



# EXECUTIVE BRIEF

LOGISTICS AS A SECRET  
WEAPON – STOCKING THE  
C-SUITE ARSENAL

Over the past 50 years or so, there has been an enormous, yet quiet and often unnoticed, shift in how executives and industry experts view logistics. There was a time that logistics was not considered much more than a cost center, or a necessary evil, so to speak. However, today supply chain management is often used as a secret weapon—providing infinite value to an organization and its customers. As a C-level executive, you are always looking for ways to help your business stay competitive or become a leader in your industry. Once you have grasped the strategic importance of logistics, leveraging today's technology to become competitive and understand how to tap into the benefits, you will be well on your way to utilizing the supply change as a competitive advantage today and over the coming years.



## STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF LOGISTICS

The strategic importance of logistics is something that is just becoming common knowledge. Shaking that “necessary evil” mindset is not always easy, especially when you are pitching a new expense to those in charge of finances. The key is understanding that logistics is inherently strategic, rather than simply tactical. Put simply; logistics can help you focus on your next steps and plans, rather than existing as a day-to-day part of work. While there are many smaller ways that logistics can be strategically important to your business, we will highlight three ways it has the biggest impact.



### GROWTH

As a company is struggling to stay afloat, logistics activities tend to be very tactical or even defensive in nature. However, to expand beyond just existing and to move into a phase of growth and change, it is important that a company embrace the more strategic side of logistics. This type of embrace means looking at the future, planning for what is to come—rather than just reacting. One way that many companies are doing this, and in turn experiencing the growth is by focusing on customization. Customizing orders and reaching consumers with personalized service or product can be the key to taking a company to the upper echelons of success and standing out from the crowd.



### CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

As an executive, what comes to mind when you think “customer service” is likely a call center, set up to answer questions and provide tech support. However, many other aspects of the business can improve customer service and your customer's experience. Logistics is one of the most important. How is this the case?

Today's customers have high expectations, referred to as the Amazon effect. They expect affordable, on-time deliveries and easy, automated returns. It is possible to improve nearly all aspects of the customer experience with modern, updated logistics strategy. When you build a better supply chain, provide managed services and streamline communications regarding deliveries, you will reduce inefficiencies and improve the satisfaction of your customers.

## **BOTTOM LINE PROFITS**

In reality, no matter what your business model or industry, improving bottom line profits is always a big concern. How can logistics make a difference with your bottom line—isn't it always a cost? While yes, there are costs associated with implementing and maintaining logistic systems, the accomplishments will often overshadow the costs (which were a "necessary evil" anyway, right?) Just a few of the ways that logistics can improve the bottom line include:

Reduce up-front capital outlays and expenses	Streamline inventory	Increase product turnover	Minimize fixed assets (eliminating unused warehouses)
Reduce long-term financial liabilities	Improve inventory management	Create a better business image	

## **LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO BECOME, AND REMAIN, COMPETITIVE**

With the strategic advantage of improved logistics becoming more and more evident to C-level executives in every business, the question is "how do I make this happen?" Today's technology has made it easier than ever to utilize logistics as a strategic advantage.

These improved techniques include using "big data" to power logistics decisions, improved inventory systems, automated billing programs and using the power of the cloud to make all necessary information accessible from every point in the supply chain. What is most exciting is that technology is still evolving, so no company is too far behind to catch up, right now. Taking advantage of the newest technologies will allow any firm to grow, improve the customer experience and increase its bottom line.

## **WHY BENCHMARKING RATES AND PROCESSES IS VITAL**

Most companies outsource at least part of their logistics activities. Because of this, keeping detailed records of all activities is essential. Plus, with today's tools for extracting data, this information can be used in all areas of business.

Logistics is subject to a huge variety of outside market factors, so regular benchmarking is important. Otherwise, it will be impossible to know whether your plans are succeeding in a strategic sense, or if you are just getting "lucky" with current market conditions.

With proper benchmarking of rates and processes, not only will you understand your entire logistics operation a bit better, but improving productivity and reducing costs will become simply another part of your overall strategy—rather than seeming like a nearly impossible goal.

## **WILL YOU TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A LOGISTICS ARSENAL?**

Logistics is more important part of the overall business picture than many C-level executives believe. That is why it is vital that you take notice of the impact and prepare to adjust and adapt today. Making these changes to logistics strategy will assure that you stay well ahead of the curve, and in turn, your competition in ALL aspects of business.

## ABOUT 4WL CONSULTING

At 4WL Consulting, we fulfill a strategic partner role for clients, bringing extensive resources and industry expertise, combined with the ability to adapt to the needs of your enterprise as you continue to grow. Our core focus is to support small/mid-size business, by customizing solutions to each of your unique business requirements and goals. Our clients know that they can count on us every step of the way.

Since 1994, its Founder, Michael Rogers has been fueling their Client's success using his 40 years of industry knowledge combined with a network of extensive carrier relationships. You can rely on 4WL Consultants to deliver your company with logistics expertise, competitive pricing, and access to cutting edge technology to simplify the shipping process.

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