A PACKLINE REPORT | NOVEMBER 2026

THE RACE TO THE DOORSTEP

The seconds you're losing at the pack bench



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PACKLINE SOLUTIONS

KEY FINDINGS

Delivery speed now wins sales, and the pack bench decides delivery speed.

- **Speed sells.** 61% of Australian shoppers are more likely to buy in a promotion when fast delivery is offered. 38% would switch brands or retailers to get it faster.
- **Volume is up, baskets are smaller.** Online spend grew 14% year on year while the average basket fell to about $90. That means more parcels to pack for every dollar earned.
- **Packaging is the new bottleneck.** As picking gets faster and more automated, orders pile up downstream at the pack bench.
- **Small seconds, big costs.** At peak, Australia Post moved over 3,000 parcels a minute. A few seconds lost per parcel turns into hours of backlog.
- **Faster can also be greener.** Paper-based sealing and void fill speed up packing and take plastic out of the box.

PEAK BY THE NUMBERS

Peak keeps getting bigger, and harder to predict.

Measure	Figure	Source
Parcels delivered, Nov–Dec 2025	111 million (up 7.6%)	Australia Post
Busiest single day, 8 Dec 2025	3.3 million parcels	Australia Post
Peak network rate	3,075 parcels a minute	Australia Post
Online spend, Apr–Jun 2026	$21.9 billion (up 14%)	Australia Post
Average online basket	About $90 (down 5%)	Australia Post
Shoppers more likely to buy with fast delivery	61%	Australia Post
Shoppers who would switch for faster delivery	38%	Deloitte
Holiday revenue retailers expect from Black Friday, Cyber Monday and Click Frenzy	52%	Deloitte
Holiday spend consumers plan for those events	23%	Deloitte

The gap between the last two numbers is the real story. Retailers are planning for one big spike, while shoppers are spreading spend into early December. Warehouses need packing capacity that flexes, not just capacity for one weekend.

THE NEW BOTTLENECK ISN'T STORAGE, IT'S PACKAGING

For years, warehouse investment has gone into storage capacity, inventory visibility and picking speed. Those upgrades work, but they push more orders downstream, faster than the pack bench was built to handle. Once an order is picked, the pressure shifts to how quickly, consistently and sustainably it can be packed and dispatched.

The result is a familiar picture at peak:

- Totes stacking up between pick and pack
- Packers walking to shared printers, tape guns and void fill
- Cartons taped two or three times "to be safe"
- Extra temps added to a bench layout that doesn't scale

> *"When we visit warehouses around Australia, we often see significant investment in storage systems, picking technology and warehouse software. But increasingly, the bottleneck we're helping customers address is the packaging process itself."*
>
> — Packline

Carton sealing: the task nobody measures

Carton sealing is one of the most common jobs in any warehouse, yet it rarely gets the scrutiny picking does. Many sites still rely on handheld tape guns, with every operator taping a little differently. One carton doesn't matter much. Across thousands of shipments a day, those small inefficiencies add up to wasted tape, slower packing, poor presentation and rework.

> *"What often surprises customers is how much time is spent simply sealing cartons. It's not until they measure the process that they discover how many labour hours are tied up in what seems like a small task."*
>
> — Packline

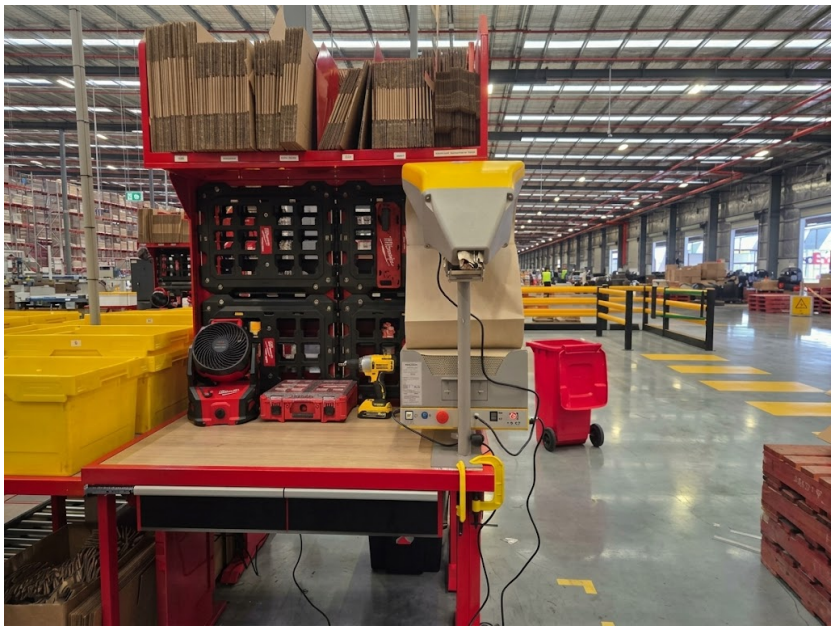
The same shift is being seen overseas: once picking speeds up, packaging becomes the next constraint. The businesses getting the best results aren't the ones buying the biggest machines. They're the ones finding the bottleneck and automating where it makes the biggest difference. More often than not, that's the packaging station.

THREE LEVERS THAT TAKE SECONDS OUT OF EVERY PARCEL

Lever	What slows packers down	What changes
Mobile workstations	Relabels, rescans and exceptions holding up the main line	The Packline Mobile Power Workstation (MPW) gives you a powered station for relabelling, rescanning and exceptions, with onboard power for a thermal label printer and scanner
Water-activated tape	Multiple passes of plastic tape, tearing and re-taping	Bondtape BP-555e dispensers cut the exact length at the push of a button; one strip seals the carton, strong and tamper-evident
Paper void fill	Bags of loose fill, over- or under-filling	Dispensers deliver paper on demand at the bench, so packers grab, fill and close



The Packline Mobile Power Workstation: a powered station for relabelling, rescanning and exceptions, so packers can keep packing.



Paper void fill delivered on demand, right at the bench. A Packline install on a customer's packing line.

Each lever on its own saves seconds. Together, they turn the pack bench from the slowest step into one that keeps pace with picking.

SETUPS THAT SCALE WITH YOU

What works at 50 orders a day falls apart at 500. Most warehouses don't redesign their packing line on purpose. They add another bench and another tape gun until their busiest area becomes their slowest. The fix is to match your setup to the volume you're actually running.

Four questions to ask before you choose equipment

- **Throughput:** how many cartons do you seal per hour at peak?
- **Box mix:** are you running a few standard sizes, or dozens of variable ones?
- **Seal security:** what are damage, pilferage and re-packs costing you?
- **Sustainability:** are customers or retail partners asking for less plastic?

Volume	Setup that fits	Why it works
Under 50 cartons a day	A tidy bench, paper void fill and a water-activated tape dispenser to suit: the BP-333 manual (no power needed) or the BP-500M electric with one-touch preset lengths	Lean and low cost, and starting on WAT now means no retraining later
50 to 1,000+ cartons a day	Worth exploring an electronic BP-555eFACM at each station, with void fill and label printing within arm's reach	This is where the biggest efficiency gains hide, and the time saved per carton adds up fast
Thousands of cartons a day	Multiple BP-555eFACM stations in dedicated lanes, fixed-size carton sealers for standard SKUs, automated pallet wrapping, and a Mobile Power Workstation for relabelling and exceptions	Uptime and consistency come first. You scale by adding stations, not complexity, and any packer can jump onto any lane



A station built for flow: cartons overhead, labels and printer at eye level, and an electronic water-activated tape dispenser within arm's reach.

WHY THE BP-555EFACM STANDS OUT



- **Preset tape lengths:** program the exact strip for each carton size, for less waste and faster packing.
- **Stronger seals:** the tape bonds into the carton fibres, so one strip top and bottom usually does the job.
- **Tamper-evident:** any attempt to open the carton shows, which helps cut pilferage and complaints.
- **Branded finish:** clean seals, with custom-printed tape available.
- **Fully recyclable:** paper tape means the whole carton goes straight into recycling.

The BP-555eFACM: colour-coded preset lengths, one press, one strip.

Packline supplies and services the BP-555e from our Victorian base. If something needs attention, you're dealing with a local Australian team, not an overseas warranty claim.

FASTER, AND PLASTIC FREE

Sustainability and productivity used to be separate projects. Now the best investments deliver both: less waste, more output and a better customer experience at once. At the pack bench, they're the same decision. Reinforced water-activated tape bonds into the carton, and paper void fill goes into the recycling with it, so customers get a box with no plastic to separate.

That matters to shoppers, to retail partners with packaging targets, and to sustainability teams reporting on what goes out the door. It's why Packline's approach comes down to one line: **pack faster, smarter, plastic free.**

PACK BENCH HEALTH CHECK

Tick each statement that's true for your site. **Three or more unticked means your pack bench is likely costing you speed.**

- [ ] Orders rarely queue between pick and pack, even at peak
- [ ] Every packer has their own tape, void fill and label printer within arm's reach
- [ ] Cartons are sealed in one pass, not taped two or three times
- [ ] We can add packing capacity for peak without rebuilding the floor
- [ ] New or temp staff can pack to standard within their first shift
- [ ] Packing equipment is serviced on a schedule, not just when it breaks
- [ ] We know what each parcel costs us in packaging materials
- [ ] Our outbound packaging is free of plastic tape and plastic fill

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What's the best packing station setup for a warehouse?

It depends on volume. Under 50 cartons a day, a simple electric dispenser like the BP-500M works well. Above that, it's worth exploring an electronic dispenser like the BP-555eFACM, which is where the biggest efficiency gains are.

Do I need an electric dispenser to use water-activated tape?

No. The BP-333 manual dispenser needs no power and is a simple, low-cost way to start. Many sites start manual and step up to electric as volumes grow.

Is water-activated tape stronger than plastic tape?

Yes. It bonds into the carton fibres rather than sitting on the surface, creating a strong, tamper-evident seal.

Is water-activated tape recyclable?

Yes. It's paper-based, so cartons can be recycled without removing the tape.

Who services BP-555e dispensers in Australia?

Packline supplies and services BP-555e dispensers from our Victorian base.

Fix it before next peak

The best time to fix the pack bench is right after peak, while the pain points are still fresh. Packline offers a free pack bench walk-through: we'll look at your flow, time a few parcels, and show you where the seconds are going.

Call 1300 66 11 61 or visit packline.com.au to book a time.

About Packline

Packline Solutions is an Australian, family-run packaging efficiency company. We supply, install and service water-activated tape systems, paper void fill, mobile workstations, carton sealers and pallet wrappers for warehouses, 3PLs, manufacturers and ecommerce fulfilment operations. Our RMT maintenance program keeps equipment running through every peak.

Sources

- Australia Post, eCommerce Update (July 2026) and peak season 2025 figures
- Deloitte, The Retail Report 2026
- Modern Materials Handling, "Boxing smarter in the e-commerce age"
- Packline blog, "The next bottleneck in Australian warehouses isn't storage, it's packaging"
- Packline blog, "Pack faster, seal smarter: the setups that scale with you"