.

Greater visibility backed by insights help today’s consumer take informed decisions. Business leaders would like to stay continuously informed about what is happening within the organization, and outside. Hence, real time exposure to performance, KPIs and SLA adherences have to be made available. In OM scenario, the sales manager or the plant head or head of the supply chain should be able to view order-specific details. Near real-time reporting is the key.

## Well-orchestrated

Order management is not a standalone function. It is a team leader of various activities in the organization if we take a bottom up approach, alternatively, this function serves as the first touchpoint to the customer if we take a top down view. For this function to be successful, we need a solid connection seamlessly orchestrated between all upstream and downstream activities. For example, OM should drive inventory planning patterns, and out of stock information should adequately alert OM engines to inform customer on the delay in fulfilment.

Hence, there is a need for a single point orchestration tool, which can accommodate and connect the dots seamlessly. This tool will serve

as a wrapper over the system of records with bidirectional data flow capabilities connected to all activities in the OM journey. It will also have inherent capability to store humongous information that can be used as desired for analysis purposes.

## Towards a new order

Order management as a function has always been dynamic. To provide a holistic customer experience, the future order management processes will have to keep up with the demand and expectations from the market. The next generation of order management will bring in a new era in agile, cost-effective, and efficient end user experience powered by analytics and digital transformation.

## About the author

**Kingshuk Banerjee**  
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Kingshuk is a sales side supply chain domain expert with over 18 years of work experiences across order to deliver, after market, bill to cash and FAO transaction finance practice. With a career spanning over a decade in BPS industry

Kingshuk has handled multiple responsibilities in BPS operations, transitions, transformation business process reengineering and process consulting for multiple industries. Kingshuk is currently heading practice and solutions for manufacturing vertical. Prior to Wipro Kingshuk has worked with Genpact and Cap Gemini.



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