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# Marketing Channels | (8th Edition)

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Chapter 2, Problem 3CID

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## Problem

W. W. Grainger, headquartered in Skokie, Ill., is one of the nation's largest wholesalers, with more than 600 branch locations. The company sells mainly industrial products such as electric motors, fans, blowers, air compressors, power transmission equipment along with thousands of different components and replacement parts. Inventories and order processing are managed with advanced computer systems. Grainger buys products from about 2,000 manufacturers and resells them to almost one million customers. The principal means by which Grainger competes, according to the company's top management, is by offering such extras as wide availability of local stocks, outside salespeople, and customer service. Grainger has also put its complete catalog online so that customers have the option of visiting the company's Web site to place their orders. In a fundamental sense, is giant W. W. Grainger different from the host of mostly much smaller wholesalers in any other line of trade?

Discuss in terms of the set of distribution tasks presented in the chapter.

## Step-by-step solution

### Step 1 of 1

Company WWG is not different from small wholesalers available in other trade. This is because they are the specialists in their trade and operate at high levels of effectiveness as well as efficiency. They are able to operate closer to optimum points on the curves than their suppliers. They are similar than a well managed merchant wholesaler and perform the task of providing market coverage, making sales contacts, holding inventory, processing of orders, gathering the information from the market as well as offering customer support.

The customer support is an important aspect for these wholesalers as they assure the availability of products in the market, provide an efficient customer service and also extend credit as well as financial assistance to the markets (dealers or agents). They also offer convenience to the dealers by providing wide assortments and also break the bulk as they order large quantities from the company and give the dealer small quantities. They also provide advice and technical support to their dealers as well as customers. Though they are concentrated and are present in most markets and deal in wide range of industrial products which they have also matched with local products.

With this the dealers as well as consumers are able to get the required products at their beck and call. Since they have presence in 300 branch locations and with thousand of components mainly industrial products such as electric motors, fans, blowers, air compressors, power transmission equipments as well as different parts for replacements they have to manage their inventories as well as order processing through advanced computer systems. They have a streamlined their buying process with 2000 manufacturers and it resells further to 920,000 customers.

Wide availability of stocks as well as co-ordination through their sales people has been an important feature for them and they have been able to provide better service in their store. Since the number of products handled by them is large, they maintain a catalog with all the information in regards to their products as well as its prevailing prices on their website.

This has helped them in providing their customers the right information during the time of their contact with them and they have used the online system to their advantage. So, they have physical as well as online presence both, which in itself satisfies the multiple channels in galvanizing its sales and satisfying the growing needs and expectations of the market.

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