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Wickes

Home Improvement Has Entered The Assortment Era

Wickes' dropship programme already works, but it runs on EDI and manual supplier connections that leave customers without tracking and make growth hard work. As Wickes moves onto a unified commerce platform and a new order management system in 2026–27, it can put dropship on one connected platform rather than carry the old plumbing forward.

A BUSINESS PLAN FOR WICKES | PREPARED FOR GARY KIBBLE, CHIEF MARKETING & DIGITAL OFFICER

WINNERS AND LOSERS

Homebase's Comeback Runs On Range, Not Stock

THE COLLAPSE

135

stores at risk when it entered administration

£84m

loss in the year to January 2023, on sales down to £701m

2024

administration, November; 45 years after the 1979 launch

Homebase's choice lived on its shelves and in its warehouses. When footfall and margin went, there was no asset-light way to keep range growing: an inventory-bound model with nowhere to put the long tail.

THE COMEBACK, ON VIRTUALSTOCK

- CDS Superstores, owner of The Range and Wilko, bought the Homebase brand, IP and 49 stores out of administration in November 2024
- Relaunched homebase.co.uk in January 2025 with 10,000+ items and click & collect at 200+ The Range and Wilko points
- Relaunched the Homebase dropship programme on Virtualstock, growing range from suppliers rather than stock, with outstanding results
- Extended the same Virtualstock dropship model to Homebase Ireland in 2026

Wickes is taking Homebase's old stores. Homebase is winning back customers with supplier-direct range. Wickes can do both.

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Sources: Homebase administration and results, Retail Gazette / Retail Week (Nov 2024); CDS acquisition and homebase.co.uk relaunch, Retail Week and Retail Gazette (Jan 2025), The Range (Wikipedia); Homebase Ireland on Virtualstock, ChannelX (May 2026); Homebase dropship results, Virtualstock. Wickes acquired four former Homebase stores (Wickes FY25 results).

THE PRIZE

An Illustrative £61m–£102m Of Incremental Revenue And £15m–£26m Of Gross Profit

01

Revenue Upside

FY25 group revenue	£1,636.2m
Assumed digital base (25%)	£409.1m
Conservative +5%	**£20.5m**
Base +15%	**£61.4m**
Upside +25%	**£102.3m**

02

Margin & Capital Efficiency

Incremental gross profit (25% supplier-direct margin)	£15.3m–£25.6m
Inventory capital if the same range were owned	£7.5m–£12.5m
Inventory capital under dropship	**£0**

Owned-stock capital uses Wickes' own FY25 ratios: cost of sales 63% of revenue and ~5.2 inventory turns (£1,032.4m ÷ £199.4m).

03

Why Margin Can Hold

- No buy, carry or markdown risk on the extended range
- Long-tail SKUs face less price comparison than core lines
- Working capital stays free for the 300-store rollout
- New categories can be tested before any inventory commitment
- Store roll out supported by extending range available to choose and collect in store

Base case: £61m of revenue and £15m of gross profit, with £0 of new stock on the balance sheet.

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Illustrative, not a forecast. Revenue, cost of sales and inventory: Wickes Group FY25 results (52 weeks to 27 Dec 2025). Wickes does not disclose a digital share of sales; 25% is an assumption. Lift scenarios, 25% supplier-direct margin and FY25 ratios are assumptions to replace with Wickes' actuals in discovery.

WHERE THE GROWTH COMES FROM

Six Categories, Ranked By How Little Has To Change

OWNED DEMAND

Power Tools & Accessories

Wickes Extra Power Tools already lists 398 lines, 370 of them home-delivery only. Depth across brands customers already buy here is the smallest change of all.

OWNED DEMAND

Flooring & Tiles

Record share in tiling & flooring and an existing Wickes Extra range. More sizes, finishes and premium ranges extend a category Wickes already wins.

OWNED DEMAND

Doors, Windows & Hardware

Wickes Extra Doors & Windows and Door Handles exist today. Made-to-measure, bifolds and designer hardware suit supplier-direct fulfilment.

ADJACENT

Garden Buildings & Outdoor

Sheds, garden rooms, furniture and bulk landscaping are bulky and slow-turning, ideal to ship direct, and a space Homebase is rebuilding fast.

POSITIONING

Appliances & Project Add-Ons

SMEG is already in the kitchen range. Wider appliance, sink and tap brands complete D&I projects without adding showroom stock.

LONG TAIL

Home Energy & Trade Specialist

Heat pumps, EV charging and specialist fixings for 671k active TradePro members: low-volume, high-intent lines stores should never carry.

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Sources: wickes.co.uk Wickes Extra category pages (accessed 30 Sep 2026); Wickes FY25 results (record share in tiling & flooring; SMEG appliances); Wickes H1 2026 results (671,000 active TradePro members). Ranking is a hypothesis to validate against Wickes' search and conversion data.

Start With The Suppliers Already Selling Through Wickes Extra

Supplier	Onboarding path (all on VS network)	Assortment-expansion potential	First-wave priority
Einhell	Migrate current EDI / manual link	88 power-tool lines; cordless platform + garden power	**Wave 1**
Senco	Migrate current EDI / manual link	56 lines; collated fixings for TradePro	**Wave 1**
Draper	Migrate current EDI / manual link	46 lines; hand, power and garden tools	**Wave 1**
DeWalt	Migrate current EDI / manual link	45 lines; trade-grade XR / Flexvolt depth	**Wave 1**
Bosch / Bosch Professional	Migrate current EDI / manual link	32 lines; DIY and pro ranges	**Wave 2**
Makita	Migrate current EDI / manual link	23 lines; LXT 18V platform	**Wave 2**

Further known third-party brands to confirm

Stanley FatMax | Vacmaster | Dremel | Worx | JCB Tools | Kärcher | Paslode | Hyundai | SMEG | Velux | Dulux | Crown | Cuprinol

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Sources: wickes.co.uk Wickes Extra Power Tools brand filter (398 results, accessed 30 Sep 2026) and category pages; SMEG from Wickes FY25 results. Network connectivity to be confirmed from Virtualstock supplier data. Waves are hypotheses.

WHAT STANDS IN THE WAY

The Constraint Is Not Demand. It Is Plumbing.

What We Would Validate

01 How many dropship suppliers are on EDI versus manual connections, and how long does a new one take to go live?

02 What share of customer-service contacts are “where is my order?” on dropship orders without tracking?

03 Where do supplier stock, order and dispatch signals reconcile today, and will that move to the new OMS?

04 How many suppliers and ranges are waiting to launch because each new connection is costly to build?

WHAT IS ALREADY KNOWN

Wickes' dropship runs on EDI and manual supplier connections. Customers get no tracking on dropship orders, which drives customer-service contacts and limits how fast the range can grow.

The fix has a deadline: a unified commerce platform from 2026 and a new order management system in two phases across 2026 and 2027, backed by £40–45m of capex and £18–20m of expensed technology projects in 2026.

The choice: connect dropship properly as the OMS is built, or carry EDI and manual links past 2027.

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Current dropship set-up and tracking gap: Virtualstock understanding of Wickes' operations, to be confirmed in discovery. Sources: Wickes FY25 results (17 Mar 2026), Digital capability section and technical guidance; Wickes H1 2026 results (15 Sep 2026).

THE PLAN

Four Phases, Proof Before Scale

PHASE 1

Weeks 1–4

Discover & Size

- Overlap analysis of Wickes' dropship suppliers against the Virtualstock network
- Baseline tracking coverage, WISMO contacts and supplier go-live times
- Integration workshop with the OMS programme team

OUTPUT

Sized business case and integration blueprint on Wickes' data

PHASE 2

Weeks 5–12

Connect & Migrate

- One connection into Wickes' current stack, designed for the new OMS
- Migrate first-wave EDI and manual suppliers, with tracking passed to customers
- Self-serve supplier onboarding and compliance reporting

OUTPUT

First-wave suppliers live on a single connection

PHASE 3

Weeks 13–20

First Proof

- Launch two expansion categories (e.g. garden buildings, flooring)
- Pilot supplier-to-store click & collect
- Track tracking coverage, WISMO contacts, SKUs live and conversion

OUTPUT

Proof on Wickes' own numbers

PHASE 4

Weeks 21+

Scale & Repeat

- Roll out to remaining categories
- Monthly supplier onboarding cadence
- TradePro-specific extended ranges; align to OMS phase 2 (2027)

OUTPUT

A repeatable assortment engine

Phase 3 revenue can land in the same financial year as the integration, and ahead of OMS phase 2 in 2027.

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Timings are indicative and would be confirmed in Phase 1 against Wickes' OMS programme plan. Supplier-fulfilled click & collect is an existing Virtualstock capability.

EVIDENCE

Retailers Like Wickes Already Run On Virtualstock

ROBERT DYAS

Assortment Growth

1,480%

increase in dropship products after replacing point-to-point EDI that onboarded only 1–2 suppliers a month; 70% of GMV now supplier-direct

UK home, garden & DIY retailer · 95 stores

BRADFORDS

Building-Supply Range

11,000

additional SKUs online, mostly landscaping; dropship now 18% of turnover and 25% of e-commerce

South-west builders' merchant · 46 branches

YOUR CATEGORY

Same Sector, Same Platform

6

home-improvement and merchant names on Virtualstock dropship: B&Q, Screwfix, Toolstation, Travis Perkins, City Plumbing and Homebase

8m+ orders a year

£2bn+ GMV processed

2004 founded

Virtualstock platform

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Sources: Virtualstock case studies (Robert Dyas, Bradfords Building Supplies); Virtualstock sector partner pages; City Plumbing, ChannelX; Homebase Ireland, ChannelX (May 2026); platform figures, FirstCapital release on the Logicbroker acquisition (Oct 2025)..

React To This Plan, And Introduce Us To The Leader Running The OMS Programme?

Every number here is a public figure or a labelled assumption. Wickes' dropship contact and tracking data would size the customer-service saving; its supplier list would replace our overlap hypothesis; its digital mix and Wickes Extra GMV would replace the 25% digital base. Three short working sessions get us there.

01

Overlap and tracking review of your dropship suppliers

02

Category sizing on your digital mix

03

Business case on your actuals