

Why do our educational and publisher partners utilize Northwest Textbook Depository?

For over half a century, the county's leading publishers and nearly all the school districts in Oregon, Washington, and Alaska have selected Northwest Textbook Depository (NWTB) as their trusted sales/distribution partner. Why is the case? Because over the years, we have earned their business and respect through our commitment to saving them time and money through exceptional customer service.

Districts partner with NWTB because we provide a set of services and a level of support that publishers find difficult to match. These include:

- Personal and customized order processing – The curriculum and purchasing departments in the Districts we serve have worked with our staff for many years. These longstanding personal relationships facilitate our detailed understanding of each District's unique needs and requirements. These might include fiscal year concerns, limited staff availability during the summer, or special invoicing requirements. Based in this knowledge, we customize our order processing to address each District's situation.
- Low cost shipping options – Our close physical proximity to the Districts we serve allow our customers to take advantage of lower costs and faster deliveries. Schools in Oregon and Washington never have to pay expedited delivery charges because our standard delivery time is 1-2 business days. Our freight fees to customers are also very low compared to fees charged by most publishers because of our high local volumes and our short delivery distances. For customers wishing to save even more, we offer Will-Call services to schools that orders from us. Many local customers, and even some Districts hundreds of miles away, have utilized our Will-Call service.
- Customized material delivery – We pride ourselves on our expertise in packing and delivering customer orders based on their specific delivery requirements and needs. The extra time we spend customizing each shipment simplifies the receiving process which in turn increases accuracy and saves our customers time and effort. Some examples of the customization we offer include labeling orders/pallets by school, grade level (and even classroom), providing specialized delivery scheduling (such as delivering teacher's materials weeks or months in advance of student materials or having shipments arrive at specific intervals over a multi-week delivery window), and staging pack and hold deliveries to accommodate specific District requirements.
- Expertise with subscription orders – Many Districts are now purchasing materials that have a subscription component (often a workbook or a student book that is delivered year after year). We handle all of these "future year" shipments for our publisher partners thereby saving them

the time and effort involved with this type of specialized order tracking and shipping. For almost all of these subsequent year shipments, we contact our customers each year to review their delivery needs and desired delivery timelines. This extra effort on our part reduces unnecessary shipments, improves the perceived value of the subscriptions, and greatly increases customer satisfaction.

- Experience with Online/web-based programs – NWTD will gather the necessary information from the customer – Name, phone number, Email contact information, etc., and transmit that information along with the relevant sales information to the publisher to help facilitate timely online activation.
- Consolidated purchasing and invoicing – Districts value NWTD as a one-stop source for their educational material needs. By consolidating orders for various publishers, schools can save time and money when issuing purchase orders, receiving materials and in their accounting / accounts payable processing.
- Simplified return processing – Returning damaged or unneeded materials is rarely a simple process. However, our customers know that NWTD provides the same level of service on the “back end” of a purchase as we do on the “front end”. Returns are researched and processed quickly and we even pick up returns from a customer’s site if we happen to have an employee visiting that area.

Publishers partner with NWTD because utilizing our services saves them time and money in multiple areas including sales support, inventory planning, shipping, accounting, and return processing. Publishers can also provide a higher level of customer service to schools through NWTD’s unique and intimate knowledge of each District’s specific needs, concerns, and delivery requirements. Finally, they can leverage the trust that Districts have with NWTD to gain a competitive advantage over their competitors. Some of the benefits we provide our publisher partners include:

- Access to our team of customer service field representatives - Unlike most depositories, we have our own set of customer relations field representatives. These individuals work closely with Districts and can be a great one-stop source of information for a publisher’s sales representative regarding what Districts are interested in purchasing and their timelines. We are happy to share the information we learn from Districts with our publisher partners as long as doing so does not violate the trust that Districts place in us.
- Post-sale support that allows the publisher to move on to the next sale - Once a publisher sales representative makes a sale, NWTD handles all the post-sale support activities allowing the

representative to focus on to their next sales opportunity instead of spending valuable time working out delivery related issues. NWTD begins by working with the District to break out the District-level purchase order(s) into specific school or even classroom material requirements. Once these requirements are determined, NWTD sets up customized delivery programs that match the customer's specific receiving needs and requirements. For example, we will determine which schools need lift gate trucks for deliveries, when receiving teams will be available at various locations, and what storage space limitations might apply, etc.

- Billing and collection services - After deliveries are complete, NWTD again saves our publisher partners time and effort by handling all billing and collection issues for the orders processed through NWTD. Our long standing relationships and the trust that we have built with the Districts we serve gives NWTD a unique perspective on each District's payment process and allows us to quickly resolve accounting questions that may arise.
- Return processing and customer refunds - If a District over orders materials and wishes to return part or all of an order, NWTD handles all the paperwork, return authorizations, credit processing, etc. This again saves our publisher partners time, effort, and costs associated with such post-sale activities. Although some companies may consider returns to be a hassle, we view returns as another opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the positive customer service experience receive when ordering our publishers' material.
- Accelerated publisher payments - As an additional benefit to our publisher partners, when NWTD pays our publishers each quarter, we frequently make these payments prior to our receiving payments from the schools who have ordered materials. This can be especially beneficial to publishers during the summer when Districts' A/P departments may be on vacation or minimally staffed which tends to result in slower invoice processing.
- Opportunity to leverage our reputation for providing excellent service - Based on the exceptional service we provide to schools in Oregon, Washington, and Alaska, many Districts specifically ask publishers about material availability thru NWTD. By utilizing NWTD, a Publisher assures new customers they will receive the high quality service they have come to expect. This can be especially helpful to smaller or mid-sized publishers trying to establish their presence in our service area and who may not be as well-known as other more established competitors.