

Emerging trends in Supply Chain Management (SCM)

“Perseverance is not a long race; it is many short races one after the other.”

- Walter Elliot

This prominent Scottish politician saw the important distinction between tactics and strategy.

Logistics involves successfully piecing together any number of moving parts into one working supply chain. Although it may look like one long process, supply chain managers need the patience to think in terms of both the end-to-end system and its constituent parts.

Emerging trends in supply chain management has been largely driven by the incessant growth in businesses, by the reliance of one business on another and by the demands that are far flung across geographies, deep into the hinterlands and traversing many barriers, in the backdrop of a globalised business complexities and more holistic move to “e-commerce”

This driving force gets further amplified by the need to “Deliver upon promises made to customers” which requires real time data for managing complexities such as digital solutions to map vendor performance and business intelligence to better understand customer behaviour

Hence for a logistics professional in real time digital environment it’s important to run “what if” scenarios and dig into any areas that gives a pause for thought in terms of advance planning, which will help leverage the resources and capabilities of supply chain partners to create superior value and competitive advantage in the market place

The evolving trends in global sourcing practices, multichannel routes to market and relationship-based innovation are transforming the business landscape along with performance improvements which has led to a high resolution of brand visibility, enhanced sales and profits and further the cause of innovative processes, setting of higher benchmarks in terms of best practices and relationship building amongst the stakeholders.

Integrating operations, management of materials and products, information and capitals into a well formatted supply chain is the new paradigm in organising business lines. Hence supply chain the mantle of “Backbone” – a valuable component of all business planning.

THE CURRENT SCENARIO: The supply chain and logistic sectors are being transformed by several innovative solutions such as IOT (Internet of things), Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, 3D Printing, Robotics and Automation, Digital Logistics Marketplace, Blockchains, On demand technologies, Crowd shipping etc.

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Factors guiding the new trends in supply chain design and performance:

- Need for advance planning - Advanced demand planning systems help companies to create an efficient customer focussed mindset without sacrificing operational efficiency.
- The globalisation of business landscape - has brought with it an ever complex and changing socio-political barriers to deal with. Hence a well thought of supply chain network which can optimise the positive effects of the socio-political-economic flux and mitigate the its negative effects is the call of the day to smoothen a cost-effective flow of materials through these “complex web of networks”
- Competition and pricing pressures – The focus should be at cost rationalisation and creating an efficient value chain which will aid cost competitiveness and simultaneously provide value added services to meet the demands of a varied set of customers.
- Outsourcing – The valuable idea of outsourcing has become a key to the efficiency of the supply chain. In this aspect supply chain is nothing but a “pooling in of various core competencies” of different partners along the supply chain, thereby bringing in manifold synergies and enhanced focus on one’s own core capability, thereby bringing in enhanced value and reducing the pricing pressures. The challenge though remains here is a “quality driven well synchronised and seamless chain of value partners” who can work briskly in tandem such that the promises made to the end customer can be fulfilled.
- Complex product life cycles – The demands of the markets are to continuously develop innovative product; at the same time the efficiency would aim at minimising the cannibalization of the existing products.
- Collaboration between stake holders – As supply chains continue to evolve there has been a move towards more intense collaboration between customers, suppliers and other peripheral stakeholders. This level of collaboration goes beyond linking information systems to fully integrated business processes and organisational structures.

THE FUTURE HOLDS GOOD FOR BUSINESSES WHICH SEEK TO STAY SUSTAINABLE THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY IN TERMS OF DELIVERING TO THE CUSTOMERS/ STAKEHOLDERS THE VALUES PROMISED

“The focus herein is “Continuously monitoring the flux, staying abreast with the evolving machinery so as to align them with the business goals in order to stay ahead in competition” and at the heart of it all is innovation which continuously and consciously improves logistics efficiencies, reduces the level of environmental impact and enhances value generation rather than labour cost thereby creating long term sustainability.”

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Shantha has 23 Years of working experience in diverse industries. Of these she spent 16 years in the logistics and supply chain arena as CEO handling the largest region of ISC/ MIDDLE EAST/ AFRICA / EMED. Her key strengths are people management of diverse cultures and large workforce, handling a large P & L, creating and implementing new initiatives , communication and business strategy.

Key achievement: Revenue and PAT - grew from Euro 58 mn to Euro 133 mn in a span of 5 years and PAT from euro 8 mn to Euro 12.8 mn in a span of 5 years. Managing a multi culture work force of 1200 people in 71 countries across the region

To view her short bio, click [here](#)

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