
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Per Hilletoft (PhD) is an Assistant Professor of Logistics at Jönköping University. He holds an MSc in Industrial Management from University of Skövde and a PhD in Logistics and Transportation from Chalmers University of Technology. His research interests include supply chain management, customer-orientation, demand and supply alignment, outsourcing, and information technology. He is currently a member of the editorial board of Industrial Management and Data Systems.

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The notion that companies have both demand and supply chains, which require active management to maximise the organisation's effectiveness and efficiency, is well recognised. The demand chain comprises all the demand processes necessary to understand, create, and stimulate customer demand, whilst the supply chain contains all the supply processes necessary to fulfil the time, accuracy, and quality requirements of customers and the profitability of the supply chain. The need to coordinate these processes and their general management has been emphasised in both the demand and supply chain literature as well as in the emerging Demand-Supply Chain Management (DSCM) concept. It has been concluded that there is a lack of real-life-based case study research addressing the issue of how different demand and supply processes influence each other, and how these processes effectively can be coordinated on intra and inter-organisational level. This implies that the concept and application of DSCM is still in its infancy, and needs to be researched further from both the demand and supply chain

perspectives. Hence, this special issue aims to contribute to the understanding of DSCM by analysing the concept from a theoretical and practical perspective, determine what are the key principles that characterise the concept, as well as to illustrate its appearance in practice. However, our main interest is in industrial case studies and real-life implementations.

Recently, there has been prevalent discussion that increasingly complex supply chain strategies would not work in practice, and are not, therefore, worth studying further (Singh, 2010). In this volume and special issue, we show that this is not the case, and supply chain strategy should also incorporate demand chain aspects to improve competitiveness in global marketplaces. What makes this current transformation interesting is the diffusion of the best practices in developed economies as well as emerging ones. In this special issue we have case studies not just from Sweden, the UK and Finland, but also from India, China and Brazil. We also could identify that developed and emerging economies are increasingly connected to each other; for example, the effort is to make innovations closer to end customers, while production networks are placed in emerging economies. Thus, we may conclude that selling low-priced and low-quality products made in South-East Asia are no longer an applicable business model, but instead, customised and high-quality items produced in competitive regions are. It seems that markets are increasingly demanding reasonably priced products that are offering superior quality and experience. This, in turn, requires demand and supply chain coordination and the treatment of both as equally important. Also, requirements for supply chain visibility, control and information technology solutions increase to new levels. However, numerous caveats are in the way as transformation is complete, e.g., batch sizes should be radically reduced (as a result, inventories are currently at non-normal high levels, e.g., in ordering from China), time delays in supply chain should be considerably decreased (including transportation delay), and cost reduction should still receive high emphasis in manufacturing operations (even while delivering increased value for customers).

As final words, we would like to express our gratitude for the *authors, referees* and the *Int. Journal of Manufacturing Research*. Without this triangle and its internal interaction as well as collaboration, this special issue would not have materialised. We also do hope that our work does not only serve the research community, but also for-profit actors as well as entire chains, improving their performance through the principles of *demand-supply chain management*.

Reference

- Singh, M. (2010) 'What is your supply chain strategy', *Supply Chain Reset: Material Handling and Logistics Conference*, Park City, Utah.