



LOGISTICS knowledgebase®

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Accelerate Breakthrough by Helping Human Experts

Imagine the art of the possible in an advanced digital age. What breakthroughs emerge? A look inside supply chain innovation labs shows engineers and academia collaborating as:

- The artificial intelligence revolution accelerates
- Algorithms pave the way toward superintelligence
- Shippers align supply chains to carrier networks to grow with less capacity
- Technology-centric supply chains optimize all modes
- Data scientists hone multi-modal, interactive metrics
- The multi-generational workforce excels in adaptability, waste reduction and innovation

From AI and blockchain to a trucking evolution contending with new ELD regulation, capacity shifts, surging volumes and a future with driverless vehicles—exponential change is here. Some argue the human mind is incapable of perceiving it. Yet, human creative intelligence and humility—which arguably elude AI—may be the X factors required for sustainability in our industry.

While machine learning and predictive intelligence will shape this era, creative companies that value collaboration, human expertise and servant leadership can change the game. In a framework of “it’s all about we,” CEO blueprints reveal leaders who do good work and show consideration for associates, customers and business partners can achieve more and drive transformation.

With the crosscurrents of change springing up faster than voice recognition apps on a smartphone, human experts equipped with insight can quickly multiply expertise. Multi-modal advisement from industry thought leaders, technology deployment, training and soft skills development combine to launch adaptive, innovative game changers.

When markets tighten, supply chains generally shift to focus on reliable service. Broad industry knowledge becomes critical. Decision makers seek proven processes, deep domain expertise including understanding of carrier strengths in all modes, cost and service. By leveraging shipping volume, visibility, long-term, executive-level carrier relationships and a mode- and carrier-agnostic philosophy that yields best lane, best price, best service options in a co-managed environment, shippers with an Enterprise Logistics Partner can improve performance despite constraints. Good shipper behavior is encouraged to reduce dwell times, establish reliable dock appointments, quickly pay and clearly communicate issues that may impact drivers’ hours.

Great supply chain strategy can provide success for all

stakeholders when designed with operational excellence, transparency and trustworthiness. Companies that are genuinely built to last—without exception—have high trustworthiness and competence. Shippers who foster long-term relationships with partners, who also value high-growth, entrench service dependability.

“What-if” scenario analysis also is valuable during disruptions. Mixed integer, linear optimization-based tools allow shippers to put constraints into the model of the supply chain network. Shippers can evaluate complex business and economic trade-offs, while rethinking network flows and lean process improvements. By examining the entire multi-modal supply chain, leaders can make the quantum leap from incremental improvement to predictive business processes and entirely new business models to evolve profitable performance.

Nimble companies use advanced analytics to evaluate same-day delivery options, last-mile delivery capabilities and knowledge of LTL shipping intricacies. Omni-channel shippers are also addressing risks while targeting growth as:

- E-commerce platforms have emerged to avert global trade non-compliance, penalties and seizures
- New sustainability business codes of conduct require third-party audits, inspection and analysis
- Warehouse sourcing optimized for e-commerce fulfillment allows for rapid market entry

Next-generation supply chain leaders embrace change to drive efficiencies. Innovation is how each of us is successful. Passionate, collaborative visionaries who find success by helping their teams accomplish their goals can help their companies do the same.

Neural networks lay the groundwork for the unimaginable. Siri, Alexa and Google Assistant fascinate, as we ponder technology and this thing called success. But the highest level of life is not success. The highest level of being is significance. Significance is not what you do for yourself—significance is what you do for others. When you value people, you accelerate the art of the possible and achieve breakthrough.

Paul Thompson is Founder and Chairman of Transportation Insight, an Enterprise Logistics Provider offering multi-modal (LTL, Parcel, TL) and e-commerce supply chain solutions. A recognized innovator in long-term value creation, Thompson was named the inaugural Grant Thornton North Carolina 100 Cultural Leader of the Year and received the 2015 EY Entrepreneur Of The Year® Southeast Region.