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## **Editorial: Logistics systems and management in the 21st century organisational competitiveness**

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### **Welcome to the inaugural issue of IJLSM**

First of all, I would like to welcome all of you for the inaugural issue of the *International Journal of Logistics Systems and Management (IJLSM)*. *IJLSM* proposes and fosters discussion on the development of logistics resources, with emphasis on the implications that logistics strategies and systems have on organisational productivity and competitiveness in the global and electronic markets. Globalisation of markets and logistics services is closely related to the success of a company. This perspective indicates the importance of effective logistics systems and its management for organisational effectiveness and competitiveness.

Globalisation of markets and operations place a tremendous pressure on logistics systems and management of an organisation in making sure that the right products and services are available at the right time with the objective of making available the required products/services to customers at competitive prices. In the olden days, companies assume responsibilities for storing, shipping and delivering products to customers in addition to manufacturing of those products. This has complicated the operations management function. Considering the importance of globalisation, responsiveness and flexibility, and the advances in information technology and systems, companies focus on logistics systems and management with the objective of reaching the market as quickly as possible with the right products/services. Realising the importance of logistics, we felt a journal dedicated to this field is appropriate and timely.

The main objective of the journal is to provide a platform for interaction between researchers and practitioners who are dealing with logistics systems and management. It also aims to promote and coordinate developments in the field of logistics systems and management. Global dimension is emphasised with the objective of overcoming various cultural barriers and in turn to meet the needs of technological and organisational changes in the global e-markets. The overall objective includes aims to provide executives and academics with the state of the art of logistics systems and supply chain management and to facilitate the exchange of information about logistics systems and supply chain management among logistics researchers and practitioners. The Journal acts as a vehicle to help professionals, academics and researchers, working in the field of logistics systems and management, to disseminate information and latest developments as well as to learn from each other's research. The journal publishes original papers, review papers, technical reports, case studies, conference reports, management reports, book reviews, notes, commentaries, and news. Special Issues devoted to important topics in logistics systems and management will occasionally be published.

This inaugural issue contains seven articles discussing the range of issues dealing with logistics systems and management. We provide a brief overview of the papers which appear in this issue.

Sohal and D'Netto in their paper, '*Australian logistics managers' perceptions of their jobs and careers*' assess Australian Logistics Managers' perceptions of their jobs and careers. In particular, this paper examines the educational qualifications, career progression, job content and reward perceptions of logistics managers in Australia. Their survey indicates a strong need for additional training in computers, business management, new technology management and logistics management. Respondents impressed that they required increased control of systems design, business to business e-commerce, transport management and warehouse operations. Also, their findings suggest that the logistics profession still continues to be dominated by male managers.

The paper, '*Supply chain management in the logistics industry: the case of Hong Kong*', by Lai and Cheng examines the implications of supply chain management (SCM) in Hong Kong logistics industry, identifies the potential problems in practising SCM and offers recommendations on the application of SCM in logistics industry. Lai and Cheng present the results of a survey administered to over 1100 companies in the industry, and a panel discussion with a group of logistics academics and industry practitioners.

Crespo Marquez in his paper, '*Front-end, back-end and integration issues in virtual supply chain dynamics modelling*', discusses the way in which dynamic modelling can be used to deal with front-end, back-end and integration issues in current high-tech virtual supply chains. Firstly, the paper reviews dynamic modelling options to connect customer value to business targets. Secondly, it reviews and discusses the operational and financial effectiveness of existing virtual tools used in supply chain integration. Finally, the paper discusses and explains experiences in modelling different types of supplier contracts to accomplish varying degrees of security and flexibility.

The paper, '*Service Quality Analysis: a case study of a 3PL company*' by Neo, Xie, and Tsui studies the quality of service provided by 3PL companies. It reports a case study carried out in a 3PL company. The results from SERVQUAL show that the customer values reliability such as documentation accuracy, picking accuracy and on-time delivery. Quadrant analysis and gap analysis indicate that the company performance is up to the customer's expectations for most of the attributes except for on-time delivery, efficient utilisation of the warehouse and the productivity level.

Gunasekaran and Ngai in their paper, '*3PL: experiences from China resources logistics (Hong Kong)*' present a case study of logistics information systems. The case study highlights the importance of various logistics strategies, tactics and operations including tools. Also identified are the critical success factors for improving the effectiveness of 3PL systems. Some of the critical success factors identified will include: strategic alliances with various logistics service providers, joint ventures, advanced warehouse management systems, web-based logistics information systems, application of ERP, and outsourcing.

The paper, '*The role of social relationships in the virtually integrated supply chain*' by Bernardes and Fensterseifer discusses the social network body of literature to examine the role of social relations on the virtualisation of the supply chain. They argue that social relations not only have a positive impact on the quality of information exchanged through information technology, but also may be responsible for the ultimate exploitation of its potential.

Lau, Lee, Choy, Ip, Chan, and Ip in their paper, '*Implementation of a logistics information system to support reverse logistics – a case study*', propose an infrastructure framework for supporting the design and implementation of a reverse logistics system. The main objective of using the reverse logistics infrastructural framework is to minimise the total logistics cost. The second objective is to set up relevant information management tools to execute the reverse logistics activities at the minimum additional cost to the company. To validate the feasibility of the approach, a case study on a telecommunications services supply company has been conducted followed by the analysis of results.

### **Invitation to IJLSM**

Academics and practitioners are invited to forward their contributions in the areas of logistics systems and management for possible publication in *IJLSM*. Potential editors are welcome for guest editing special issues in emerging areas of logistics systems and management. Please direct all your communication to the Editor-In-Chief (agunasekaran@umassd.edu). Some of the topics should include (but are not limited to):

- Logistics Enterprise Network
- Design and Development of Logistical Systems
- Logistics Performance Management
- Enterprise Resource Planning
- E-Logistics
- Logistics Information Systems
- Customer Relationship Management
- Material Handling
- Supply Chain Management
- Warehouse Management
- Purchasing
- Transportation Management
- Supply Chain Management Information
- Inventory Management
- Demand Management
- Logistics Optimisation
- Logistics Systems Design and Optimisation
- Benchmarking in Logistics
- Project Management
- Distribution Management
- Modelling and Analysis of Logistics
- Global Logistics

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