
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Dr. Hokey Min is James R. Good Chair in Global Supply Chain Strategy in the Department of Management at the Bowling Green State University. He was Professor of Supply Chain Management, Distinguished University Scholar and Director of the UPS Center for World-wide Supply Chain Management and the Center for Supply Chain Workforce Development at the University of Louisville. He earned his PhD degree in Management Sciences and Logistics from the Ohio State University. His research interests include global logistics strategy, e-synchronised supply chain, benchmarking, and supply chain modeling. He has published nearly 100 articles in various refereed journals including *European Journal of Operational Research*, *Journal of Business Logistics*, *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, *Transportation Journal*, and *Transportation Research*.

Supply chain management (SCM) is often concerned with coordinated linkage, design and control of information flows across the vertical value chain involving purchasing, production, and distribution. Its major aim is to increase joint problem solving and concerted cost reduction efforts among different organisational units or trading partners through information and risk sharing. Due to this nature of SCM, one of the most powerful catalysts for SCM is information technology. The special issue of the *International Journal of Information Technology and Management (IJITM)* aims to bring together the recent advances in IT and its innovative application to various aspects of SCM. This special issue contains a total of six selective, but diverse papers based on conceptual theory, empirical work, or analytical framework that can add value to the SCM knowledge base.

This special issue starts with a paper by Min and Yu who synthesised the past research efforts on the use of collaborative planning, forecasting and replenishment (CPFR) for demand planning in SCM and provides future research directions for the development of analytical frameworks for CPFR. It also compares CPFR with both agent-based forecasting and focus forecasting that can either complement or replace CPFR for demand planning in SCM. Furthermore, it takes a critical look at whether CPFR indeed brought managerial benefits proclaimed by their proponents and users.

The second article by Min *et al.* revisits the rise and fall of high-profile dot-com ventures and then analyses the secret behind some of their successes and the major causes of some of their failures. Through case studies including Amazon.com, ToysRUs, and eBay, this article attempts to find the common denominators for their successes and missteps that can be the business model for other dot-com ventures, which would like to emulate the successful paths of surviving companies. In particular, the authors of this article discovered that supply chain competency such as reverse logistics strategy can dictate the success of dot-com ventures (especially e-tailers). Thus, an entrepreneur's deep understanding of supply chain mechanism may have the profound impact on his/her successful startup and survival of dot-com ventures.

The third article by Lippert introduces the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explain and predict the supply chain member's acceptance and adoption behaviour toward a broad range of information technologies such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) useful for problem solving, information sharing and cost reduction in supply chain initiatives. The author used the Structural Equation Model (SEM) to test whether the technology trust, supply chain awareness, resistance to change, and willingness to take risks have an significant impact on the perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and post-adoption utilisation of information technology. This research discovered that the influence of technology trust appeared to exhibit an impact on a supply chain member's perception of the information technology's usefulness and ease of use.

In the article presented by Wong and Johansen, the new forecast updating procedure is proposed to improve collaborative forecasting accuracy for seasonal products with volatile demand patterns. To validate the efficiency (*e.g.*, reduced forecasting errors) and sensitivity of the proposed forecast updating procedure, the authors conducted a two-stage longitudinal case study dealing with a toy supply chain. In particular, they used both simulation and empirical tests involving historical weekly consumer demand data for various toy products with relatively short product cycles. The tests revealed that early reduction of potential forecast errors through the proposed forecast updating procedure helped to meet seasonal demands for toys and consequently improve production and inventory decisions.

In contrast with prior studies investigating the information technology adoption behaviour of the supply chain members (*e.g.*, suppliers, manufacturers, distributors) at the supply chain upstream, the article by Sill *et al.* focuses on the examination of the end-customers' reaction to information technology induced products such as Radio Frequent Identification (RFID)-tagged products. The authors designed the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to predict and explain end-customers' reactions to RFID, and to assess the effect of a variety of beliefs and attitudes on both intentions and actual purchase of RFID-tagged products. Based on a series of empirical tests, the authors found that an end-customer's trust of RFID significance predicted his/her intentions to purchase RFID-tagged products.

Finally, Papagiannidis *et al.* present a case study dealing with practical issues such as logistics outsourcing and on-print customer responses involving the integration of Information Technology (IT) with an e-synchronised supply chain in the UK digital print industry. This case study illustrates the detailed supply chain transformation process and how the supply chain networks with print partners, fourth-party logistics providers, and customers were developed. The scenario incorporating IT into e-synchronised supply chain similar to this case can be applied to other companies encountering similar supply chain challenges.

To summarise, I sincerely hope that these articles selected for the special issue of *International Journal of Information Technology and Management* can be valuable resources and guidelines for both academicians and practitioners alike who are interested in the efficient utilisation of information technology for successful supply chain operations. The Guest Editor gratefully acknowledged the continued support, encouragement, and guidance provided by Marjorie Celis of Inderscience Enterprises Ltd., and the valuable suggestions made by anonymous referees who make this special issue “really special.”