



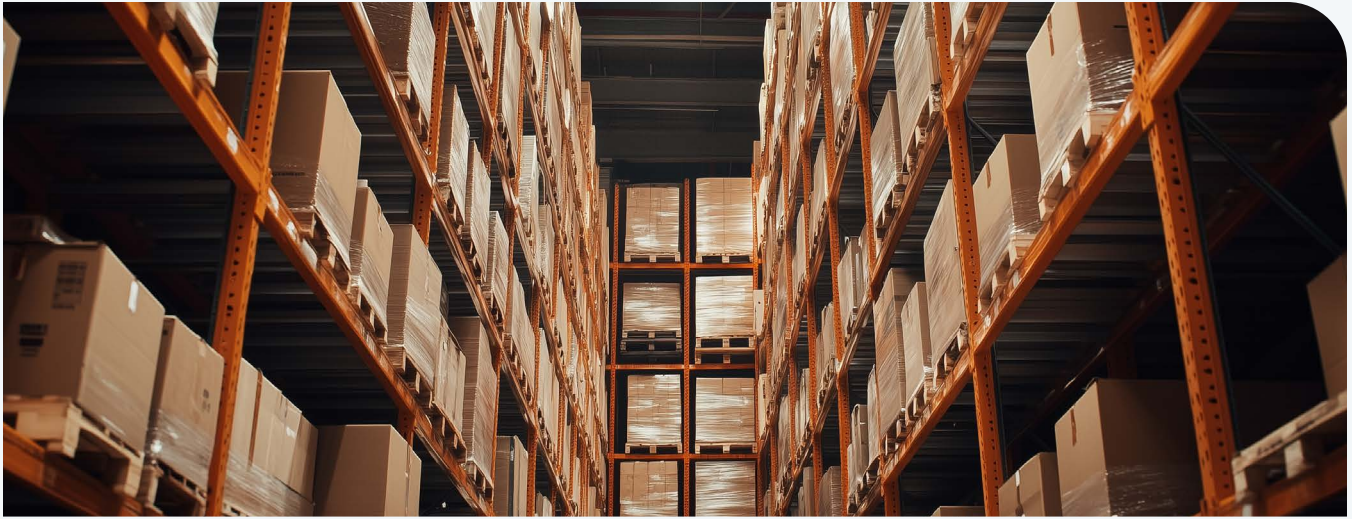
**Peak Season 2025:**

# **The Peak Season Confidence Report: How 76% of Leaders Plan to Outperform the Competition**



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After years of crisis management and reactive responses to disruption, supply chain leaders have cracked the code on something fundamental for 2025 Peak Season: they've stopped treating every challenge like a crisis and started building fulfillment operations that scale where others fail under pressure. Rather than just surviving peak season, organizations are leveraging change to pull ahead.

This newly charted course trades risk for competitive advantage, defined by strategic resilience, technological sophistication, and confident preparation rather than anxious anticipation.

Our comprehensive survey of supply chain professionals reveals a dramatic transformation in how organizations approach operational challenges of Peak Season. Despite heightened global disruptions to commerce, this year leaders are expressing greater confidence in their operational readiness:

*Only 46% expect 2025 to be more challenging than 2024—a striking reversal from 2024 when 77% anticipated increased difficulty.*



It's not because 2025 has been a cake walk. No one would agree with that. Instead, organizations have moved beyond the "just survive" mentality that characterized peak in recent years, investing this year in fundamental capabilities that create sustainable success. The data reveals three critical shifts:

**A strategic pivot** from operational band-aids to long-term resilience building,

**The maturation of workforce strategies** beyond simple headcount increases, and

**A technology focus** that prioritizes integration and visibility over experimental adoption

Most significantly, **84% of leaders express confidence in their fulfillment systems**—a remarkable achievement considering the [28-point confidence gap](#) that plagued the industry in 2024, when 70% of executives entered peak season confident in their systems but only 42% achieved successful performance when it mattered most.

The implications extend far beyond peak season preparation. Organizations that have embraced this strategic transformation are positioning themselves to navigate an increasingly complex global marketplace where agility, visibility, and resilience determine market leadership.



# The Great Confidence Shift

## A Dramatic Reversal from Survival to Strategy

A 31-percentage-point swing in confidence for the upcoming Peak Season signals a fundamental shift in how organizations approach operational challenges. This transformation becomes even more remarkable when viewed alongside system performance expectations. The 28-point gap between expectation and reality we uncovered a year ago cost organizations millions in overtime, shipping overruns, chargebacks, and customer churn.

The 2025 data tells a different story. While fewer leaders express the highest level of confidence (40% "very confident" versus 70% in 2024), total confidence in 2025 remains strong at 84%, suggesting a more realistic, earned confidence based on proven capabilities rather than untested assumptions.



## Strategic Investment Priorities: Beyond Quick Fixes

In 2024, organizations focused heavily on immediate operational responses, such as hiring up and automation point solutions that were still relatively new to the market, expensive, and largely hype-driven for those without a strategic technology vision to support it. This short-term crisis mentality burdens capital without a solid plan for long-term growth. The 2025 priorities paint a fundamentally different picture that goes beyond tactical fixes.

**Building supply chain resilience and improving forecasting accuracy** tie for the top priority (both at 34%), representing a collective commitment to ongoing capability development and sustainable success within a broader strategic context, rather than short-term problem solving.

*“This shift from reactive tactics to proactive strategy extends across all operational areas. Organizations are no longer asking ‘How do we survive this peak season?’ but rather: ‘How do we build capabilities that make us stronger regardless of what peak season brings?’”*

**Josh Lett**

Senior Vice President of Customer Experience  
Deposco

## Technology Maturation: From Experimentation to Integration

The technology investment landscape has similarly evolved from experimental adoption to strategic integration. While 2024 saw heavy focus on artificial intelligence (51%) and automated guided vehicles (42%)—often implemented as standalone solutions—2025 priorities center on system upgrades for visibility (28%) and practical automation integration (26%).

This evolution reflects hard-earned lessons about technology's role in operational excellence. Organizations discovered that disconnected point solutions, regardless of their individual sophistication, cannot deliver the operational visibility and control required for peak season success. The focus has shifted to integrated supply chain platforms that provide real-time visibility across the entire operation, real-time intelligence, and proactive decision-making.

The technology confidence expressed by 84% of survey respondents reflects this maturation. Leaders are confident not because they've adopted the latest technologies, but because they've implemented integrated solutions that provide the visibility, control, and agility necessary to navigate complex operational challenges and win.

## Strategic Resilience: The New Operational Imperative

### Diversification as Risk Management

The commitment to operational resilience manifests most clearly in supplier diversification strategies. An overwhelming **72% of organizations are actively diversifying their supplier base away from risk concentrations**—the highest-priority disruption mitigation strategy identified in our survey. This represents a fundamental shift from the efficiency-focused supplier consolidation that characterized operations in previous years.

This diversification extends beyond geography to encompass operational capabilities. Organizations are building redundancy not just in their supplier networks but in their operational approaches, with **58% partnering with third-party logistics companies and 38% investing in automation to offset higher labor costs and increase operational flexibility.**



## Sophisticated Workforce Strategies

Perhaps nowhere is the strategic evolution more evident than in workforce management approaches. The 2024 focus on simple solutions—hire more people (51%) or deploy more automation (51%)—has given way to sophisticated, multi-faceted workforce strategies that recognize the complexity and impact of modern labor challenges.

The 2025 approach is remarkably comprehensive:

**88%** are cross-training existing workers for maximum flexibility

**87%** are hiring seasonal workers earlier to ensure adequate training time

**76%** are increasing compensation to attract and retain quality talent

This represents a mature understanding that workforce challenges require warehouse management platforms that are easy to learn and helpful, rather than simply replacing humans.

This strategic sophistication extends to retention strategies, with 52% of organizations expressing concern about employee retention and implementing comprehensive approaches that combine performance tracking, training, development, and workplace flexibility. The focus has shifted from filling positions to building capable, adaptable teams.

## Proactive Cost Management

Cost management strategies have similarly evolved from reactive absorption to proactive management. Rather than simply accepting disruption costs as collateral damage, organizations are implementing sophisticated approaches that drive competitiveness while protecting margins.

The strategies reveal strategic thinking:

**76%** are implementing selective price increases to pass costs to consumers

**70%** are deploying dynamic pricing based on cost fluctuations

**68%** are strategically positioning inventory to optimize both availability and cost structure

Only 8% are absorbing costs to maintain competitive pricing—a dramatic shift from the cost-absorption strategies that characterized earlier disruption responses.

# Technology as Competitive Advantage

## Systems Integration and Visibility Are Top Priorities

The transformation in technology priorities reflects a mature understanding of how technology creates competitive advantage. Organizations have moved beyond the pursuit of individual technological capabilities to focus on integrated systems that provide comprehensive operational visibility and control for high volumes during peak season.



Real-time Cost Tracking  
& Margin Analysis

**32%**



Multi-Region Supplier  
Mgmt & Risk Assessment

**30%**



Technology Integration  
for Data Visibility

**30%**

Real-time cost tracking and margin analysis leads improvement priorities at 32%, followed closely by multi-region supplier management and risk assessment (30%) and technology integration for data visibility (30%). These priorities reflect an understanding that competitive advantage comes not from individual technologies but from integrated capabilities that enable superior decision-making.

This year's emphasis on demand forecasting with external economic factors (28%) and cross-border logistics optimization (26%) demonstrates the sophistication of current planning approaches. Organizations are building systems that don't just react to demand but anticipate and shape it through superior commerce intelligence and operational agility.

## Preparation is Getting Comprehensive

The 84% confidence level in fulfillment systems represents more than technological capability—it reflects comprehensive preparation that integrates technology, processes, and people into coherent operational strategies. This confidence is earned through proven performance rather than assumed through investment.

A broad mix of top preparation priorities prove that operational strategies are comprehensive rather than isolated technological implementations:

**48%** are diversifying supplier bases across multiple regions

**28%** are expanding third-party logistics partnerships

**28%** are upgrading fulfillment systems for better visibility

**26%** are investing in automation to reduce labor dependency

**26%** are building additional safety stock

**“***The days of throwing technology at problems and hoping for the best are over. Peak success today requires a partner who can deliver a holistic, tailored solution rather than a software transaction that won't fit your business next year. If they're not presenting an easy bridge to your growth ambitions—with customer validation that things you never thought were possible can be done—you're looking at the wrong partner.***”**

**Michael Johnson**

*Vice President of Business Consulting, Deposco*

## Performance and Profit Expectations Are Higher

The industry expects better confidence in systems to translate directly to better market performance. An impressive 76% of leaders expect to outperform competitors, with 26% expecting much better performance and 50% anticipating somewhat better results.

Equally significant, 66% expect better profit margins in 2025 compared to 2024, with 28% anticipating significantly better margins and 38% expecting somewhat better results. This margin confidence, despite ongoing cost pressures and market uncertainties, reflects the operational efficiencies gained through strategic investment in technology, processes, and capabilities.

**“***No one wants to become the Chief Apology Officer during their peak season. Investing in future-proof technologies over market assumptions is driving optimism and a ripple effect on performance, customer experience, and profits. Particularly with advancements in intelligence, businesses can expect to replace shipment delays, mispicks, and time spent fixing customer issues with improved workforce satisfaction, customer loyalty, throughput, and measurable savings in the areas of customer service, returns, and order accuracy that does not fail. When technology can do that, you're free to focus on your next profit opportunity.***”**

**Josh Lett**

*Senior Vice President of Customer Experience, Deposco*

# Navigating Consumer Behavior and Market Dynamics

## What to Expect From Consumers

The survey reveals realistic expectations about consumer responses to market conditions:

**76%** anticipate delayed purchasing decisions

**68%** expect reduced consumer spending due to higher prices

**68%** predict shifts toward domestic products

**68%** foresee increased price sensitivity

Notably, only 28% expect increased "panic buying" leading to stockouts—suggesting that consumer behavior has stabilized from the extreme patterns that characterized shopping five years ago. This leveling out underscores the importance of more accurate demand planning and inventory positioning.

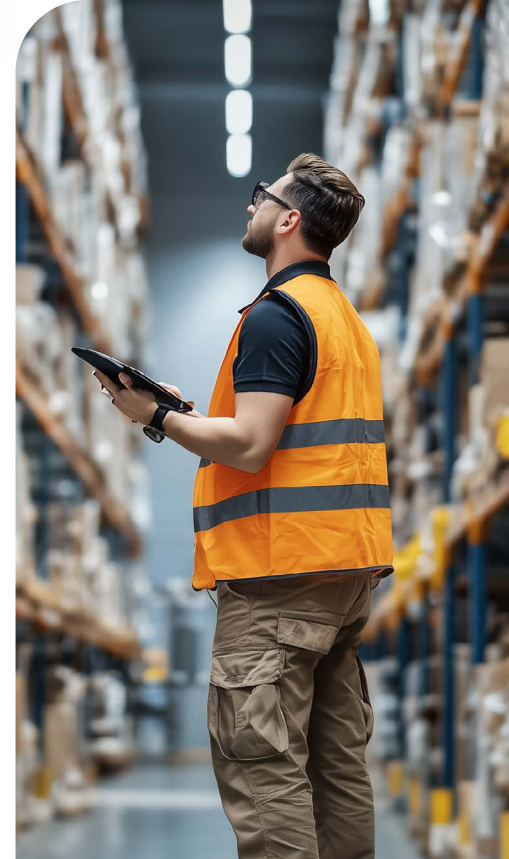
## Strategic Market Positioning

The combination of operational confidence and market understanding positions organizations for sustained competitive advantage. With 72% of supply chain leaders expressing high confidence in their ability to handle ongoing market changes (30% extremely confident, 42% very confident), leaders are positioning their organizations not just to survive market volatility but to capitalize on it.

*“2025 is the perfect time for organizations to look at strategic risk-taking and market expansion that would be impossible if they were still operating their peaks in crisis mode. The ability to navigate complexity rather than simply avoid it becomes a source of competitive differentiation in markets where agility and reliability determine market share.”*

**Michael Johnson**

Vice President of Business Consulting, Deposco



**CONCLUSION**

# Building Tomorrow's Supply Chain Today

The transformation revealed in our 2025 survey data represents more than operational improvement—it signals the emergence of a new paradigm for supply chain leadership. Organizations have evolved from reactive crisis management to proactive strategic development, building flexible fulfillment capabilities that create sustainable competitive advantage regardless of market conditions.

This evolution positions forward-thinking organizations to capitalize on market opportunities while their competitors remain trapped in reactive cycles.

The 84% confidence in fulfillment systems, combined with sophisticated workforce strategies, integrated technology platforms, and proactive cost management, creates a foundation for sustained market leadership.

The challenge now lies not in reacting to disruption but in leveraging operational excellence for competitive advantage. Organizations that have made this transition are discovering that superior supply chain capabilities don't just protect against downside risk—they enable upside opportunity that drives market leadership and sustained, profitable growth.

## The Deposco Advantage: Engineering Confidence Through Integration

The strategic transformation documented in our survey aligns precisely with Deposco's platform philosophy: that competitive advantage comes from managing complexity with a better plan of attack. Having handled 1.2% of total U.S. commerce in a single peak season, Deposco's integrated, intelligent supply chain platform provides the visibility, control, and agility necessary for peak season domination.

While the industry has evolved from crisis management to strategic planning, Deposco has consistently delivered the integrated platform capabilities that enable this transformation from Day 1.

Our customers achieve the operational confidence reflected in this survey:

**99.8%** order accuracy

**98%+** on-time delivery rates

**32%** reduction in labor costs

**Zero** system outages during peak

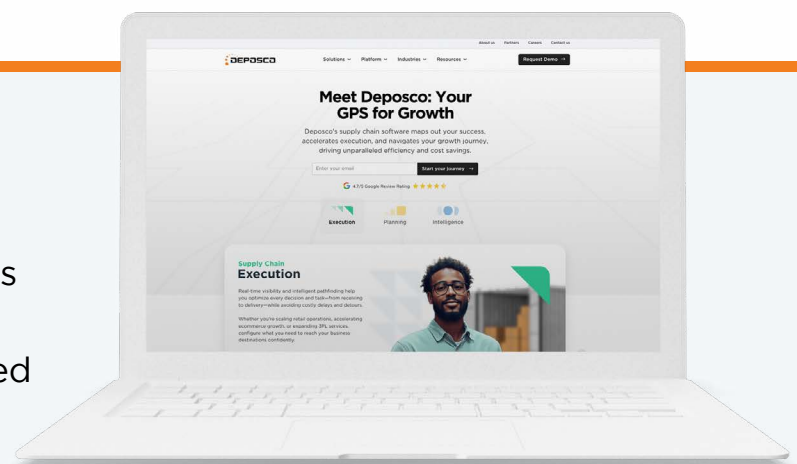
Our platform is engineered for the complexities of modern commerce. It doesn't simply solve today's challenges; it builds the foundation for tomorrow's opportunities. As supply chain leadership shifts toward capitalizing on complexity, Deposco is their trusted choice for integrated intelligence, flexible WMS+OMS architecture, and scalable performance that transform operational excellence into competitive advantage.

Interested in investing in strategic capabilities? Build those capabilities on a platform designed for the realities of modern commerce. Discover that feeling when confidence and performance overshadow fear, margin loss, and constant platform changes in January. We understand that today's supply chain challenges require tomorrow's thinking, today.

*This report is based on a comprehensive survey of supply chain professionals conducted June 23 – July 3, 2025, across retail, CPG, and distribution organizations throughout North America. Survey respondents represent organizations ranging from \$50M to \$2.5B in annual revenue, with leadership roles spanning senior management through C-suite positions.*

#### ABOUT DEPOS.CO

Deposco's supply chain platform maps out your success, accelerates execution, and navigates your growth journey, driving unparalleled efficiency and cost savings.



Our AI-powered unified platform delivers actionable insights across your entire supply chain—from planning to execution—adapting like a GPS to keep you on the optimal path. With the industry's most extensive collection of pre-built integrations for rapid implementation, we help over 4,000 of the world's fastest-growing retailers, 3PLs, DTC ecommerce businesses, and brands navigate nearly \$50 billion in sales and 165 million consumer orders globally.

To learn more about how Deposco can support your warehouse evolution, visit [deposco.com](https://deposco.com).