

PREFACE

These are exciting times in the history of e-commerce and for businesses operating in the growing e-commerce industry. While some companies are making a fortune others are going out of business. How can there be such differences in business performance outcomes? The answer to this question can always be found in understanding the way that e-commerce operations are managed. It is not luck or timing that helps a non-profitable operation become and maintain profitability, it is through the adaptive knowledge and skill of the people who run the business. The managers who run businesses are called, “operations managers” and as this book will show are critical to the success of all e-commerce business operations.

Regardless of whether you are a vice president of operations or working as a supervisor in service shop, this book will help to make you aware of the issues, concepts, philosophies, procedures, methodologies, and practices of running e-commerce operations. The purpose of this book is to provide current research findings, strategies, and practices that can help operations managers run and improve their e-commerce operations. This book has been designed for an upper-level undergraduate course or a graduate business or engineering management course on e-commerce operations management for university students. Decision-makers who have to reengineer e-commerce operations can also use this book. This group of decision makers might include CEO's, vice presidents of operations, general managers, plant managers, supervisors, and industrial engineers. Other operations management and engineering faculty, trainers, and graduate students will also find this book presents a useful variety of new ideas for managing e-commerce operations.

This book assumes that the reader has had some exposure to the terminology and technology commonly found in the field of operations management. The basic operations management or industrial management course that undergraduate students take in business degree programs constitutes sufficient prerequisite knowledge to satisfy the background to fully appreciate the content of this book. While most of the terminology necessary to fully utilize this book are actually defined in the book, readers can consult any basic operations management textbook or in either of the latest versions of the *American Production and Inventory Control Society (APICS) Dictionary or Encyclopedia of Production and Manufacturing Management*. Throughout this book, important

terms are italicized and are usually followed by a definition. The location of the initial definitions can be found using the index at the end of the book.

The contents of this book are organized into two parts. In Part I, "Introduction and Critical Success Factors in E-Commerce Operations Management," two chapters are presented that help to define the basic subject and terminology used in the book, as well as briefly identifying the major topics that make up the rest of the book. In Part II, "Critical Success Factors of E-Commerce Operations Management," eight chapters are each devoted to an individual topic that combines the subjects of operations management with leading-edge e-commerce subject material. These chapters' contents are based on the most recent research in their respective areas. They represent information on both "how-to" manage an e-commerce operation and "what's happening" in e-commerce. Collectively, they help to explain what is meant by the term "e-commerce operations management."

While many people have had a hand in the preparation of this book, its accuracy and completeness are the responsibility of the authors. For all the errors that this book may contain we apologize for them in advance.