319 Capital Partners
Tom Barnes
CEO
319capitalpartners.com

The lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on labor shortages are being felt across industries, and ours is no exception.

We've all heard about the supply chain delays and the port delays, but this impact is being felt across almost every industry and organization. A recent article referred to this time not as the "Great Depression" or the "Great Recession," but as the "Great Resignation."

Due to the labor shortages, salaries have increased dramatically in the past year, which has caused significant employee turnover.

What can companies do to compete in this environment?

One thing is to automate as much as possible in order to do more with less and have employees focus on the most valuable tasks.

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Robotic process automation (RPA) is a growing focus these days. Not only does it allow companies to do more with less, freeing up cash in order to increase salaries and be more competitive, but at the same time, it improves team morale because the team can now focus on more important things. It also improves accuracy, which in turn helps improve compliance.

A second opportunity is to outsource certain roles that are not core to your organization. For example, if you are in the business of building widgets, you might not have an attractive career path for members of your trade compliance team, which could create turnover. By leveraging a managed services firm to focus on this area, an organization can reduce risk, improve compliance, and save money. Within the managed services firm there are career paths for these professionals. You also have a significantly larger core of expertise from which to draw, and chances are good that the increased depth of experience in the space will create efficiencies and save companies money while also making them more compliant.

Allport Cargo Services
Bill Aldridge
President
us.allportcargoservices.com

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of the logistics sector has intensified around what you know, when you know it, and more importantly, whether you have the visibility and capability to quickly align your internal and external partners to pivot and make the best decision possible to solve the issue in real time.

It is now a must to utilize new machine learning, artificial intelligence (AI), and predictive tools in conjunction with firsthand information provided by people on the ground in the origin countries, to proactively make decisions on how, when, and where to move, store, and distribute product to effectively compete and be among the winners. The best-in-class technology platforms need to allow stakeholders to collaborate in real time and enable importers to make smarter decisions sooner, changing from the traditional, reactive track-and-trace model to a proactively managed supply chain.

As rates have continued to increase, some of the traditional third-party logistics provider (3PL) solutions have taken center stage and become a critical factor in the discussion. Solutions like distribution center (DC) bypass, terms of sale conversion managed by tightly coupled control towers, owned assets, and infrastructure are making it possible to quickly deploy old and new options to solve equipment and/or ocean carrier space issues. Control towers have typically focused on governance and oversight of individual business units; the future is extending visibility and potential resolution options across

"The future is extending visibility and potential resolution options across business units, process, and trading partners."

Bill Aldridge

Association for Supply Chain Management
Abe Eshkenazi
Chief Executive Officer
apics.org

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As the post-pandemic world continues to rebuild, the demand for warehouse workers is soaring. In the United States alone, more than 600,000 job openings are projected for the next decade. Warehouse clerks, material handlers, assemblers, forklift and machine operators, pickers, packers, and truck drivers are the backbone of this network and a mainstay of our global economy.

These positions are part of a diverse, fast-growing industry that uses state-of-the-art technology and has numerous interesting opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and growth. Filling these roles will be critical to addressing the Great Supply Chain Disruption.

But it's also essential to recognize that industry roles across the board are evolving drastically after the deluge of recent market disruptions. The best practices that once kept things moving are giving way to all-new approaches, which in turn transform the way people work and teams function.

To address these challenges, the Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM) recently launched a new warehousing certificate program developed in partnership with Prologis, Inc., a global leader in logistics real estate. This program enables people to acquire the skills they need to launch promising warehousing careers and serves as a standard for core warehousing training and education. Learners develop foundational skills while gaining a comprehensive understanding of the logistics sector.

Organizations everywhere are working hard to attract, recruit, and retain these modern-day supply chain heroes. There has truly never been a more exciting time to be a part of the field.

> “We cannot go back to the status quo in 2022 and hope that things will get better.” ▸
>
> *Pervinder Johar*

business units, process, and trading partners, thus enabling holistic approaches to meet customer expectations at a competitive cost.

Value-added service offerings such as packaging optimization, previously a nice-to-have in the ocean world, quickly moved to the top of list of initiatives being considered. Improving the density of product loaded in a container or on an air freight pallet now delivers significant savings. Applying the best and brightest packaging engineers with in-country support, relentless focus on reducing damage, improving loadability, and not selling paper are a winning combination all around.

In the end, the winning formula is centered around neutrality and having available options, choices with the capability to execute the best decision possible without disrupting product, documentation, and information flow.

Blume Global

Pervinder Johar

CEO
blumeglobal.com

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, more shippers and third-party logistics providers (3PLs) haven been taking a close look at supply chain digitization. Why? Myriad new demands have surfaced, including a massive uptick in consumer spending and online ordering.

These unending requests have exacerbated inefficiencies in domestic freight flows that have existed for decades. The result has been a nearly complete breakdown of the global supply chain. Forget striving for efficiency; now shippers just want to get the goods to their destination.

The supply chain has substantial, fundamental problems that won’t simply disappear once goods start flowing again. We cannot go back to the status quo in 2022 and hope that things will get better, especially when it comes to one major issue that impacts all other nodes of the supply chain: US port congestion.

Solving the current supply chain crisis and unprecedented port congestion requires a collective effort across all stakeholders. For example, small domestic truckers play a significant role in providing capacity and improving the flow of goods from the nation’s seaports and rail ramps.

But shippers can’t always find and connect with drayage carriers that have chassis. In the current environment, containers on chassis are dropped off at distribution centers (DCs) and can sit there for days because the DC is out of space, effectively taking those chassis out of circulation. For shippers, using supply chain technology to find drayage carriers with chassis is essential to continuing to move goods out of US West Coast seaports.

Focusing on a single stakeholder in the network will do little to ease congestion. But allowing all stakeholders to connect through innovative supply chain technology solutions and work together on a common digital platform will optimize and add fluidity to the entire network. We need to work together to improve the flow of freight around the world.

BuyCo

Carl Lauron

CEO and Founder
buyco.co

Even now, two years after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, widespread delays persist in maritime transportation. Keeping up with exceptions while maintaining organizational goals is challenging for importers and exporters alike.

During the vessel selection process, shippers often do “the best they can” to pick timely shipments. Yet time and time again, shipments are delayed, allocations go unused, and their carbon footprint is not under control. Many shippers think exceptions are completely out of their hands. And it is true that there isn’t much they can do if their carrier is late.

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But what if data intelligence could help shippers predict the future, avoid delays, and meet other organizational goals?

Innovation is making that possible for shippers. It all starts with making data more accurate and more available to shippers during the vessel selection process. Accurate data is essential, and carrier data alone is not enough; carriers’ estimated time of arrival (ETA) data, for example, is often unreliable at the time of booking.

With good data, shippers can select the best vessel based on their organizational goals and predefined criteria, including allocations, ETA reliability, and carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions.

In this way, allocation management is also completely simplified because shippers can search and book vessels based on which allocations need to be used. They can also select vessels that are most likely to be on time, taking into consideration the reliability of the carrier’s ETAs for the same line over the past three months. And finally, for the first time ever, shippers can search for vessels with the lowest CO_2 emission to reduce their carbon footprint and create a more sustainable brand.

Today, technology — fueled by accurate data — is playing an important role in improving the vessel selection process, automating the booking process, and providing more control to shippers, so that they can meet their organizational goals, including reducing CO_2 emissions from vendors.

CBRE

Blaine Kelley

Executive Vice President
cbre.com

Across all nodes of the US supply chain, severe inventory shortages, equipment and capacity strains, and peak volumes have set the stage for a very challenging