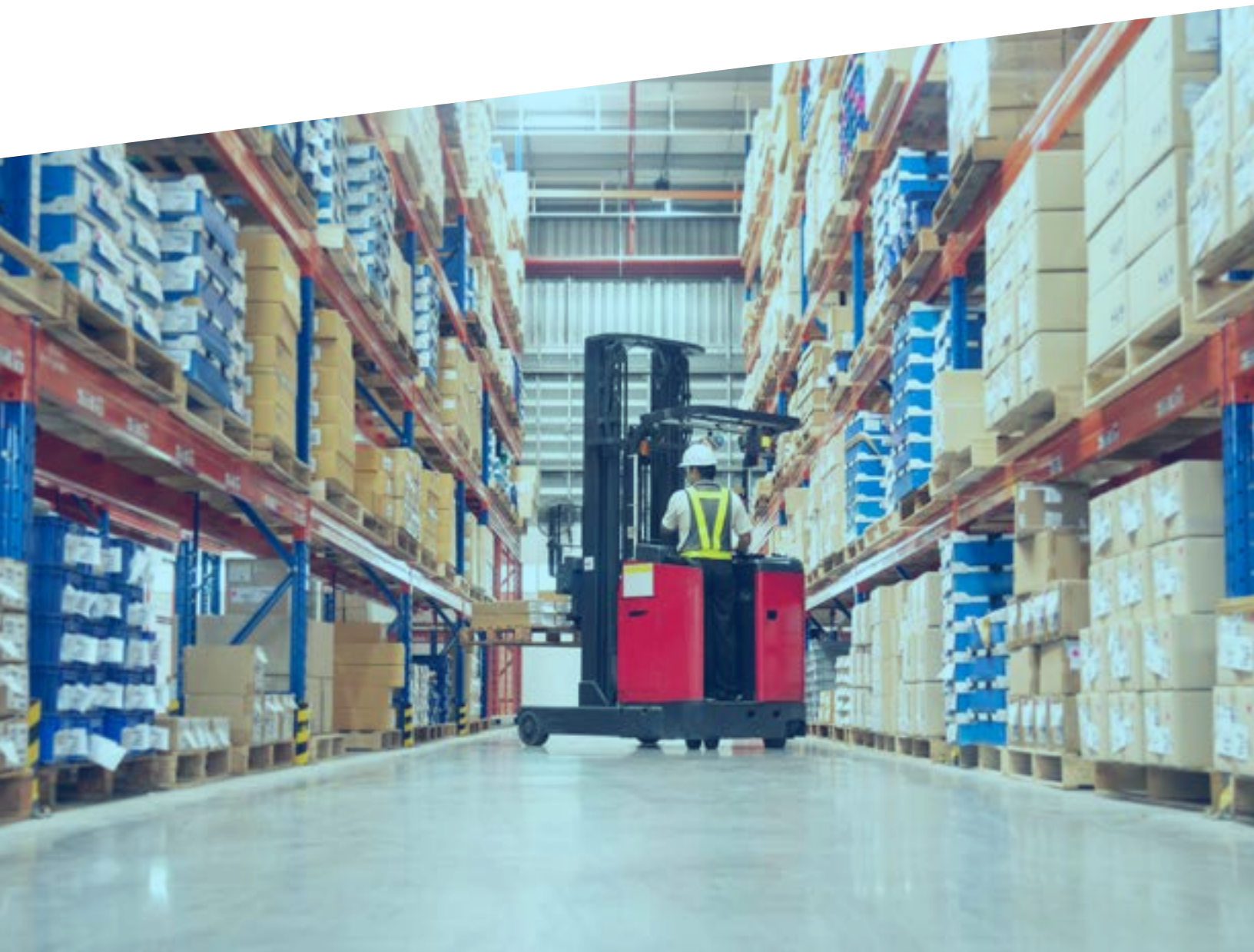


# Why Smart Scheduling Is a Must for Distributors

Give Customers More Options While Maximising Delivery Efficiency



## Why Efficient Appointment Scheduling is Crucial for Distribution Companies

In today's competitive business landscape, distribution companies are reevaluating their strategies for appointment scheduling to meet customer demands effectively. With narrow profit margins and rising customer expectations, traditional methods of setting delivery appointments are no longer sufficient.

These companies must empower their sales teams to provide prompt and accurate appointment options to customers while offering greater scheduling flexibility to existing clients. Simultaneously, it is essential to minimise delivery costs. This is where the concept of smart scheduling comes into play.

## The Challenge of Setting Delivery Appointments in Distribution

Assigning the right delivery appointment schedule is critical for attracting new customers in the distribution industry. However, sales teams often encounter challenges when closing deals quickly without complete visibility into available delivery capacity.

Overcommitting to appointments risks straining service operations, leading to poor performance and potential customer losses. Companies face a dilemma: Should they accept any appointment schedule proposed by the customer during the sales call, regardless of consequences? Or should they inform the customer that confirming available capacity is necessary, potentially losing the sale to a faster competitor?



*Smart scheduling supports hybrid routes, allowing distribution companies to utilise fixed service windows for priority customers.*

## Understanding Smart Scheduling

Smart scheduling offers real-time appointment options that are scored, empowering companies to determine the most suitable choices for customers. These options are tailored to each customer and order, considering factors such as existing appointments, service capacity, route optimisation, and other constraints.

By scoring the options, companies can prioritise those that reduce service costs and enhance operational efficiency. Smart scheduling enables companies to leverage fast, cost-effective appointment options to attract and retain customers.

	Wednesday 24 April	Thursday 25 April	Friday 26 April	Saturday 27 April	Sunday 28 April	Monday 29 April
7am-10am						
10am-1pm						
1pm-4pm						

	No capacity or high cost
	Least Cost/Neighbour Ex
	Capacity

## Hybrid Routes and Efficient Scheduling

Smart scheduling supports hybrid routes, allowing distribution companies to utilise fixed service windows for priority customers while dynamically scheduling lower-priority clients. This maximises route productivity and elevates customer satisfaction. It enables seamless integration of scheduled services with on-demand requests, providing greater flexibility and improved cost management.

By eliminating uncertainties in appointment scheduling, smart scheduling helps companies control costs more effectively. It eliminates guesswork regarding service capacity and recommends the most cost-effective appointment options based on existing appointments.

This prevents the sales team from inadvertently increasing costs due to uneven service demand while expanding the range of options they can present to maximise service efficiency.



*With smart scheduling, customers get greater ordering flexibility and more reliable delivery and distributors get greater control of how they schedule deliveries and their profit margins.*





## Enhanced Flexibility and Cost Management of Unscheduled Services

Customer demand in the distribution industry can be highly variable, necessitating companies to be agile in fulfilling scheduled service requests. These services can be costly to execute, often requiring additional resources or specialised equipment. From a customer perspective, scheduled services can be frustrating if specific delivery timeframes are not provided.

Smart scheduling enables efficient resource utilisation by combining scheduled services with on-demand requests, optimising capacity, and reducing costs. It identifies available capacity and determines the most cost-effective options to fulfill service requests.

By intelligently leveraging resources, companies can be more responsive to customer needs and provide service windows that enhance the customer experience. Smart scheduling also offers a self-service option, allowing customers to book services on-demand while ensuring cost-effective options are presented.

## Putting Appointment Management in the Customers' Hands While Controlling Expectations and Costs

Customers in the distribution industry value flexibility in managing their appointments, and companies can leverage smart scheduling to provide better access to available service windows while ensuring feasibility. It enables customers to check for available service capacity through an appointment calendar and encourages them to schedule in advance to secure their preferred time slots.



## Conclusion

Smart scheduling addresses two significant challenges faced by distribution companies: providing fast and accurate appointment assignments during sales interactions and presenting service options that maximise efficiency. By extending these concepts to scheduled services, smart scheduling allows companies to be more responsive while minimising costs by intelligently utilising available capacity and reducing the need for expensive expedited services.

With smart scheduling, companies gain greater control over their service schedules and operational profitability.

To learn about how Descartes' solutions can assist distribution companies in implementing smart scheduling for their appointments, visit our [website](#).



## About Descartes Systems Group

Descartes (Nasdaq:DSGX) (TSX:DSG) is the global leader in providing on-demand, software-as-a-service solutions focused on improving the productivity, security and sustainability of logistics-intensive businesses. Customers use our modular, software-as-a-service solutions to route, track and help improve the safety, performance and compliance of delivery resources; plan, allocate and execute shipments; rate, audit and pay transportation invoices; access global trade data; file customs and security documents for imports and exports; and complete numerous other logistics processes by participating in the world's largest, collaborative multimodal logistics community. Our headquarters are in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada and we have offices and partners around the world.

Learn more at [www.descartes.com](http://www.descartes.com) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#).

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