LogiSYM

The Magazine for Supply Chain Executives

APRIL 2025

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The Logistics & Supply Chain Management Society
The Regional Professional Body for Logistics Practicioners

The Official Journal of The Logistics & Supply Chain Management Society

APRIL 2025

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Feature Articles

EDITORIAL MESSAGE

One of my favourite films from the past was “The Year of Living Dangerously”, an award-winning adaptation of the novel written by Australian author Christopher J. Koch in 1978. In light of the evolving risks facing modern logistics networks and the professionals who manage them, today’s global commerce environment resembles a volatile narrative. The uncertainty of U.S. tariffs and the disruption of established trading transactions have fostered a climate of instability, similar to the story’s themes of navigating disorder and adjusting to ever-changing circumstances.

For supply chain practitioners, embracing this "disruption as normal" means fostering resilience and agility, and as the characters in Koch's story adapt to political turbulence, businesses must pivot strategies with increasing normality to manage disruptions like trade wars, pandemics, and geopolitical tensions. Leveraging technology, diversifying suppliers, and building robust contingency plans, leading organisations transform challenges into opportunities. So, we need to view disruption not as an anomaly but as a constant, evolving factor in global trade—a modern-day "year of living dangerously" that demands innovation and adaptability. A great time to be in supply chain management!

Welcome to the April 2025 edition of LogiSYM Magazine with this month’s theme of "Cold Chain Logistics for Food, Pharma & Retail".

We kick off this theme with an excellent contribution from Kim Winter, “The Importance of Cold Chain Logistics for Food, Pharma & Retail: Ensuring Efficiency, Compliance, and Resilience”, in which he looks at the challenges and solutions evolving across these 3 industry verticals and provides an overview of the key emerging strategies, particularly for integrating technologies and sustainability in strengthening last-mile capabilities.

Continuing in cold chain management and an important evolving regulatory theme for Halal Supply Chains, Dr Marco Tieman provides us with a timely update in his article “An Invitation to Join the Halal Supply Chain Alliance: A Collaboration Platform for Halal Supply Chains”. Marco covers some of the continuing challenges for stakeholders with the evolution of a harmonised industry standard and a new collaborative platform to support this.

Following on from last month’s Artificial Intelligence (AI) theme, Wolfgang Lehmacher’s article “AI Supply Chains/Logistics: A Critical Take on Human-Machine Dynamics” takes a really interesting dive into

the interactions between humans and the evolving AI tools and how to balance risks and rewards with the keys to the pathway of "responsibility".

In our latest chapter of "The Green Mile", Tim Foote continues our recent discussion on the importance of SMEs to the sustainability journey, sharing his own experience with some further thoughtful suggestions to get initiatives moving by looking at them through the lens of normal business efficiency projects and initiatives.

In the context of one of the most successful editions of Singapore Maritime Week (2025) having ended and my own passion for sustainability in the supply chain, I took the opportunity with the recent announcement by Pyxis R and WaterB collaboration for sustainability in Singapore's river ferries through capture and use of solar energy to consider the role of SMEs and smaller nations in net zero targets in an article "Thinking Big: How Small Countries Are Fuelling the Net Zero Maritime Revolution".

The LogiSYM APAC 2025 Symposium is now just around the corner, co-located with CeMAT SEA at the Singapore Expo on 20-21 May, 2025, and an excellent programme of speakers and topics in the region's leading event for thought leaders and the supply chain industry. Do not miss your chance to join the event! **To learn more about the LogiSYM Asia Pacific Singapore 2025 Scan the QR Code.**

Brett Marshall
Editor-In-Chief of LogiSYM Magazine

LSCMS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Agility Is No Longer An Option...

In almost every conversation I have been having and in meetings I've had in Jakarta, Yangon and Shenzhen these past three weeks, the topic of conversation often gravitates towards trade and tariffs. Opinions abound, but most of us are making uninformed guesses and assumptions trying to figure out what world "leaders" will do and how the others will react in what could soon escalate into a tit-for-tat war.

It is, of course, a topical and serious cause for concern, but there are other important issues in the supply chain that also require our attention today – and not tomorrow when this current crisis subsides – which, given the actors we have, is unlikely to happen anytime soon.

As any good logistician knows, we have to navigate multiple issues at once and not deal with an issue sequentially in the supply chains we manage. Secondly, albeit more frequently and on a larger scale, disruptions have been and will continue to be the mainstay in what we do. We have to navigate these minefields whilst continuing to achieve optimum place and time utility.

To help us do this, logisticians need supply chains that are able to adjust and adapt to the next issue that crops up, and we can only do this if we have the systems, people and processes in place that allow us to do this.

Managing and executing an agile supply chain is no longer an option. In today's volatile environment of trade tensions, geopolitical conflict, and rapid market shifts, agility is essential in supply chains. It enables businesses to quickly adapt, reroute, and respond to disruptions—minimising risk, ensuring continuity, and seizing new opportunities as conditions change. Agility is now a competitive necessity, not a luxury, and was part of what we decided our focus would be in 2024 when we put our platform for LogiSYM in 2025 together – Digital, Sustainable & Secure : Empowering Supply Chain Agility and Efficiency. Nice to be right, but in this case better if we were not!

The conversation and knowledge sharing continue across all of what we do, both online and in person, and I hope you will take advantage of these to continue gaining insights and leveraging the opportunities that present themselves along the way, and I look forward to meeting you in person at LogiSYM Asia Pacific, which takes place in Singapore from 20th to 21st May.

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THINKING BIG: How Small Countries Are Fuelling the Net Zero Maritime Revolution

By Brett Marshall
Editor-In-Chief
LogiSYM Magazine

Singapore's maritime sector proves that resource contraints can be turned into opportunities

I recently had the opportunity to attend a launch event of Singapore's first solar-powered Pyxis R ferry to WaterB, a leading river cruise operator in Singapore, in an event titled "Our River, Reimagined" at the ArtScience Museum. A highly thought-provoking launch of a ferryboat in view of a recent article I recalled reading about an initiative in the Nordics with similar goals, and I have taken the opportunity to explore this idea further.

Sustainability is more than just a buzzword—it's a mission that some of the world's smallest yet most dynamic nations are leading. Countries like Singapore and the Nordics, despite their size, are driving innovative changes in maritime energy, demonstrating that strategic collaboration and visionary policies can set the stage for a net zero future. Their success stories offer valuable insights into how ambitious sustainability goals can be achieved through technological breakthroughs and collective efforts.

Small Nations, Big Ideas

Small nations possess agility that allows them to pivot quickly towards innovation. Singapore, a global maritime hub, exemplifies this through its efforts to revolutionise the industry. As outlined in the press release[1] for the event, the launch of the Pyxis R, Singapore's first solar-powered river cruise, is a testament to this inventive spirit. Developed by Pyxis, a local maritime electrification startup, this vessel is more than just an electric upgrade—it's a leap towards net zero emissions.

Singapore's maritime sector proves that resource constraints can be turned into opportunities. By leveraging strategic partnerships, intensive research, and government support, the nation is reshaping the industry and proving that bold risks can lead to sustainable breakthroughs.

Reimagining Maritime Innovation: The Pyxis R Story

The Pyxis R integrates cutting-edge technology, including Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) capabilities, which allow surplus solar energy to be fed back into the grid. Powered by an intelligent platform developed by Electra, the vessel employs smart charging, predictive maintenance, and real-time operational tracking. These technological advancements not only enhance efficiency but also extend the lifespan of vessels while ensuring compliance with emission standards.

This innovation extends beyond technology—it embodies Singapore's commitment to reducing its maritime environmental footprint. WaterB, a leading

river cruise operator, plans to deploy ten Pyxis R vessels by 2025, replacing half its existing electric fleet. This move aligns with national sustainability efforts, offering both an eco-friendly alternative and an enhanced cruising experience.

The Power of Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

One of the core drivers behind these maritime innovations is collaboration. The Pyxis R project is the result of collective efforts between Pyxis Maritime, WaterB, SP Mobility, The Mobility House Asia Pacific, and key government agencies like the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), Public Utilities Board (PUB), and Enterprise Singapore. This cross-industry cooperation has enabled the implementation of V2G technology, which supports Singapore's push for energy resilience.

This collaborative model is mirrored in the Nordic maritime energy transition detailed in the analysis of a recent Maritime Executive article, "Charting the Course for the Maritime Energy Transition in the Nordics". [2]. Countries in the region thrive on a culture of cooperation, bringing together government bodies, industrial players, academic institutions, and tech startups. Their coordinated efforts are modernising maritime operations, demonstrating that shared vision and common goals are essential for sustainable innovation.

Lessons from the Nordic Maritime Transition

While Singapore leads maritime innovation in Southeast Asia, the Nordic region serves as another prime example of transformation. Facing harsh maritime conditions, Nordic countries have embraced resilient, renewable energy solutions to drive sustainability. Their approach, combining integrated energy systems with strict environmental regulations, has successfully reduced emissions while improving energy security.

A key takeaway from the Nordic experience is the importance of predictive maintenance and digital fleet management. These measures enhance operational efficiency and ensure steady progress towards net zero despite technological and geopolitical uncertainties. By embracing these strategies, maritime sectors worldwide can achieve similar sustainability milestones.

Pillars of Sustainable Maritime Innovation

The success of initiatives like the Pyxis R and Nordic maritime projects highlights several key factors:

Visionary Leadership – Bold leadership fosters a culture of experimentation and innovation.

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration – Cooperation between government agencies, industry players,

and tech developers creates synergies for progress. Advanced Technology Integration – Innovations like solar power, V2G, and predictive maintenance redefine maritime operations.

Supportive Regulatory Frameworks – Policies that encourage sustainable practices and provide incentives help drive innovation.

Data-Driven Decision-Making – Real-time analytics optimise efficiency and ensure adherence to sustainability benchmarks.

When combined, these elements create a robust foundation for achieving sustainable maritime transformation.

Scaling Innovation for Global Impact

The Pyxis R and Nordic maritime initiatives serve as models for scaling sustainability across the global maritime sector. By expanding similar projects worldwide, the benefits could be profound:

Accelerating Decarbonisation – Widespread adoption of solar-powered vessels and smart grid technologies can significantly cut emissions.

Enhancing Energy Resilience – V2G technology can stabilise power grids by converting vessels into mobile energy assets.

Boosting Economic Competitiveness – Small nations can attract global investment by positioning themselves as leaders in green technology. Catalysing Sustainable Tourism – Eco-friendly maritime transport offers quieter, more scenic journeys, appealing to tourists.

Inspiring Cross-Sector Innovation – The success of these projects can encourage other countries to pursue similar sustainable strategies.

When localised innovations scale up, their cumulative environmental and economic benefits can be transformative. This goes beyond emissions reduction—it's about redefining how industries, economies, and communities interact with technology to create a sustainable future.

Navigating the Future

As the world intensifies efforts towards net zero, the experiences of smaller nations like Singapore and the Nordics offer valuable lessons. Their success stories highlight that vast resources aren't necessary for innovation—what's needed is vision, collaboration, and the willingness to challenge the status quo.

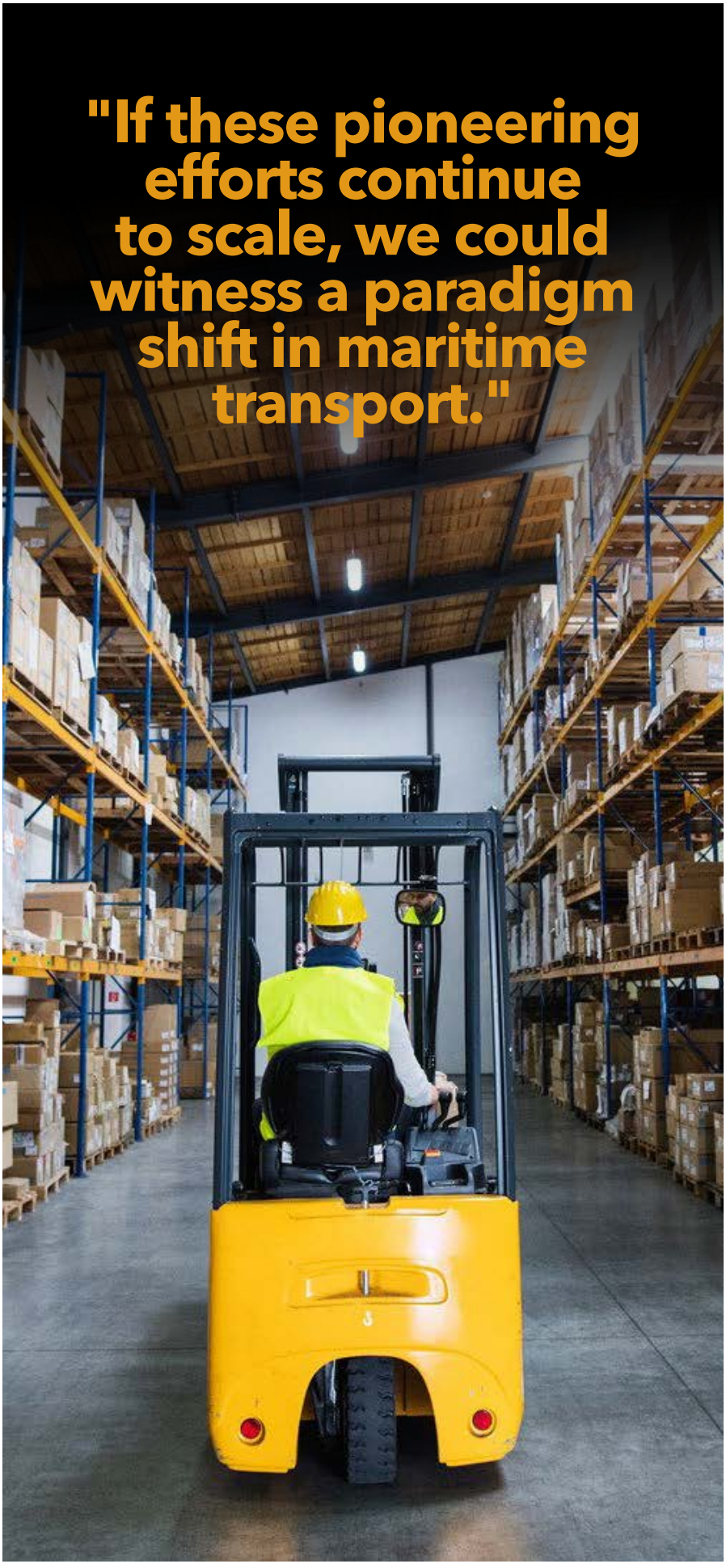
The maritime industry, traditionally linked to heavy environmental costs, is now at the forefront of a sustainable revolution. By embracing cutting-edge technology, refining regulatory frameworks, and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships, small nations are proving they can lead the charge in global sustainability efforts.

If these pioneering efforts continue to scale, we could witness a paradigm shift in maritime transport. Beyond cleaner waterways, this shift would signal a renewed commitment to sustainability worldwide. The ripple effects—ranging from energy resilience to economic revitalisation—demonstrate that when vision meets collaboration, even small players can drive monumental change.

The path to a sustainable maritime future is complex, but the emerging models from Singapore and the Nordics provide a clear, actionable roadmap. Their successes should inspire others to innovate, collaborate, and ultimately dream big in the quest for net zero.

The challenge now lies with global stakeholders: How can we leverage the ingenuity of smaller nations to create a worldwide network of sustainable, efficient maritime operations? The journey has just begun, and the horizon is bright for those willing to chart a bold new course in maritime energy transition.

Sources:
[1]Press Release: "Pyxis, Singapore's Electric Vessel Start-Up, Unveils First Solar-Powered River Cruise for WaterB, Advancing Towards Net Zero Goals", March 17 2025, Pyxis and WaterB, (pyxis@preciouscomms.com)
[2]"Charting the Course for the Maritime Energy Transition in the Nordics", Mikael Lind, Wolfgang Lehmacher, Andreas Bach, and Nina Egeli, February 9, 2025, The Maritime Executive (maritime-executive.com)



Brett Marshall
Editor-In-Chief
LogiSYM Magazine

Brett is an accomplished transformation leader with 35 years in logistics, supply chain, and quality, including 30 years in the pharmaceutical industry. He is passionate about quality, safety, and sustainability, dedicated to making healthcare accessible while ensuring product integrity and patient safety. Brett cultivates a strong organisational culture by defining clear purpose, setting strategic objectives, and implementing performance management techniques.
He is experienced in cross-cultural leadership, process management, and regulatory standards. He has worked in Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Bangladesh, and Singapore.

Brett is a Certified Sustainable Supply Chain Professional, a member of the GDP-UCI Advisory Board, on the Advisory Board for the Logistics and Supply Chain Management Society of Singapore, a member of the Parenteral Drug Association, a member of the International Society of Pharmaceutical Engineers (ISPE), and a member of ISPE's Women in Pharma and APAC GAMP 5 Communities of Practice.

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Why Supply Chain Leaders from ASEAN Countries Must Attend CeMAT Southeast Asia 2025

Southeast Asia's logistics and supply chain sector is experiencing rapid transformation, driven by infrastructure expansion, automation adoption, and the growth of e-commerce. With supply chain digitalisation expected to grow at a rate of 5-7% annually, businesses in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam are at a pivotal moment to embrace innovation and optimise efficiency.

As companies across the region invest in smart warehousing, AI-powered logistics, and automation technologies, one event stands out as the platform to connect, learn, and explore cutting-edge solutions: CeMAT Southeast Asia 2025.

Taking place from May 19 to 21, 2025, at Singapore EXPO, CeMAT Southeast Asia is the premier event for intralogistics, automation, and Industry 4.0 in the region. Bringing together technology providers, logistics professionals, and supply chain decision-makers, the event provides an essential opportunity to gain market insights, explore innovative automation solutions, and build strategic regional partnerships.

Why ASEAN Supply Chain Professionals Need to Be in Singapore

Singapore's role as a global logistics hub makes it the ideal host for CeMAT Southeast Asia 2025. With world-class infrastructure, business-friendly policies, and seamless international connectivity, it is the gateway to ASEAN's rapidly growing supply chain and automation sector.

For businesses based in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam, the event presents a rare opportunity to engage with international solution providers, learn from regional experts, and explore automation technologies tailored to Southeast Asia's evolving logistics needs.

CeMAT Southeast Asia 2025 is designed to address key challenges and opportunities shaping the region's logistics industry, including:

• Smart Warehousing & AI-Driven Automation: Businesses are increasingly integrating AI-powered robotics, automated guided vehicles (AGVs), and IoT-enabled supply chain solutions to enhance operational efficiency. CeMAT provides firsthand access to live demonstrations of the latest automation technologies designed for logistics providers, retailers, and e-commerce companies.

• Supply Chain Scalability & Market Expansion: As demand for faster and more efficient logistics operations grows, companies across ASEAN are looking for new strategies to optimise supply chains. The event's networking sessions

and exhibitor matchmaking facilitate connections between regional businesses and global solution providers, unlocking new opportunities for expansion.

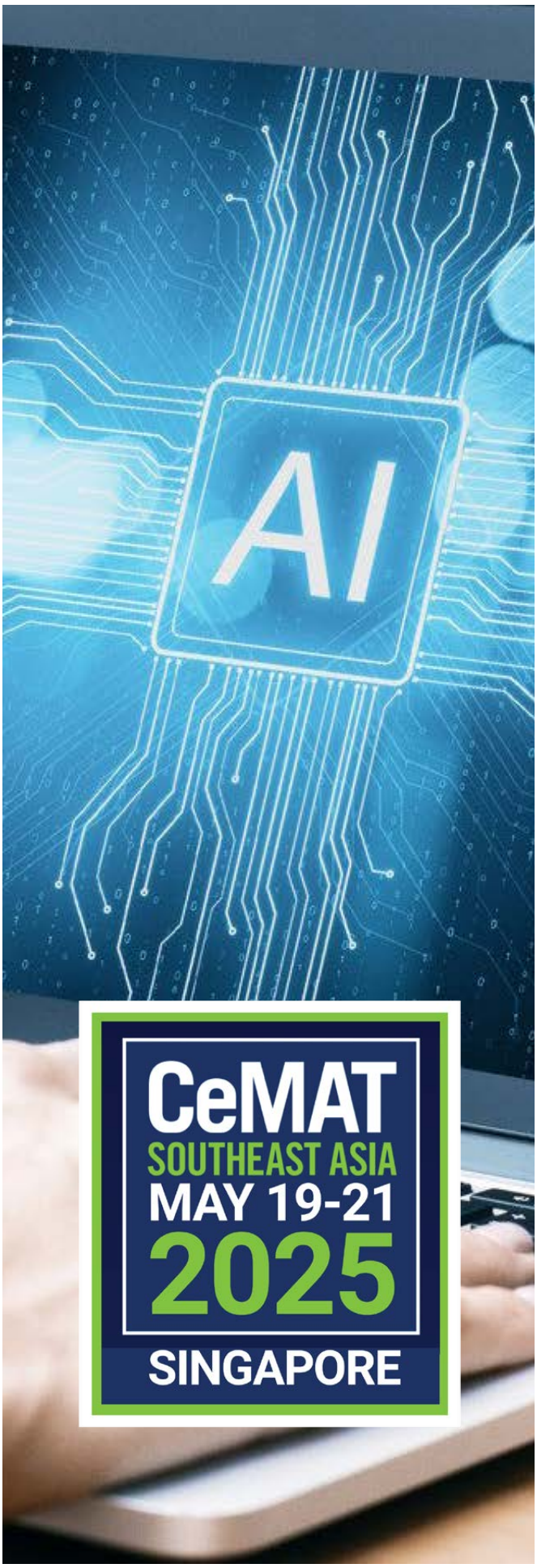
• Insights from Global and Regional Experts: In addition to the exhibition, CeMAT Southeast Asia 2025 offers thought leadership sessions, panel discussions, and technical presentations. These feature real-world case studies from logistics and automation leaders who have successfully implemented AI, robotics, and digital transformation in supply chain operations.

For businesses looking to stay ahead in ASEAN's rapidly evolving logistics and supply chain sector, CeMAT Southeast Asia 2025 offers direct access to regional insights, automation solutions, and strategic partnerships.

Co-located with LogiSYM Asia Pacific 2025, the region's leading conference on supply chain strategy and digitalisation, the event provides invaluable knowledge on market trends, regulations, and investment opportunities. Attendees will gain a competitive edge in navigating ASEAN's logistics landscape while engaging with distributors, automation specialists, and supply chain decision-makers driving industry transformation.

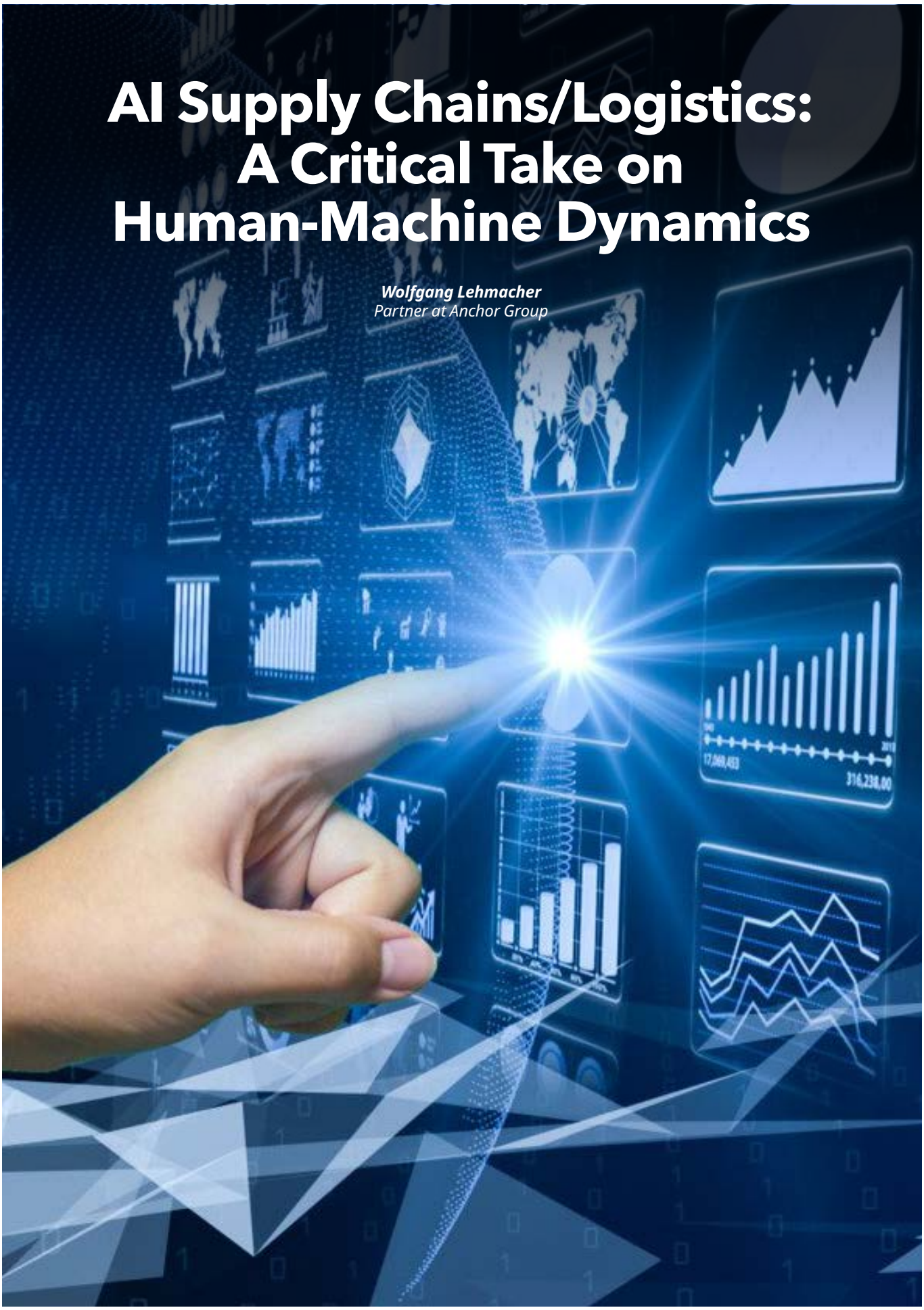
For international companies, CeMAT Southeast Asia 2025 is the ideal gateway into one of the world's fastest-growing logistics markets. As supply chains continue to adapt to disruptions, sustainability demands, and increasing automation, ASEAN presents a critical opportunity for supply chain diversification and investment.

With cutting-edge technology showcases, thought leadership discussions, and high-level networking opportunities, CeMAT Southeast Asia 2025 is more than just an exhibition; it's a strategic platform for growth, innovation, and market expansion in ASEAN's booming logistics industry.



AI Supply Chains/Logistics: A Critical Take on Human-Machine Dynamics

Wolfgang Lehmacher
Partner at Anchor Group



"We must reframe our understanding of AI, placing it firmly in the category of tools rather than collaborators."

Given the high stakes, opportunities, and threats involved, we should reassess human-AI interactions in the rapidly evolving landscape of artificial intelligence (AI). As AI increasingly integrates into critical sectors such as healthcare, finance, national security, supply chain management, and logistics, the potential adverse effects of misuse, malfunctioning, or overreliance grow exponentially, calling for attention and mitigation.

The high-opportunity and high-risk AI environment demands clarity in how we perceive and interact with AI. Viewing AI as a tool rather than a collaborator establishes a clear hierarchy of control and responsibility, with humans firmly at the helm. This view is foundational for a framework that maximises benefits while minimising potential harm, allowing humanity to navigate better this highly dynamic field's ethical, practical, and safety considerations.

There is a tendency to see AI as a collaborator or teammate. This concept is fundamentally flawed. True collaboration requires shared purpose, mutual accountability, and transparency – elements absent in human-machine interactions. No matter how advanced, AI must remain a tool designed to serve human goals, not an entity capable of sharing our ambitions and values.

AI as a Tool, not a Teammate

In the rapidly evolving field of supply chain and logistics, the integration of AI presents immense opportunities and significant challenges. As AI increasingly permeates critical areas such as demand forecasting, inventory management, route optimisation, and risk assessment, it is crucial to reassess human-AI interactions to maximise benefits while mitigating potential risks.

We must reframe our understanding of AI, placing it firmly in the category of tools rather than collaborators. Like other technological advancements throughout history, AI should be appreciated for its power and utility but not confused with human capabilities or responsibilities.

This distinction is crucial for maintaining clarity in decision-making processes and accountability structures. By viewing AI as a tool, we acknowledge its role as an enhancer of human capabilities rather than as a replacement for human judgement.

The Danger of Anthropomorphisation

The tendency to humanise AI by attributing human qualities to AI systems can lead to serious misconceptions and risks. These include:

Overtrust: Users may place undue faith in AI outputs without critical evaluation.

Blurred Boundaries: The distinction between human and machine capabilities becomes unclear, potentially leading to misplaced reliance on AI for tasks requiring human judgement.

Accountability Issues: When AI is perceived as human-like, assigning responsibility for errors or harmful outcomes becomes more challenging.

The Imperative of Human Control

We must ensure human control over AI systems and engage profoundly and decisively in designing, implementing, and using AI. This includes:

Understanding AI Outputs: Users must comprehend how AI generates its results to use the technology responsibly.

Ability to Deactivate: Like any tool, we must retain the power to turn off AI systems when necessary.

Continuous Monitoring: Regular checks and maintenance of AI systems are paramount, like maintaining other critical infrastructure.

Responsibility for Design and Outcomes

Ethical decision-making and responsibility cannot be outsourced to machines. Humans retain accountability for the outcomes of AI-assisted processes, especially in high-stakes domains.

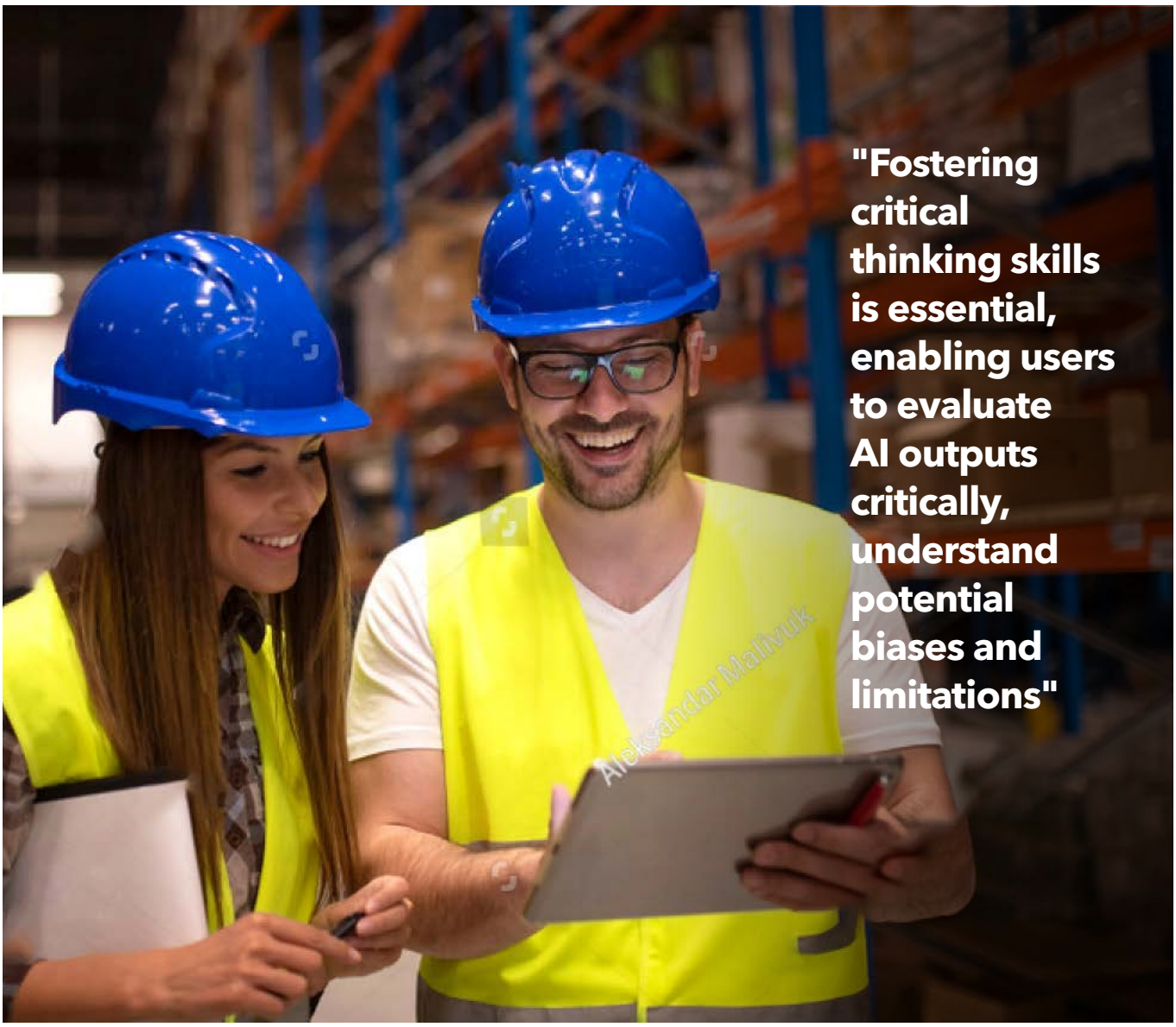
This principle of human accountability is fundamental to the responsible development and deployment of AI systems. As creators and operators of these technologies, we bear the ultimate responsibility for their actions and impacts.

Maintaining human oversight, control, and accountability safeguards against potential misuse or abuse of AI systems.

The Path Forward: Responsible AI Utilisation

Organisations and individuals should focus on the following areas to harness the benefits of AI while mitigating risks:

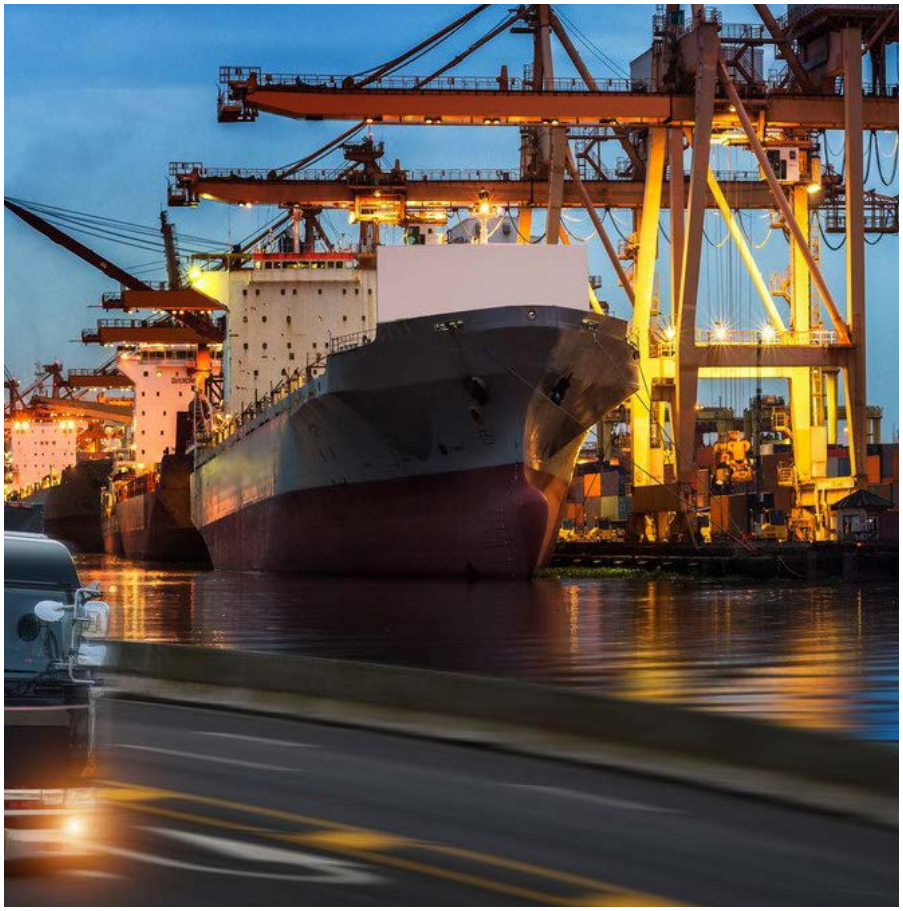
Education: Invest in AI literacy to ensure users understand the technology's capabilities and limitations. This involves



developing comprehensive training programmes that cover AI fundamentals, potential applications, and limitations, catering to various expertise levels. Practical application through hands-on experience with AI tools, including simulations and real-world problem-solving exercises, enhances understanding. Additionally, fostering critical thinking skills is essential, enabling users to evaluate AI outputs critically, understand potential biases and limitations, and question AI-generated results rather than accepting them at face value.

Clear Boundaries: Establish roles for AI systems for implementation and responsible use. This involves defining specific tasks and processes where AI will be utilised, explicitly stating its limitations to prevent overreliance on AI for decisions requiring human judgement. Developing a human-AI interaction framework is crucial, outlining how humans and AI systems should interact, including guidelines for necessary human intervention and decision-making processes when AI and human judgements differ. Ensuring transparency in AI usage is equally important, as well as making all stakeholders aware of where and how AI is being used within the organisation.

Ethical Frameworks: Develop robust guidelines for human-centric AI deployment. This process involves establishing ethical AI principles addressing transparency, privacy, and accountability to guide AI development and use. Conducting impact assessments before deployment is essential to evaluate risks, potential ethical implications, societal impacts, and bias and unintended



consequences. Implementing governance structures, such as appointing ethics officers or committees, ensures adherence to guidelines and provides oversight for AI deployments. Engaging employees, customers, and affected groups and communities in developing ethical frameworks is crucial to incorporating a broad range of perspectives and ensuring comprehensive, responsible AI deployment.

Regular Audits: We must systematically review AI systems to ensure they continue to serve intended purposes without unintended consequences, conducting regular audits by interdisciplinary teams to evaluate performance, accuracy, and alignment with organisational goals and ethical standards. Continuous monitoring for potential biases or discriminatory outcomes is essential, including analysing input data, decision-making processes, and outputs. This requires developing and tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure efficiency and adherence to ethical standards. Establishing feedback loops to collect and incorporate input from users and parties involved helps identify issues early and inform adjustments.

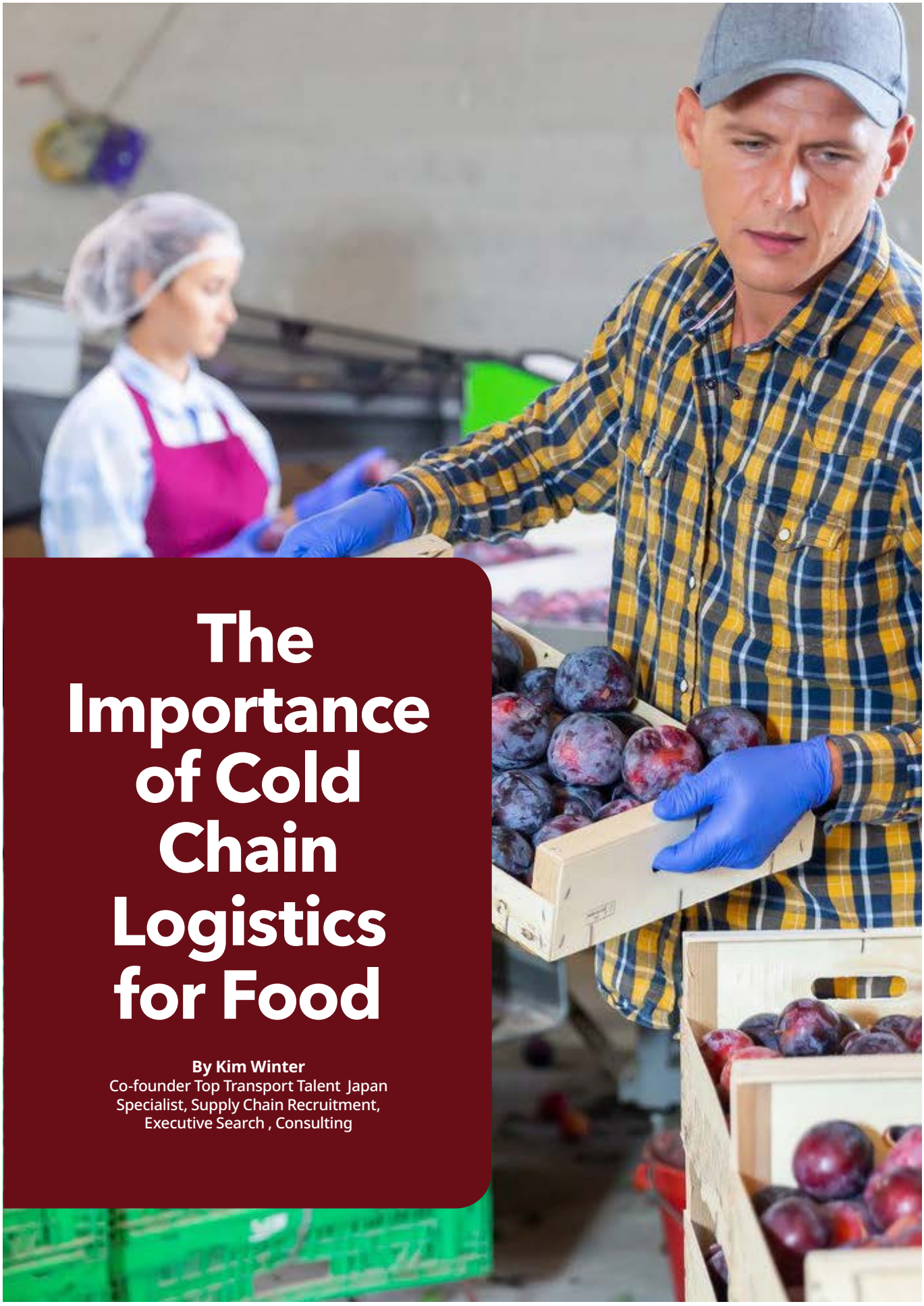
Conclusion

While AI offers tremendous potential to enhance human capabilities and drive innovation across the economy and society, including supply chains and logistics, we must resist the temptation to anthropomorphise these systems. There is no room for AI romanticism. We must maintain a clear-eyed view of AI as a powerful but inanimate technology and tool to safely leverage its strengths, avoiding the pitfalls of misplaced trust or abdicated responsibility.

As we navigate the AI revolution in our global supply chain networks and embrace the technology's potential, we must assert human primacy in decision-making, ethics, and accountability. Only by maintaining a healthy control structure can we harness AI's potential for the betterment of society while safeguarding our essential human values and responsibilities. This is certainly paramount for the safe and fruitful deployment of AI-to-AI interactions.

***Wolfgang Lehmacher** - Partner at Anchor Group*

***Wolfgang Lehmacher** is a partner at Anchor Group and an advisor at Topan AG. The former director at the World Economic Forum, and CEO Emeritus of GeoPost Intercontinental, is an advisory board member of The Logistics and Supply Chain Management Society, ambassador F&L, advisor GlobalSF and RISE, and founding member of the think tanks Logistikweisen and NEXST. He is also the co-author of the Practical Playbook for Maritime Decarbonisation and co-editor of the book Maritime Decarbonization*



The Importance of Cold Chain Logistics for Food

By Kim Winter
Co-founder Top Transport Talent Japan
Specialist, Supply Chain Recruitment,
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Introduction

Cold chain logistics is a critical component of global supply chains, ensuring that temperature-sensitive products such as food, pharmaceuticals, and retail perishables are stored and transported under optimal conditions. In an era where consumer demand for fresh and safe products is growing and regulatory standards are becoming increasingly stringent, businesses must adopt sophisticated cold chain strategies to maintain product integrity and avoid losses.

With technological advancements, increased globalisation, and the rise of e-commerce, cold chain logistics is evolving at an unprecedented pace. However, challenges such as temperature fluctuations, regulatory compliance, high operational costs, and supply chain disruptions continue to test the resilience of businesses in this sector.

Kim Winter, a leading expert in cold chain management, having successfully recruited for most of the world's top 10 cold organisations, highlights the significance of this industry:

"Cold chain logistics is not just about temperature-controlled warehousing & transportation—it's about uniquely safeguarding health, safety, and quality. Companies that fail to optimise their cold chain risk more than financial losses; they jeopardise business sustainability, consumer trust and regulatory compliance."

This article explores the importance of cold chain logistics, industry-specific challenges, and strategies for businesses to enhance efficiency and resilience.

Understanding Cold Chain Logistics

What is cold chain logistics?

Cold chain logistics refers to the specialised handling, storage, and transportation of perishable goods under controlled temperature conditions. It is widely used in industries such as:

• Food & Beverage: Ensuring the freshness and safety of dairy, meat, seafood, and frozen foods.

• Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare: Transporting vaccines, biologics, and temperature-sensitive drugs under precise conditions.

• Retail & E-Commerce: Supporting the growing demand for fresh and frozen grocery delivery services.

Maintaining an unbroken cold chain is essential to prevent spoilage, contamination, and loss of product efficacy. Any temperature deviation can have severe consequences, leading to product recalls, financial losses, and health risks for consumers.

Key Components of Cold Chain Logistics

A well-functioning cold chain consists of:

Temperature-Controlled Storage: Warehouses and distribution centres equipped with refrigeration and freezing technology.

2. Refrigerated Transport: Specialised trucks, containers, and air freight solutions for temperature-sensitive goods.

3. Monitoring and Compliance Systems: IoT sensors, real-time tracking, and automated alerts for temperature deviations.

4. Last-Mile Delivery Optimisation: Ensuring end-to-end temperature control in urban and remote areas.

Winter emphasises, "Cold chain logistics is a precision game—every degree, every minute matters; cold chain can be a life or death environment. Companies that leverage technology and robust monitoring systems gain a significant competitive edge."

Cold Chain Challenges Across Industries

1. Cold Chain Logistics in the Food Industry

The global food supply chain is highly dependent on cold chain logistics to maintain product quality, reduce food waste, and comply with safety regulations.

Challenges:

• Food Spoilage and Wastage: Over 30% of perishable food is lost due to inadequate temperature control.

• Regulatory Compliance: Stringent food safety laws such as the FDA's FSMA (Food Safety Modernisation Act) demand rigorous tracking and reporting.

• Supply Chain Disruptions: Extreme weather events, transportation bottlenecks, and labour shortages can impact timely deliveries.

Solutions:

• Advanced Refrigeration Technology: Adoption of energy-efficient cooling solutions.

• IoT and AI-Driven Monitoring: Real-time temperature tracking and predictive analytics for risk mitigation.

• Alternative Distribution Models: Localised sourcing and micro-fulfilment centres to reduce long-haul dependencies.

2. Cold Chain in the Pharmaceutical Industry
Pharmaceuticals, especially vaccines, biologics, and speciality drugs, require strict temperature control to maintain efficacy. A minor temperature fluctuation can render a vaccine ineffective, making compliance a top priority.

Challenges:

• Stringent Regulatory Requirements: Compliance with WHO's GDP (Good Distribution Practices), US FDA, and EU GMP guidelines.

• Temperature Sensitivity: Vaccines and biologics require storage between 2°C and -80°C, demanding specialised infrastructure.

• Supply Chain Vulnerabilities: COVID-19 exposed gaps in pharmaceutical cold chain logistics, highlighting the need for greater resilience.

Solutions:

• Cryogenic Storage Facilities: Advanced freezers for ultra-low temperature requirements.

• Blockchain for Compliance Tracking: End-to-end visibility to ensure data integrity and regulatory adherence.

• Redundant Supply Chain Strategies: Diversified manufacturing and distribution hubs to mitigate disruptions.

Winter states, "The pharma industry has no margin for error. A single failure in cold chain compliance can cost millions and, more importantly, impact human lives."

3. Cold Chain Logistics in Retail & E-Commerce

The rapid rise of online grocery and perishable deliveries has intensified the need for robust cold chain networks in the retail sector. Consumers expect fresh products with minimal delays, making logistics efficiency a competitive advantage.

Challenges:

• Last-Mile Delivery Constraints: Ensuring consistent temperature control in urban and remote areas.

• Cost Pressures: High

operational costs for maintaining cold storage and transportation.

• Consumer Expectations: Demands for same-day or next-day fresh food deliveries.

Solutions:

• Micro-Fulfilment Centres: Decentralised cold storage hubs closer to urban centres.

• AI-Powered Route Optimisation: Efficient delivery planning to minimise transit times.

• Sustainable Packaging Innovations: Use of biodegradable thermal insulation and gel packs.

Key Strategies for Strengthening Cold Chain Resilience

1. Leveraging Technology for End-to-End Visibility

Cold chain logistics requires constant monitoring to ensure compliance. Companies can adopt:

• IoT Sensors & Smart Tracking Devices: Real-time temperature monitoring with automated alerts.

• AI and Predictive Analytics: Early risk detection and supply chain optimisation.

• Blockchain for Data Transparency: Secure documentation of temperature logs for regulatory compliance.

Kim Winter remarks, "Technology-driven visibility is the new gold standard in cold chain logistics. If you can't monitor it in real time, you can't manage it effectively."

2. Strengthening Cold Chain Infrastructure

Investment in robust cold storage and transportation solutions is critical.

• Renewable Energy-Powered Refrigeration: Sustainable cold storage solutions to reduce energy costs.

• Cryogenic and Ultra-Cold Storage: Expanding capabilities for pharmaceutical cold chain needs.

• Redundant Storage & Distribution Hubs: Ensuring backup facilities for emergency situations.

3. Enhancing Last-Mile Logistics Efficiency

Cold chain logistics must extend seamlessly to the last mile.

• Electric and Hybrid Refrigerated Vehicles: Sustainable transport options for urban deliveries.

• Dark Stores and Localised Warehouses: Faster delivery through strategically placed fulfilment centres.

• Automated Delivery Lockers: Temperature-controlled pickup points for consumer convenience.

4. Ensuring Compliance and Risk Management

Regulatory compliance remains a top priority across industries.

• Real-Time Compliance Monitoring: Automated tracking for seamless audits.

• Staff Training & Certification Programs: Ensuring best practices in handling perishable goods.

• Cross-Border Compliance Planning: Adapting to international trade and import/export regulations.

Kim Winter asserts, "Regulatory compliance in cold chain logistics is not a box-ticking exercise—it's a foundation for trust and operational success."

Future Trends in Cold Chain Logistics

1. Sustainable Cold Chain Solutions

• Development of eco-friendly refrigerants.

• Expansion of solar-powered cold storage units.

2. AI-Driven Demand Forecasting

• Predicting stock levels based on historical data and consumer trends.

3. Expansion of Smart Packaging

• Temperature-sensitive labels and indicators for real-time quality assurance.

4. Growth of Autonomous Cold Chain Vehicles

• Self-driving refrigerated trucks to enhance delivery efficiency.

Conclusion

Cold chain logistics is a cornerstone of modern supply chains, ensuring the safe and efficient transport of perishable goods across industries. From food safety to pharmaceutical efficacy and e-commerce convenience, maintaining an unbroken cold chain is paramount.

By leveraging technology, investing in infrastructure, optimising last-mile logistics, and prioritising compliance, businesses can enhance resilience and stay competitive in an evolving landscape.

Kim Winter summarises it best:

"The future of cold chain logistics belongs to those who innovate, integrate technology, and prioritise sustainability. The companies that get it right will lead the way in global trade, consumer trust and stakeholder profitability."

Kim Winter
Founder & Group Managing Director at Logistics Executive Group

Kim delivers 40 years of executive leadership experience spanning executive search and recruitment, executive coaching, career transition, corporate advisory, consulting, and M&A across the supply chain, logistics, 3PL, e-commerce, cold chain, FMCG, retail, maritime, aviation, government, resources, and industrial sectors. He is the host of the Logistics Executive TV vodcast platform, a regular contributor to industry media, a professional Master of Ceremonies, and is frequently invited to chair or moderate international events.

Kim is the co-founder and chairman of the not-for-profit humanitarian organisation Oasis Africa (www. oasisafrica.org.au), which provides sustainable 'Freedom from Poverty through Education' to over 8,000 mainly orphaned children in East Africa's slums.

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An Invitation to Join the Halal Supply Chain Alliance: A Collaboration Platform for Halal Supply Chains

By Dr. Marco Tieman
Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer
HSC Alliance Sdn Bhd

Background

The halal industry is a multi-trillion US dollar sector, encompassing food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and modest fashion. Halal requirements are shifting from a product-based approach towards a halal supply chain and value chain approach. This transition is being driven by regulatory developments in Muslim-majority countries as well as increasing consumer demand.

Muslim consumers are progressively insisting that halal integrity extends beyond the factory, encompassing the entire supply chain, similar to food safety and cold chain management. Additionally, there is growing interest in ensuring that businesses operate in accordance with Islamic values. Consequently, brands that align their operations with these values stand to gain consumer trust and loyalty.

Indonesia is implementing stringent halal regulations, making halal certification mandatory for supply chain actors in the food sector (from October 2024), cosmetics (by October 2026), and pharmaceuticals (phased from October 2026 onwards). It is anticipated that other Muslim-majority countries will introduce similar regulatory policies by 2030.

However, maintaining halal integrity throughout the supply chain is not as straightforward as it may seem. Collaboration is essential to achieving truly end-to-end halal supply chains.

Halal Cold Chain Initiatives

Halal requirements are particularly relevant to cold chains, which are critical for halal food and pharmaceutical supply chains. Some logistics service providers have already introduced halal-certified cold chain solutions, featuring dedicated halal cold storage facilities. Pioneering examples include:

- **Malaysia: MISC Integrated Logistics (Port Klang)**
- **Indonesia: IPC Logistic (Tanjung Priok)**
- **Singapore: SATS Coolport (Changi Airport)**
- **The Netherlands: Eurofrigo (Port of Rotterdam)**
- **Belgium: Port of Zeebrugge**

In addition to halal-certified cold storage facilities at sea and airports, there is a growing need for halal cold storage hubs near urban centres. These hubs would facilitate last-mile distribution of halal products to retail, HORECA (hotels, restaurants, and cafés/ catering), and e-commerce

SUPPLY CHAIN ALLIANCE

consumers. Some transport companies in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries already provide halal-certified cold transportation, using dedicated halal-only refrigerated trucks.

However, there are fewer halal-certified cold storage facilities for pharmaceuticals, even in Muslim-majority countries with well-developed halal standards such as Malaysia and Indonesia. Halal pharmaceuticals is a highly specialised sector with stringent regulatory requirements. As a result, developing end-to-end halal pharmaceutical cold chains will take time but presents significant opportunities for cold chain solution providers.

Challenges in Current Halal Supply Chains

Halal logistics solutions have largely been developed as independent initiatives by local logistics service providers, later followed by multinational logistics firms. These efforts have been based on general halal supply chain management standards, leading to inconsistent halal logistics practices and varying standard operating procedures, even within the same country.

As most supply chains operate on an international scale—even for products as simple as bread—this inconsistency creates significant challenges. The lack of uniform halal supply chain practices, particularly in sectors such as airfreight, sea freight, and e-fulfilment, results in unpredictable halal integrity performance.

This issue poses problems for multiple stakeholders:

· Muslim consumers, who demand products that are unquestionably halal.

· Brand owners, who must safeguard the halal integrity of their products and supply chains while protecting their corporate halal reputation in OIC (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) countries.

· Halal certification bodies, which are responsible for guaranteeing the halal integrity of certified products.

· Governments in OIC countries, which must ensure access to and protection of halal products for their Muslim populations.

Greater collaboration is necessary within the halal industry, both through vertical collaboration (within brand owner or retail supply chains) and horizontal collaboration (between different halal supply chains).

Halal Supply Chain Alliance

HSC Alliance Sdn Bhd is an organisation recently established in Malaysia to create an international halal supply chain network, harmonise halal supply chain

Halal Cold Chain Initiatives

"HSC Alliance aims to build international halal supply chain networks"

collaboration programmes, HSC Alliance aims to build international halal supply chain networks, offering synergy benefits to brand owners, retailers, and logistics providers. The alliance serves as a collaboration platform by and for the halal industry, ensuring the harmonisation of halal supply chain protocols.

Later this year, we are launching our first collaboration initiatives. We invite halal food, cosmetics, and pharmaceutical producers, as well as logistics service providers, to join us in achieving end-to-end halal supply chains.

Dr Marco Tieman
Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer
HSC Alliance Sdn Bhd

Marco Tieman
Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer HSC Alliance Sdn Bhd

Dr Marco Tieman is the Co-Founder and CEO of HSC Alliance Sdn Bhd, with a mission to build an international halal supply chain network. He is also the CEO of LBB International, a supply chain consulting firm, and serves as the Organising Chairman of LogiSYM Indonesia and Malaysia. Additionally, he is an Adjunct Professor at Saito University College in Malaysia, an Adjunct Professor at Universitas Ary Ginanjar in Indonesia, and a Senior Fellow at IPMI International Business School in Indonesia. He is the author of Halal Business Management: A Guide to Achieving Halal Excellence.

Neste started producing sustainable aviation fuel (SAF)

By NESTE

Neste, the world's leading producer of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), has started producing SAF at its renewable products refinery in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

The refinery has been modified to enable Neste to produce up to 500,000 tonnes of SAF per annum. As a result, Neste's global SAF production capability has increased to 1.5 million tonnes (around 1.875 billion litres) per annum.

"It is clear that we need to continue making progress in mitigating climate change and addressing aviation's climate impact. Neste is fully committed to supporting its customers in the aviation industry to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, and this milestone underlines that commitment. Our SAF production capability, now also in Rotterdam, enables us to significantly contribute to the implementation of the ReFuelEU Aviation Regulation and similar SAF mandates. Policies like these are crucial to ramping up SAF production and usage, and we need to keep our ambitions and

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Green Initiatives for Logistics

By Timothy Foote
Director Transportation and Network APAC at Asendia
and Founder of Susymbio

Last month, I published the article "How SMEs Move Green", where I detail how smaller logistics organisations can begin putting together their path to a zero emissions future. One part of that and arguably the most impactful part of that path is to establish initiatives that will begin eliminating emissions. This is really where improvements are made, and for that reason the initiatives themselves need to be talked about and read about with experiences shared within our logistics community.

Because of my past work as a consultant, I was able to hear and study many different initiative ideas for reducing emissions. While in meetings with teams, I could really appreciate the ingenuity that people have. At the same time, you can also see the challenges that teams experience. For one thing, coming up with an idea to reduce emissions is not something that companies have traditionally focused on. That said, reducing emissions for logistics professionals should come naturally.

Logistics professionals are familiar with reducing waste. This is a prime part of our education as well as our daily work. Once a team sees that fuel emissions are nothing but "waste", the tasks of measurement and actions will come naturally as well.

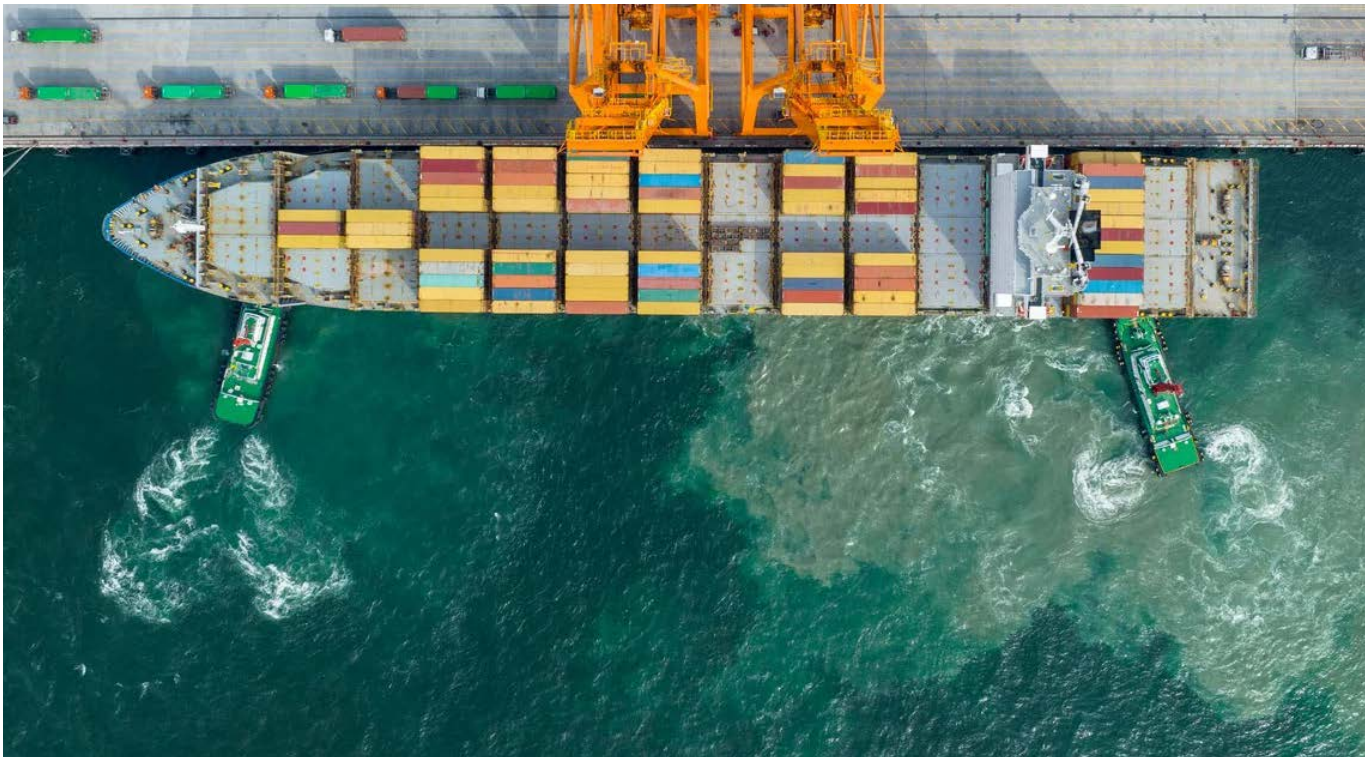
How to Make Initiatives?

Step 1 – Identify Sources of Emissions

Make a list of all the sources of emissions that you feel your company is involved with. Business travel, shipping emissions, facility power, factory power usage, and downstream waste that your industry makes (like single-use packaging or packing). In some cases, the output of emissions from a source is simple. For instance, the emissions from delivery vehicles are easy to identify if you directly manage the vehicles. You know how much fuel was burnt from how much was purchased.

In other cases, emissions waste needs to be studied. You may know the number of kilowatts of energy used in your warehouses and facilities, for instance, but you cannot see the exact amount of emissions. Some power grids are cleaner than others. Coal-powered grids are more polluting than natural gas-powered grids, for example. In cases like these, you may need to study more and get more specifics from your energy company.

Another area where some study will be needed is when transport vendors are used. Emissions generated by transportation vendors are known as Scope 3 emissions. If you are a service-providing logistics company, then this



will be by far the largest source of your overall emissions. You may need to study the types of vehicles these vendors use so that you can get a good idea of how to calculate the emissions. Ultimately, transport emissions that you buy from vendors can be calculated using the cargo weight, vehicle type and the delivery trip distance.

Step 2: Create Initiatives

Now that you know what emissions your company is responsible for, you need actions that can be done to reduce them. This can focus on changing the activity or changing the technology from a fossil fuel-burning technology to a cleaner energy alternative. As an example, let me list out the initiatives I have identified for an e-commerce logistics provider:

1. Replacing jet fossil fuel with sustainable air fuel

2. Replacing ICE (internal

combustion engine) delivery vans with EV (electric vehicle) running models

3. Decreasing air transportation with other modes (trucks or ships)

4. Reducing energy used in warehouses by changing to energy-efficient lighting

5. Reducing the distances for high-emission transportation with a better-designed supply chain network

6. Changing the office electricity plan to a zero-emissions plan

7. Reducing business travel for internal meetings

These are just seven examples of initiatives; there are many more. Initiatives should be measurable so that you can reach a target. This is important to use measures that can show progress even when your total business is increasing or decreasing. Take number two above as an example. Ask your delivery vendor for the percentage of deliveries done by EVs. As this delivery vendor transitions to EVs over ICE vehicles, you should expect the percentage of deliveries by EVs to increase. You can likewise make your targets look at this percentage of that transition. This percentage shows progress whether you ship more or less at any given time frame.

Step 3: Prioritise

You can have a dozen initiatives, but likely it will only be 4 or 5 that will make up the lion's share of your total emissions. It is wise to prioritise those for long-term measuring.

If you are an SME and you are starting your transition journey, let me know if my advice is helpful. I would really like to know as well what novel initiatives your firm has come up with to reduce emissions. Please share any insights or experiences you have in making your targets to move green.

Timothy Foote

Director Transportation and Network APAC at Asendia and Founder of **Susymbio**

Tim Foote has worked in management positions at multiple MNCs for more than 25 years, gaining expansive expertise in logistical operations. He continues to craft delivery solutions for many e-commerce clients at Asendia. When it comes to sustainability, Tim first gained experience as the Head of Go Green at DHL eCommerce APAC. He later grew his knowledge as a trusted sustainability expert working for his own consulting business, Susymbio. Please reach out to him for any sustainability stories you feel are noteworthy. Let's green our industry together!

UPS UNVEILS GAME-CHANGING UPS® GLOBAL CHECKOUT: NO MORE SURPRISE IMPORT FEES

By UPS

UPS Unveils Game-Changing UPS® Global Checkout: No More Surprise Import Fees

Available in 43 countries, the new service guarantees the cost of customs fees and duties on international purchases at checkout.

ATLANTA – March 26, 2025 – UPS (NYSE:UPS) today announced the launch of UPS Global Checkout, an exciting new service that makes it even easier for consumers around the world to buy online from shippers around the world. Until now, international purchases often arrived with an unpleasant surprise – an additional bill for unpaid import costs. UPS Global Checkout solves that problem by guaranteeing upfront the amount online shoppers pay in duties, fees and taxes and eliminating the frustration of unexpected costs at delivery.

UPS is the only global integrated carrier to offer a guaranteed landed cost solution for international shipping that is seamlessly incorporated into its shipping technology, transforming the shopping experience and offering complete transparency on costs. With updates in near real time, the service adjusts to policy changes, international tax laws, duties and tariffs, helping to avoid surprise costs and offering a positive delivery experience. Available in 43 origin countries and delivering to more than 200 destinations worldwide, the service helps businesses of all sizes grow globally by streamlining international shipping.

"With UPS Global Checkout, we're making international shopping around the world as easy as buying in-store,"

said Kate Gutmann, EVP and president of International, Healthcare and Supply Chain Solutions at UPS. "Online shoppers can now enjoy full transparency and peace of mind with no surprises, knowing what they pay at checkout is the total cost for a cross-border purchase. This, combined with our total UPS premium delivery experience, benefits our customers – the retailers – by helping to drive additional sales. Given trade shifts around the world, expanding growth opportunities in new markets can now be seamless."

Customs duties, taxes and fees are a significant concern for international shoppers. Every day, tens of thousands of residential deliveries around the world arrive with duties and taxes payable on delivery. And a survey of U.S. and U.K. shoppers found 41% were deterred from buying from an international e-commerce site if the amount of duties and taxes was not crystal clear at checkout.

How UPS Global Checkout changes the game

Guaranteed total landed cost: Purchasers see the total cost, including duties, fees and taxes, before completing their purchase on eligible shipments.*

Enhanced customer experience: No surprise charges at delivery, leading to increased customer satisfaction and encouraging repeat purchases.

Data-driven accuracy: UPS Global Checkout uses artificial intelligence to assess items in the shopping cart and calculate the correct duties and taxes.

Peace of mind: Helps businesses more easily comply with international duties and tariffs.

UPS Global Checkout is one of several new tools UPS offers that simplify cross-border e-commerce. UPS Export Assure offers AI-powered assistance to create export documentation. And UPS Paperless® Invoice helps our customers save time, reduce errors and enhance sustainability by eliminating paper forms.

Learn more about how UPS is helping businesses to ship internationally. *Terms and conditions apply.

Attributable quote:

Wilfredo Ramos, president, UPS Asia Pacific: "In today's dynamic business environment, UPS offers the international broking expertise our customers need to confidently manage change. By providing a guaranteed landed cost at checkout, UPS Global Checkout solves a major pain point for online retailers and consumers, ensuring a positive delivery experience and improving customer satisfaction. We're excited to offer this service to meet the growing demand for efficient cross-border transactions as trade opportunities for Asian businesses expand."

UPS (NYSE: UPS) is one of the world's largest companies, with 2024 revenue of $91.1 billion, and provides a broad range of integrated logistics solutions for customers in more than 200 countries and territories. Focused on its purpose statement, "Moving our world forward by delivering what matters", the company's approximately 490,000 employees embrace a strategy that is simply stated and powerfully executed: Customer First. People Led. Innovation Driven. UPS is committed to reducing its impact on the environment and supporting the communities we serve around the world. More information can be found at www.ups.com, about.ups.com and investors.ups.com.

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targets high. At the same time, it requires support and close cooperation across the whole aviation ecosystem to accelerate the energy transition and related emission reductions," said Heikki Malinen, President and CEO of Neste.

Neste continues investing in renewable fuel production capacity.

In addition to the recent modifications to the refinery, Neste continues its strategic growth investment project in Rotterdam, which will more than double the company's production capacity at the Rotterdam refinery to 2.7 million tonnes of renewable products annually, making the refinery the world's largest facility producing renewable diesel and SAF. This expansion, scheduled to be completed in 2027, will increase Neste's total global annual renewable fuels production capacity to 6.8 million tonnes, with Neste's total annual SAF production capability accounting for 2.2 million tonnes. In addition to the Rotterdam refinery, Neste has SAF production capabilities at its refineries in Singapore and Porvoo, Finland.

Neste (NESTE, Nasdaq Helsinki) creates solutions for mitigating climate change and accelerating a shift to a circular economy. The company is the world's leading producer of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) and renewable diesel, enabling its customers to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Neste refines waste, residues and other renewable raw materials to high-quality renewable fuels at its refineries located on three continents. The company's annual renewable fuels production capacity will be increased to 6.8 million tons in 2027.

Neste has high standards for sustainability and the company has consistently been recognized by several leading sustainability indices. In 2024, Neste's revenue stood at EUR 20.6 billion. Read more: neste.com

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