CILT*Buzz*

Chinese New Year
Supply Chain

The Chartered
Institute of Logistics
and Transport

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

LISTEN 8 min

Dear Colleagues,

The new Republican Administration inherits a robust US economy, with little signs of recession. It has an edge over China and Europe, still anaemic. Despite initial stimulus efforts, China's economy is struggling to hit 4.5-5%.

Incremental US tariff impositions and other trade and advanced technology restrictions will oblige China to mount even stronger and bolder financial efforts to stimulate domestic consumption and diversify its exports away from USA. South Asia and ASEAN economies will benefit from the reorchestrated production, trade and supply chain flows.

Meanwhile, China's start-up AI company DeepSeek's meteoric rise, open-source AI innovation has stunned Washington and the Silicon Valley with its game-changing, low-cost and fewer chips business model. Under the cloak of national security, AI could thus become yet another geopolitical battleground that could further undermine USA/West-China technological trade and the open-source's borderless ethos.

CHINA SINGAPORE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT — Singapore and China recently upgraded (Further Upgraded Protocol) their 15-year-old Free Trade Agreement.

Singapore investors and services suppliers will benefit from more liberal and transparent rules to Invest in and trade with China.

China has been Singapore's top merchandise trading partner since 2013. The FTA upgrade will be useful for Spore MMEs/SMEs businesses with trade and supply chain connections in China.

Key benefits of the Further Upgrade Protocol

MARKET ACCESS

Singapore secured greater market access to China's services sectors.

Singapore investors will no longer be subjected to equity limits in over 20 sectors. These include:

Construction and related engineering services

Retail and wholesale

Renting and leasing

Technical testing and analysis services

Architectural and urban planning services

RULES

Singapore investors and service suppliers enjoy more liberal and transparent rules that level the playing field for them to invest in and trade with China.

The **Investment Chapter** includes new rules that:

Prohibit nationality-based discrimination when an investor first enters a market.

Remove performance requirements, such as local content and technology transfer requirements.

Remove national requirements for appointing senior management and board of directors.

The **Services Chapter** introduces new rules, including removing the requirement of having a local presence in specified sectors.

A new **Telecommunications Services Chapter** provides clearer rules and greater transparency for telecoms regulatory processes to facilitate industry collaboration in innovation and development.

SINGAPORE-CHINA ECONOMIC RELATIONS

China has been Singapore's largest merchandise trading partner since 2013, making up 13.9% of Singapore's total merchandise trade in 2023.

Singapore has been China's largest foreign investor in terms of investment flow since 2013, with China being Singapore's top investment destination since 2007.

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Singapore and Malaysia concluded the **JOHOR - SINGAPORE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE** Agreement recently .

The Agreement will create a new Integrated zone with more cross-border economic connectivity, business and Investment opportunities, and supporting SUPPLY CHAINS, especially in the Iskandar Development Region and Pengerang. Six MOUs were also concluded, covering higher education, carbon credits cooperation, cross-border carbon & storage, urban development, social development, and preventing & combating transnational crimes.

Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone

Map: STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS • Source: MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, MALAYSIA

MICRON TECHNOLOGY, an American tech giant, announced a S$9.5 billion High Bandwidth Memory (HBM) packaging facility at a recent groundbreaking ceremony in Woodlands. It will be the first plant producing Advanced Semiconductors vital for Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications. The HBM plant will enable Singapore to strengthen its role as a Resilient and Critical Node in the Semiconductor Supply Chain supporting the fast-growing AI sector. The HBM Investment will be a vital Engine for innovation that will also strengthen the local semiconductor ecosystem and help talent development.

SAESL — The Singapore Aero Engine Services (SAESL) JV between SIA Engineering Company and Rolls Royce, will expand its jet engine maintenance facility at Loyang. This is part of its $242 million expansion. By 2028, the expanded capacity will enable the company to maintain 400 engines annually compared to 300 engines today. When completed It will be the world's largest maintenance site for the latest generation engines powering the Airbus A350, A380 and Boeing 787.

LAND — The Land Transport Authority (LTA) has invited Public Transport Operators (PTOs) to submit bids to operate 27 public bus routes under the Tampines Bus Package from 2026. SBS Transit (SBST), the incumbent operator, has been running the Tampines Bus Package since 2016 and its contract with LTA expires in July 2026. Electric Bus Operations are expected to be a key factor in the bid exercise.

The Upcoming East Coast Integrated Depot, to be opened in 2026, will be a supporting base which will hold over 500 buses and charge more than 200 electric buses, as

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well as hold train depots serving three rail lines. LTA is committed to purchase 2,000 ELECTRIC BUSES over the next 5 Years. By 2030, half of the 5,800 public buses will be powered by batteries. All future bus depots will be equipped with electric vehicle charging systems.

The Government has announced a "pioneering" PLATFORM WORKERS ACT. The Act will provide a helpful safety net for drivers, including Ride Hailing Drivers - GRAB, GOJEK, TADA and CDG Zig. It has been assessed that the PW Act could add approximately $493 million over 5 years in Central Provident Fund costs for the ride-hailing and food delivery platforms. The Government has introduced a temporary support scheme from 2025-2029 to help offset driver's CPF contributions during the transition. Hence, ride hailing costs will increase while driver's take-home pay will decrease owing to their CPF contributions/savings. About 90% of the daily point-to-point trips are through the "Asset Light" ride-hailing business model as the traditional taxi fleet has shrunk considerably from 27,000 taxis in 2016 to 13,000 taxis in 2024. The ride-hailing industry thus has to tread gingerly vis raising prices to stay sustainable and avoid chasing away passengers.

RAIL – The former Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM) 24km-long rail line from Tanjong Pagar to Krangi (Rail Corridor) is fast being transformed into a "natural forest". Almost 21 km of the Rail Corridor is now publicly accessible. Four Community Nodes (Queensway, Bukit Timah Rail Station, Buona Vista and Kranji) along the corridor have spaces that will enable the public to gather and participate in activities.

MARITIME & AVIATION (MULTIMODAL) — Under the "Alliance for Action" initiative, the Airfreight and Sea Freight-Cargo, Port and Airport Industry sectors are exploring how best to improve the operational coordination, especially for Speedier Multi-Modal (Sea-Air Cargo) Transhipments to further strengthen Singapore as a Safe, Resilient and Efficient Global Logistics Hub.

The priority is to speed up the time taken for AIR-SEA INTERMODAL TRANSHIPMENTS via Singapore in 2025 by incentivising Leading Logistics Providers to expand their regional business activities. A prototype App is reportedly being developed to equip shippers and logistics providers with

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functions to simplify and increase the efficiency of intermodal logistics locally. Air-sea intermodal transhipments take 5 or more days due to schedule uncertainties and slower manual processing by smaller logistics providers. The Ministry of Transport prefers a "stretched target" that will at least halve the Dwell Time and enable cargo to depart Singapore on a connected flight or ship within 24 hours after arrival.

CHANGI AIRPORT GROUP (CAG) –

Cargo capacity at the existing airfreight facilities at Changi Airport is expected to be tight. In the interim efforts to optimise space at the Changi Airfreight Centre (CAC) and Airport Logistics Park (ALPS), CAG will prioritise the tenant mix and type of cargo it plans to handle until fresh capacity comes on stream from 2030. Pharmaceutical and E-commerce cargo, with strong growth are being prioritised. By mid-2030, when fully developed, the Changi Air Cargo HUB will boost the airport's total cargo capacity from 3 million tonnes to 5.4 million tonnes annually. This will include the SECOND ALPS, the upcoming Changi East Industrial Zone (including Terminal 5 development) as well as the existing ALPS and CAC.

Changi Airport meanwhile was ranked the World's **fourth busiest international airport** in 2024, with a total international seat capacity of 41.5 million seats. Dubai (60.2m), Heathrow (48.3m) and Incheon (41.6m) International Airports were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively.

MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE —

MPA announced a record port performance for 2024 with 1) ARRIVING VESSEL TRAFFIC increasing to 3.11 billion gross tons, 2) CONTAINER THROUGHPUT increasing to 41.12 million TEUs (Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units) and 3) CARGO THROUGHPUT increasing to 622.67 million tonnes.

Karmjit Singh
Chairman

We are CILT

Meet the Council of Trustees Webinar by CILT International 5 Feb 2025, 4.00pm (London)

We are thrilled to announce the second edition of our exclusive online webinar series, offering CILT members a unique opportunity to connect directly with the Council of Trustees of CILT International. Engage with our esteemed leaders who shape and guide the activities of our Institute.

Join us via Zoom, on 5 Feb 16.00 – 18.00 GMT (Europe/London) where you will have the chance to:

- **Ask any pressing questions and present any queries for our Trustees about CILT's activities, initiatives and future plans**

- **Gain further transparency and visibility into the workings of the Institute**

- **Understand how the Council of Trustees supports individual members and the wider CILT community as a whole**

REGISTER

CILT Sri Lanka: 3rd Research Symposium on Supply Chain Management & Logistics

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport

3rd Research Symposium on Supply Chain Management & Logistics

"Transformative Strategies for a Dynamic Supply Chain: Adapting to a Changing World"

Keynote Speaker
Prof. Jan Godsell

Dean, Loughborough Business School
Professor of Operations and Supply Chain Strategy
Loughborough University, United Kingdom

📅 **14 FEB 25**   🕘 **9AM ONWARDS**   📍 **COLOMBO**

Important dates
- Deadline for submission of Full papers/ extended abstracts- 05 October 2024
- Notification of acceptance – 1 January 2025
- Conference Date - 14 February 2025

Submit Your Full Paper/ Extended Abstract to : education@ciltsl.com

For More Information:
Dinithi Tharushika (Education Coordinator)
Telephone : 0776616572
Email : education@ciltsl.com
Web : www.ciltsl.com

CALL FOR PAPERS

MORE INFO

Women in Logistics and Transport

For information on joining WiLAT, please contact WiLAT Singapore Chairperson Kelly Lee at WiLAT.SG@cilt.org.sg

a*Buzz*

CILTS & SINGAPORE ARMED FORCES SIGN MOU
24 Jan 2025

MINDEF/SAF continued emphasis on professional development for Logisticians

The **Joint Logistics Department of the Singapore Armed Forces** and The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Singapore have signed a 5-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a strategic partnership, providing the MINDEF Defence Executive Officers (DXOs) with access to CILT's global expertise and accredited training programmes. The MOU signing underscores the importance of fostering professional development growth and collaboration to equip the MINDEF DXOs in the logistics field with the latest knowledge, resources and new opportunities for innovation across a wide range of key logistics areas efficiently and effectively, including but not limited to:

> (a) **Logistics and Supply Chain Management**
> (b) **Maintenance and Engineering for Logistics Elements**
> (c) **Transport Operations**
> (d) **Logistics Data and Digitalisation**
> (e) **Procurement and Contract Management**
> (f) **Professional Logistics Training, Education and Accreditation**

We are thrilled to embark on this collaborative journey with Joint Logistics Department of the Singapore Armed Forces and look forward to making a positive impact to the MINDEF DXOs in the Logistics community.

(Left to right) Head Joint Logistics / Dy Chief Sustainability Officer (SAF) ME7 Sreekanth Shankar,
Head Joint Logistics Plans & Resource Branch (SAF) ME6 Chua Zhongwang,
Chairman CILTS Karmjit Singh and Honorary Secretary CILTS Ivan Neo

PSB ACADEMY
KOREA STUDY TOUR
20 Jan 2025

CILT Singapore warmly hosted the 37th PSB Academy Korea Study Tour in Jan 2025.

As part of our ongoing collaboration with PSB Academy, CILT Singapore was delighted to welcome the 37th batch of PSBA Korea Study Tour (KST) students for an insightful study visit on 20 January 2025 at our office.

The delegation comprised eight undergraduate students and one faculty member from esteemed South Korean universities, including:

- **Tech University of Korea**
- **Pukyong National University**
- **Konkuk University**
- **Daejeon University**
- **Kookmin University**

Chairman Karmjit Singh shared his insights on "Singapore as a Global Logistics Hub", offering students a deeper understanding of Singapore's pivotal role in the global supply chain. We are proud to foster meaningful learning experiences and strengthen international academic ties in the logistics and transport industry!

MANAGING MARITIME ENVIRONMENT WEBINAR SERIES

brought to you by:
THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORT SINGAPORE

Navigating Oil Spill Incidents
Vessels, Human Factors & Technology

16 Jan (Thur), 2025
11.00 am - 12.00 pm (SGT)

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our distinguished panel of speakers and webinar attendees from around the world. A BIG THANK YOU!

PANELISTS

CAPT. CHONG JIA CHYUAN
Senior Deputy Director (MSPO) / Port Master
Maritime Safety & Port Operations Division (MSPO)
MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY
OF SINGAPORE

PUNIT OZA
President & Fellow
INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED
SHIPBROKERS, UK

KARMJIT SINGH
Chairman
CILT SINGAPORE
MODERATOR

PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS OF WEBINAR

Phases Of Operations

- Phase 1 – Emergency Phase: Collection of oil floating close to the shoreline and pooled, bulk oil ashore
- Phase 2 – Project Phase: Removal of stranded oil and oiled shoreline material
- Phase 3 – Polishing phase: Final clean-up of light contamination and removal of oil stains, if required
- **All clean up work at public facilities completed on 3 Sep 2024.**

Stage 1 (Emergency phase) Stage 2 (Project phase) Stage 3 (Polishing phase)

Test-bedding New Concepts & Technologies

High Pressure Washing using Drones/Vessels for hard to reach/slippery areas that pose hazards to workers

3D Object derived from Lidar Point Cloud and 3D Mesh Model can aid in consequence modelling and damage assessment

Roles and Responsibilities of Response Teams

Incident Commanders

Incident commanders lead response efforts, coordinating team activities and ensuring effective communication among all members during emergencies.

Marine Biologists

Marine biologists assess environmental impacts and provide expertise on marine life to ensure ecosystem protection during response operations.

Cleanup Crews

Cleanup crews are responsible for removing debris and pollutants from affected areas, playing a vital role in restoring environments after incidents.

Key Human Factors to consider

Physical Demand

Long working hours coupled with exposure to harsh weather and hazardous materials create huge challenges. Heavy lifting and equipment handling leads to fatigue, which needs to be managed.

Psychological Aspects

The existence of high-stress environment requiring quick decision making is quite draining for the crew and responders. The emotional impact of the environmental damage coupled with public scrutiny, media pressure and extended periods away from family incur heavy stress.

Communication Requirements

Strict protocols along with regular briefings are essential. The response also requires quick and seamless coordination with multiple agencies and at the same time engage the public & private stakeholders in a proactive manner.

Technology & Fatigue Management (1)

Wearable Devices and Biometric Monitoring

- Smart watches and fitness trackers to monitor heart rate variability
- Activity level tracking through step counts and movement patterns
- Sleep quality monitoring during rest periods
- Continuous vital signs monitoring for early fatigue detection

Automated Scheduling Systems

- AI-powered shift planning to optimize work-rest cycles
- Real-time adjustment of schedules based on workload and fatigue indicators
- Integration with workforce management systems
- Automatic alerts for mandatory rest periods

frontM
Intelligent Collaboration. Anywhere.

The Maritime SuperApp: A Holistic Technology Solution

CONNECT	ENGAGE	CARE	ENTERTAIN	LEARN
Maritime-tailored communications toolkit to unite your workforce	Next-Gen Crew Intranet to engage, educate, empower crew	An integrated holistic approach for human capital strategies	Onboard entertainment as your silver bullet for superior crew welfare	Adobe LMS & offline eLearning with STCW+ courses & AI chatbots

RESOURCES:

WATCH THE WEBINAR
(1:00 hr)

Exclusively for Members
WEBINAR PRESENTATION SLIDES
(requires login to CILTS Knowledge Centre)

Industry: **LATEST**

Its Role in China's Logistics & Transport

LISTEN 6 min

The day after TikTok, the embattled Chinese-owned streaming video app, went dark in America, another Chinese digital product – DeepSeek - emerged brilliantly in the global spotlight.

What is DeepSeek? What is its role in China's AI revolution, and the country's supply chain and transport industry?

Founded in 2023 by Liang Wenfeng in Hangzhou, China, DeepSeek has gained an unprecedented meteoric rise onto the global AI stage with its groundbreaking cost-effective and powerful AI models.

40-year-old Liang Wenfeng, the founder of Chinese AI startup DeepSeek, speaks at a symposium chaired by Chinese Premier Li Qiang on Jan 20, 2025.

This article delves into DeepSeek's development, its application in China's AI systems—particularly in the supply chain and transport industry—and its impact on the global AI ecosystem.

Development of DeepSeek

DeepSeek was founded with the vision of creating AI models that are both highly efficient and cost-effective. The development of its flagship model, DeepSeek-R1, is a testament to this vision. Unlike other AI models that require massive computational resources, DeepSeek-R1 was developed using fewer than 2,000 Nvidia chips and at a fraction of the cost incurred by competitors like OpenAI and Google.

Efficiency and Innovation

DeepSeek's AI models were developed using innovative algorithms and architectures that significantly reduce computational costs.

By leveraging open-source technologies and optimising data processing methods, DeepSeek achieved breakthroughs in AI with considerably lower resource consumption.

Application in China's AI Systems

DeepSeek's AI models have been integrated into various sectors within China, with notable success in supply chain and transportation.

1. Supply Chain Management

Predictive Analytics: DeepSeek's AI models are used to predict demand and optimise inventory levels, reducing waste and ensuring efficient resource management.

Route Optimisation: Logistics companies use DeepSeek to plan the most efficient delivery routes, reducing transportation costs and improving delivery times.

Real-Time Tracking: AI-enabled real-time tracking systems provide visibility into the location and status of shipments, helping businesses monitor their supply chains more effectively.

2. Transportation

Autonomous Vehicles: DeepSeek's AI models are deployed in autonomous vehicle technologies, enhancing the safety and efficiency of transportation systems.

Traffic Management: AI-powered traffic management systems use DeepSeek to analyse traffic patterns and optimise signal timings, reducing congestion and improving flow.

Smart Public Transport: Public transportation systems leverage DeepSeek's AI to optimise routes and schedules, improving the overall efficiency of urban transport.

Examples of DeepSeek applications

Cainiao Network: Alibaba's logistics arm, Cainiao Network, uses DeepSeek's AI models to optimise delivery routes and improve logistics efficiency.

Didi Chuxing: China's leading ride-sharing company, Didi Chuxing, incorporates DeepSeek's AI into its autonomous vehicle development and traffic management systems.

Impact on the Global AI Ecosystem

DeepSeek's emergence has had far-reaching implications on the global AI ecosystem. Here are some key impacts:

1. Democratisation of AI: DeepSeek's cost-effective and open-source AI models have made advanced AI technologies more accessible to smaller players around the world. By lowering the barriers to entry, DeepSeek has democratised AI development and fostered innovation.

2. Market Disruption: DeepSeek's success has disrupted the AI market, challenging the dominance of established AI giants in the US and Europe. The company's efficient AI development methods have prompted a re-evaluation of the relationship between computing power and AI capabilities.

3. Technological Advancements: DeepSeek's breakthroughs have accelerated the overall improvement of AI models, leading to more efficient and powerful AI systems. This has substantial implications for various industries, including healthcare, finance and logistics.

4. Geopolitical Impact: DeepSeek's rise has highlighted the shifting power dynamics in the AI race between the US and China. The company's success has demonstrated China's growing capabilities in cutting-edge AI technologies, reshaping the competitive landscape.

DeepSeek's development in China has positioned it as a formidable player in the AI industry. Its applications in supply chain management and transportation have showcased the potential of AI to transform these sectors.

Moreover, DeepSeek's impact on the global AI ecosystem underscores the importance of cost-effective and efficient AI development, challenging the status quo. As the AI landscape continues to evolve, DeepSeek's innovative approaches and open-source ethos will likely inspire further advancements and democratise AI technologies globally.

Also read article: **AI in China's Supply Chain & Transport** on page 26.

Industry: **LATEST**

Impact of new US tariffs on Global Supply Chain

LISTEN 4 min

Not long after President Donald Trump announced that the United States would implement 25% tariffs on U.S.-bound imports from Canada and Mexico, effective February 1, he subsequently said that the nation would also levy a 10% tariff on U.S.- bound imports from China.

While specifics regarding tariffs are yet to be made available, Matt Muenster, Chief Economist for Green Bay, Wisc.-based Breakthrough, an innovator in transportation management, dedicated to creating transparent and fair strategies for the world's leading shippers, told *Logistics Management* that, at a high level, these planned tariffs are partially driven by the movement of Chinese goods through Mexico into the U.S.

"I think we're going to see a lot more policy focused upon those flows, that would probably be an expectation with the new administration that's coming into keener perspective," he said. "Not only do we have tariffs with countries directly, particularly Mexico and Canada, and perhaps there's some USMCA considerations in terms of trade agreements, but also there's going to be a lot more focus in terms of since tariffs have been in place, largely since 2018 in China, and the ripple effects from that. Or have Chinese goods gone and are there workarounds in the market to get around the

tariffs that have been placed on those goods. I think what we're seeing in some of the policy directed in Mexico, that's part of the focus is making sure that Chinese goods weren't simply being passed through Mexico and into the U.S."

While the stated tariffs on China are below what was previously touted, *Suppyframe* CMO Richard Barnett said that a 10% U.S. tariff on Chinese imports will nonetheless increase electronic component pricing and have a disruptive impact upon the entire electronics supply chain.

"Consider the printed circuit board, which is used in almost anything that has a plug. The hyper growth of the AI data center segment is reliant on high-layer-count PCBs, and China represents over a third of total production," said Barnett. "Chinese firms also enjoy around 60% market share for other advanced PCBs used in AI, servers and myriad end markets. While AI gets all the attention, worldwide aerospace & defense demand for PCBs is growing markedly and electronic component sourcing in the space is in China-Zero verses China-Plus-One modes."

In a recent interview, Chris Rogers, S&P Global Market Intelligence Research Director Chris Rogers said in looking at the first quarter, Rogers said that tariffs are the main theme, for supply chain decision makers, and is the primary reason annual growth is expected across the board in the fourth quarter, while adding that S&P Global

Market Intelligence expects total U.S.-bound imports to be down overall in 2025.

"The first quarter looks to be strong, but things could rapidly slow down as the year goes on, with the fourth quarter potentially down 10%-to-12%, as the impact of tariffs starts to make itself felt, both in terms of a reduction in overall trade, but also a reduction to a strong fourth quarter a year earlier," he said.

On a more positive note, he explained that this is not the first time shippers have been preparing for the unexpected, in a sense, as things were similar in 2018, when tariffs on China were initially rolled out by the Trump administration.

"There is likely to be some front-loading and probably more increasing prices this time than last, last time," he said. "Maybe the difference this time around is that tariffs could well be much more widespread. If tariffs are widespread, there's no point in doing anything other than just putting your prices up, because it doesn't matter where you go, you're still going to face higher tariffs unless you bring everything back to the US. But if it was cheap to bring everything back to the US, they already would have done so. Tariffs really are the main game in town.

SOURCE	Logistics Management

Industry: **LATEST**

Self-driving public buses in LTA trial

LISTEN   3 min

The Land Transport Authority (LTA) of Singapore will trial self-driving public bus services in Marina Bay and One-north.

This will start with smaller buses with at least 16 seats, on Service 400 in the Marina Bay and Shenton Way area, followed by Service 191 in one-north.

These two services were selected for their shorter and simpler routes, said LTA. One-north is part of an existing autonomous vehicle (AV) testbed, where trials have been conducted since 2019.

AVs do not have drivers and are equipped with sensors that allow them to navigate through roads.

LTA will purchase six autonomous buses for a start. They will operate alongside existing buses and will be deployed from mid-2026 for an initial period of three years.

During the initial phase, the buses will have drivers onboard as safety operators.

These self-driving buses must meet operating requirements, including safe pick-up and drop-up at all stops. They will be monitored in real-time by LTA to assess their performance and compliance with regulations.

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Trial of autonomous public buses on Service 400

Map: Clara Ho   Source: Land Transport Authority, Jan 27, 2025

Trial of autonomous public buses on Service 191

Map: Clara Ho   Source: Land Transport Authority, Jan 27, 2025

Additional safeguards include requiring all passengers to be seated and wearing seatbelts. A customer service officer may be deployed on board to assist commuters who require help.

Depending on the performance of the first six buses, LTA may consider buying up to another 14 autonomous buses, which will enable the trial to be expanded to two more public bus services.

The authority has launched a request for proposals.

The selected party will work with SBS Transit, which currently operates Services 400 and 191, to develop operational concepts and plans.

Through this pilot, LTA aims to assess the technical feasibility of autonomous vehicle (AV) technology for public bus services, and gain insights into the operational aspects of running autonomous buses at both service and fleet levels.

The winning tenderer is expected to operate for at least six months to demonstrate the reliability of the autonomous buses' self-driving and remote operations capabilities, after which a remote safety operator can take over the supervisory role.

LTA said the proposals must include bus models, fleet management and remote operation systems, as well as electric charging infrastructure.

They should also have the hardware and software needed for AV operations as well as the associated maintenance and support services.

| SOURCE | Channel News Asia |

Preparing for the 2025 Chinese New Year

LISTEN   10 min

If you've been in the manufacturing, distribution, logistics or warehouse industries for any period of time, you likely have a few battle stories to tell.

Delays in raw materials or other parts of the supply chain. Disruption of an otherwise faultless workflow. Quality control issues. Maintenance and repair.

How about the Chinese New Year celebration?

Yes, you heard us right. How can a national festival cause warehousing or distribution hiccups, you ask? Consider that U.S. exports to China accounted for 7.5% of all 2022 exports, and additionally the U.S. received 16.2% of China's total exports in 2023, as per the Office of the United States Trade Representative. No matter what your company manufactures, stores or distributes, chances are that Chinese (and Taiwanese, as they celebrate the holiday along with several smaller countries) companies are involved *somewhere* in your design-to-materials sourcing-to-prototyping-to-assembly-to-packaging process — which means that a national weeks-long celebration taking precious production hours from its working businesses might have an impact on *your* operation in the States.

What exactly is Chinese New Year? When is it? And what should you do to ensure your responsibilities aren't affected? Read on.

Background of Chinese New Year

The Chinese New Year (also referred to as the Spring Festival, marking the end of Winter) is an annual festival celebrating the start of a new year for the customary lunisolar Chinese calendar. The first day of the New Year, determined by the date the new moon first appears (and thus has a different start date every year in mid-late January), kicks off the festival that continues throughout the period the moon is present. The most revered holiday in Chinese Culture, the New Year is celebrated with many customs and myths, from familial reunion dinners, house cleanings, and door-window decorations consisting of red paper 'cuts' and Chinese poetry.

Now that we've given you a brief overview of Chinese New Year, let's get down to what you need to know for the 2025 edition. Next year's festival commences Wednesday, January 29, 2025, starting the Year of the Earth Snake. As a recognized public holiday, nearly all Chinese workers will get seven (7) days off from Tuesday, January 28 — New Year's Eve — to Monday, February 3. Likewise, Chinese schools align their Winter breaks with the New Year. During the total 40-day celebration period, more than 3.6 BILLION TRIPS are made within China, according to China's National Development & Reform Commission (NDRC).

What does the nearly unanimous observance of Chinese New Year mean for your company if it does any trade with China?

1. Your business *will* be impacted...and for longer than 7 days

Manufacturing, distribution and warehousing professionals know one fact too well: a minor hiccup in your production cycle can have a domino effect, throwing off more than meets the eye. While many Chinese factories may be closed for only 7 days, they'll see a definite ramp-down in the days preceding the break, and getting back up to full production once they return will take some time as well.

Moreover, most goods and service corporations (including manufacturers, suppliers, sourcing, warehousing and logistics) may close for an *additional* 2-4 weeks — before and/or after the festival — if transportation networks (road, rail, air travel, etc.) are closed or otherwise compromised during peak travel days (referred to as Chunyun — the most significant human migration in the world) when residents return home to gather with their families. It's not incomprehensible to think that the disruption to your operation could last the better part of a month.

These delays can lead to depleted inventory levels (also known as 'stockouts'), which can be a precursor to significant consequences such as disrupted operations, lost sales, and higher-than-normal inventory replenishment and operational costs. The result? A negative

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impact on cash flow and a damaged brand reputation, as your customers turn their attention to competitors who can get them what they need, when they need it.

2. Place orders, schedule production well ahead of time

Remember, Tier I-III suppliers and other secondary parts-component manufacturers will also close, so make sure you include these folks in your plans if necessary. Although Chinese/Taiwanese businesses may answer your emails or phone calls during the break, it's highly unlikely during the New Year festivities.

Your best strategy is to plan ahead for all your materials and product needs — well ahead. Sit down with your team, look at timelines from previous New Years' orders and deliveries, etc., and discuss any missteps. Best practices for the upcoming New Year will arise from these conversations, and you can apply these learnings to your inventory, demand and production forecasts.

TIP: There is no such thing as planning too far ahead.

Some Chinese factories stop accepting new orders up to 4-6 weeks before the holiday. With all the pre-, during- and post-festival variables flying around, the sooner you get your orders in, the better...even if it's months ahead of time. This will ensure a favourable position on your partners' project priority list — and minimize any peak shipping and loading fees, tariffs, higher holiday pricing, etc.

3. Have transparent communication with your Chinese partners, internally

Open an intentional, straightforward dialogue with your foreign partners' leadership teams regarding their projections for the New Year, and what delays may occur. Initial discussions can start as early as August-September regarding order placement, production scheduling, etc., with a firm order deadline agreed upon by both sides to guarantee arrival before the holiday.

Also, talk to them about schedules *after* workers have returned, as it typically takes plants at least 30 days to return to normal production levels once they reopen.

Some Chinese companies give incentives to staff who work during the Chinese New Year, recognizing that most of their customers are in the middle of production. However, it's more common to work overtime throughout the year to bank the hours off to maximize their New Year's vacations.

At 3.7 MILLION square miles (the third-largest country by area in the world, behind Russia and Canada), you can imagine that many employees spend countless hours simply getting to and from the various provinces where they'll celebrate the New Year.

Finally, make sure that everyone in your own organisation is on the same page, and moving in lockstep with whatever plan you choose to execute.

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport

4. Keep an eye out for QA issues

Stateside warehouses may see an uptick in product quality issues with Chinese/Taiwanese materials or product in the weeks leading up to Chinese New Year. As manufacturers and suppliers prepare for the time off, it's a race to produce and ship as many orders as possible — even for customers who had the foresight to plan a couple of weeks ahead.

Given a fulfilment speed much brisker than usual, resultant quality may suffer. Then, when the New Year concludes, up to 1/3 of factory workers do not immediately return to work as they extend their vacations, with many never returning (as movement between factory jobs by migrant workers is more fluid than in other countries). Consequently, plants are forced to either get by with a skeleton crew, or recruit temporary — and less skilled — crew members across all levels of hierarchy to get them through.

All of these factors contribute to significant risk that potentially affects quality assurance, compliance, and the like.

TIP: Implement strong QA and inspection protocols to ensure greater diligence. Third-party inspection companies are available for situations just like these.

5. Have a provisional plan in place

Including worst-case scenarios in your Chinese New Year disruption avoidance plan is always wise. Do you have alternative ways to get the materials or products you need? Can you source them either from a plant in your partner's network outside the celebration area or possibly another supplier in your vendor universe in the event your Chinese-Taiwanese partner can't deliver? Can you increase your provisional 'safety' stock levels to guard against potential stockouts? What other measures can you take that will yield minimal impact on your operations?

There are infamous stories of large retail and B2B corporations losing millions in sales when inventory is depleted due to poor planning for the Chinese New Year. Ensure you get ahead of the game so your business isn't one of them.

With a proactive approach, you can avoid Chinese New Year disruptions. Start planning now to keep your supply chain flowing without hiccups.

SOURCE	Scano
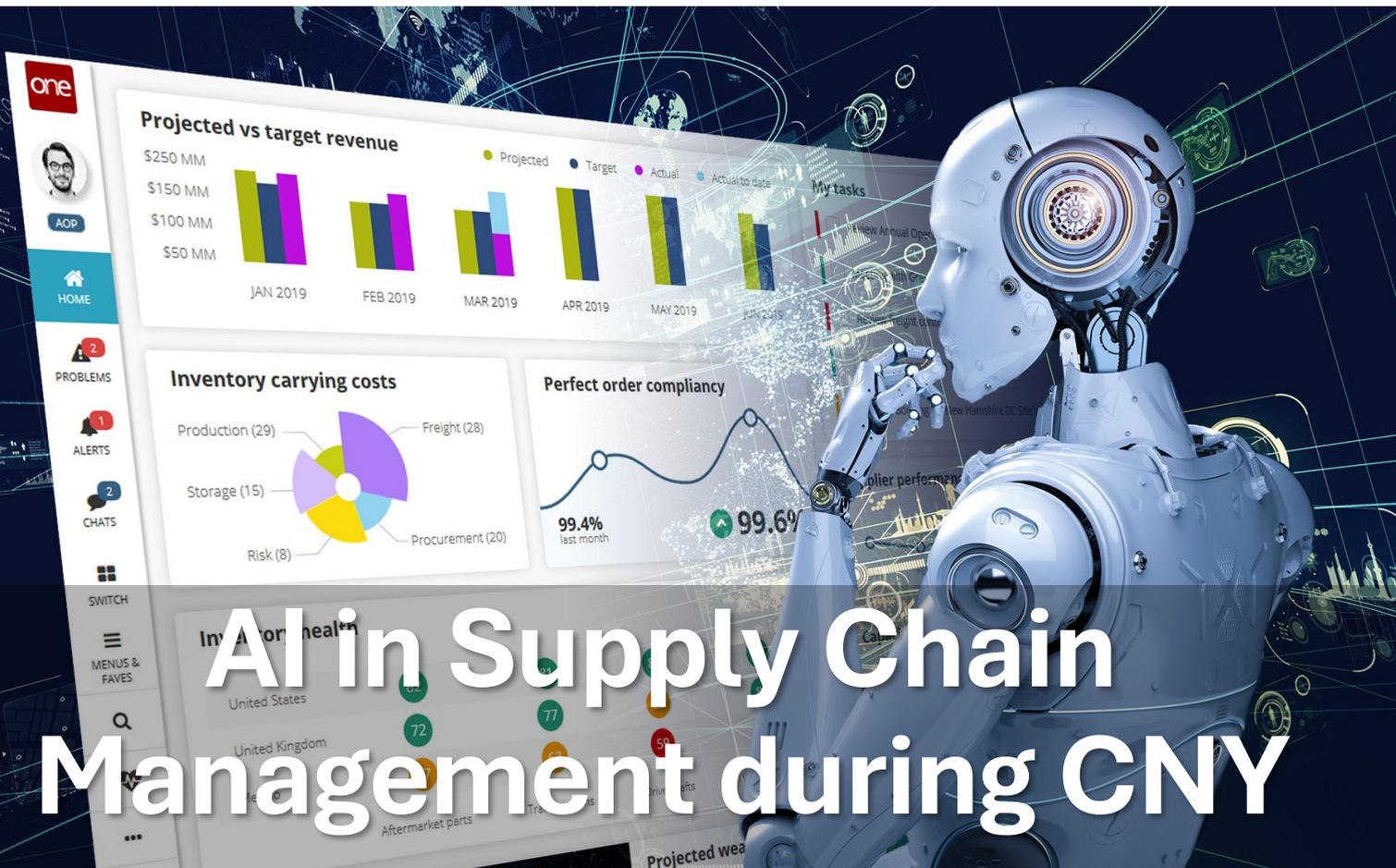
AI in Supply Chain Management during CNY

[LISTEN 5 min]

Chinese New Year (CNY) is a significant holiday in China, celebrated by over a billion people. The extended holidays and market closures during this period pose unique challenges to global supply chains.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful tool to address these challenges, offering innovative solutions to optimise logistics, manage inventory, and ensure timely deliveries.

CHALLENGES DURING CHINESE NEW YEAR

1. **Extended Factory Closures:** Many factories in China shut down for up to four weeks during CNY, leading to production halts and delays in order fulfilment.

2. **Labour Shortages:** A large portion of **the** workforce travels back to their hometowns, resulting in labour shortages in factories and logistics operations.

3. **Port Congestion:** Ports and customs offices **operate** with minimal staff, causing congestion and delays in shipping.

4. **Increased Shipping Costs:** High demand for shipping goods before and after CNY leads to increased freight rates and longer transit times.

5. **Inventory Management Challenges: Businesses** must carefully manage their inventory levels to avoid stockouts or overstocking.

APPLICATION OF AI IN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

1. **Predictive Analytics:** AI-powered predictive analytics can forecast demand and optimise inventory levels, ensuring that businesses have sufficient stock to meet customer needs during and after CNY. For example, companies like Alibaba use AI to analyse historical data and predict future demand, allowing them to adjust their inventory strategies accordingly.

2. **Route Optimisation:** AI-driven route optimization algorithms can help logistics companies plan the most efficient routes for transporting goods. This reduces transportation costs and ensures timely deliveries. Cainiao Network, Alibaba's logistics arm, uses AI to optimise delivery routes and improve efficiency.

3. **Real-Time Tracking:** AI-enabled real-time tracking systems provide visibility into the location and status of shipments, allowing businesses to monitor their supply chains more effectively. This helps in identifying

potential delays and taking corrective actions promptly.

4. **Automated Warehousing:** AI-powered automated warehousing systems can streamline warehouse operations, reducing the need for manual labour and increasing efficiency. These systems use robotics and machine learning to manage inventory, pick and pack orders, and optimise storage space.

5. **Supplier Collaboration:** AI can facilitate better collaboration between businesses and their suppliers by providing real-time data and insights. This helps in aligning shipment schedules, managing expectations, and ensuring smooth communication throughout the supply chain.

EXAMPLES

1. **Alibaba's Cainiao Network:** Alibaba's Cainiao Network uses AI to optimise logistics operations. By integrating AI-driven route optimization, real-time package tracking, and smart warehousing, Cainiao ensures timely and efficient deliveries during the CNY period.

2. **Tencent's AI Lab:** Tencent's AI Lab focuses on machine learning, computer vision, and speech recognition, which are integral to modern supply chains. The company's smart retail solutions bridge online and offline shopping experiences, creating a seamless supply

chain that caters to evolving consumer demands.

3. **Baidu's Apollo Project:** Baidu's Apollo project focuses on autonomous driving, which has the potential to redefine logistics and transportation in supply chains. By leveraging AI expertise and partnerships with automobile manufacturers, Baidu aims to minimize human intervention in moving goods across vast distances.

AI has revolutionised supply chain management during the Chinese New Year period by offering innovative solutions to address the unique challenges posed by the extended holidays and market closures.

By leveraging AI technologies, businesses can optimise logistics, manage inventory, and ensure timely deliveries, ultimately enhancing the resilience and efficiency of their supply chains.

AI in China's Supply Chain & Transport

LISTEN 17 min

At the heart of China's AI revolution stands a cohort of companies and visionary leaders who have transformed the nation's tech landscape.

Firms like Alibaba, Tencent, and Baidu, colloquially referred to as the "BAT" companies, have spearheaded China's march into the AI era. While each has its unique domain of expertise, their collective impact on the supply chain is profound.

AI-INTEGRATED FACTORIES

As one steps into these modern factories, the first noticeable change is the elevated level of automation. Gone are the days when vast rows of workers toiled on assembly lines. Today, robots, equipped with advanced sensors and guided by AI algorithms, handle intricate tasks, from soldering circuits to assembling intricate components. These robots, with their precision and efficiency, have exponentially increased production rates, minimized errors, and drastically reduced the costs associated with defects and rework.

However, AI's integration is not limited to mere physical robots. **The factories of Shenzhen have embraced the concept of the 'Digital Twin.'** Here, every physical

component, machine, and process has a virtual replica in a digital realm. These digital counterparts constantly collect and relay data, allowing factory managers to monitor real-time operations, predict potential breakdowns, and optimise production flows. By simulating different scenarios in this digital space, managers can pre-emptively address issues, ensuring that the physical factory runs seamlessly.

This data-driven approach to manufacturing, often termed 'smart manufacturing', relies heavily on the Internet of Things (IoT). Devices embedded with sensors are scattered throughout the factory, collecting data ranging from machine temperatures and vibration levels to ambient humidity and lighting conditions. When this vast amount of data is fed into AI algorithms, patterns begin to emerge. These patterns, otherwise invisible to the human eye, offer insights that can lead to transformative changes in the production process. For instance, by analysing data, an AI system might deduce that a particular machine's efficiency drops by a minuscule percentage when room temperature rises beyond a certain point. While this observation might seem trivial, addressing it could lead to substantial long-term gains in productivity and energy conservation.

Augmented Reality (AR) glasses, powered by AI, guide workers through complex assembly processes, overlaying digital instructions onto physical components. These glasses can also instantly provide workers with relevant data, from machine operational statuses to inventory levels, ensuring they are always informed and can make rapid decisions.

The supply chain, the backbone of any manufacturing setup, has been redefined in Shenzhen's AI-integrated factories. Advanced analytics predict raw material requirements, optimise inventory levels, and ensure timely procurement, reducing holding costs and wastage.

PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS: FORECASTING AND INVENTORY

Predictive analytics, a confluence of statistical algorithms, machine learning, and big data, is transforming industries, but its impact on forecasting and inventory management in supply chains is particularly noteworthy. At the intersection of mathematics and technology, this tool promises a new era of efficiency, foresight, and agility, allowing businesses to navigate the intricacies of global trade with unparalleled precision.

Historically, forecasting was a complex art, relying on past trends, intuition, and often, educated guesses. Companies would review past sales data, consider economic indicators, and then project these patterns into the future. While this traditional method had its merits, it often fell short in a rapidly changing global marketplace. The influx of variables, from geopolitical events to sudden market shifts, made forecasting an increasingly precarious endeavour.

Enter predictive analytics. Instead of merely extrapolating from past data, predictive

analytics dives deeper, sifting through vast data repositories to discern subtle patterns and correlations. By ingesting real-time data from various sources—sales figures, social media trends, market news, weather forecasts, and more—it offers a dynamic and continually updated vision of future demands. This means that instead of reacting to market changes, businesses can anticipate them, positioning themselves strategically to meet upcoming challenges and opportunities.

Nowhere is this foresight more invaluable than in inventory management. Inventory, often the most significant asset on a company's balance sheet, represents both potential profits and considerable risk. Overstock and you're burdened with holding costs, potential obsolescence, and wasted resources. Understock and you risk lost sales, frustrated customers, and compromised business relationships. Striking the perfect balance is a perennial challenge for businesses, and predictive analytics offers a compelling solution.

By accurately forecasting demand, predictive analytics enables businesses to maintain optimal inventory levels. Algorithms analyse data points like historical sales, seasonal trends, promotional calendars, and even external factors like economic indicators or competitor actions. With this wealth of information, these algorithms generate precise demand predictions. Consequently, businesses can make informed decisions about procurement, production schedules, and warehousing needs.

Moreover, predictive analytics goes beyond just demand forecasting. It delves into the intricacies of the supply chain, offering insights into potential bottlenecks or disruptions. For instance, if data indicates that a particular raw material's price is likely to spike due to geopolitical tensions in a supplying country, businesses can pre-emptively source alternatives or hedge against the anticipated price increase. Similarly, if analytics foresee a potential labour strike in a critical logistics hub, businesses can reroute their shipments, ensuring continuity and customer satisfaction.

In addition to forecasting, predictive analytics plays a crucial role in inventory placement. For global businesses with multiple warehouses or retail outlets, deciding where to place inventory is a complex decision matrix. Predictive models, by analysing variables like transportation costs, local demand trends, and warehousing expenses, assist businesses in making optimal placement decisions. This not only ensures that goods are readily available where they're most likely to be in demand but also minimizes transportation and holding costs.

Another remarkable advantage of predictive analytics is its self-improving nature. Machine learning models, a cornerstone of predictive analytics, constantly refine themselves. As they are fed more data and as businesses provide feedback on forecast accuracy, these models tweak their algorithms, continually enhancing their predictive prowess. Over time, this iterative learning process ensures that forecasts

become increasingly accurate, aligning ever closer with actual market realities.

AI IN QUALITY CONTROL: REVOLUTIONISING MANUFACTURING

In the manufacturing world, 'quality' is not just a buzzword—it's a core tenet, a distinction between success and failure. Quality control, therefore, has traditionally been a rigorous process, involving manual inspections, random sampling, and often, considerable time and resource investments. However, with the integration of Artificial Intelligence, the domain of quality control is undergoing a transformative shift. By infusing intelligence into systems, AI is setting new benchmarks for manufacturing standards, ensuring that the products rolling off assembly lines are not just good but exceptional.

At the heart of AI's impact on quality control is its ability to process vast amounts of data swiftly and accurately. Where human inspectors might struggle to identify minor inconsistencies or defects, especially after hours of repetitive work, AI-powered systems maintain a consistent vigilance. Equipped with sensors, cameras, and advanced algorithms, these systems can detect anomalies that might escape the human eye. For instance, in electronics manufacturing, AI can identify minute soldering flaws or microscopic cracks in chips, ensuring that only flawless products reach the end customer.

Furthermore, **AI-driven quality control goes beyond mere defect detection. By** **analysing the collected data, AI can identify patterns, deciphering the root causes of recurring defects.** If a particular machine is consistently producing slightly misaligned components or if a specific batch of raw material often leads to flaws, AI can pinpoint these issues. This proactive problem-solving not only ensures better product quality but also leads to enhanced process efficiency. By rectifying issues at their source, manufacturers can avoid wastage, reduce rework, and optimise their production flows.

Another area where AI is making a significant impact is in predictive quality. Traditional quality control is often reactive—products are made, inspected, and then either approved or rejected. However, with AI's predictive capabilities, quality control can shift from being a post-production process to an integral part of the manufacturing cycle. AI can analyse data in real-time as products are being made. If a potential defect is detected or if a machine's parameters drift beyond acceptable limits, immediate alerts can be generated. This means defects can be rectified on-the-fly, even before the product is complete.

The integration of AI in quality control also promises scalability. As businesses expand and production volumes surge, maintaining consistent quality standards becomes a challenge. Manual inspections can become bottlenecks, leading to delays and potential oversights. However, AI-driven systems can scale seamlessly. Whether it's inspecting a hundred units or a million, the precision and speed of AI remain consistent. This

scalability ensures that even as businesses grow, their commitment to quality remains unwavering.

The advantages of AI in quality control extend beyond the factory floor. In sectors like agriculture, AI-powered drones equipped with multispectral cameras can monitor vast tracts of land. They can identify areas of crop stress, detect pest infestations, or evaluate soil health. By ensuring the quality of agricultural produce right at the source, AI ensures that only the best products reach the market.

The fusion of AI and quality control is not without its challenges. The success of AI in detecting defects is contingent on the quality and volume of data it's trained on. If the training data lacks diversity or if it doesn't encompass the myriad defects a system might encounter in real-world scenarios, the AI's efficiency can be compromised. Furthermore, while AI can detect and even predict defects, the nuances of human judgment and expertise are irreplaceable. There might be instances where contextual understanding or a holistic assessment, beyond mere data points, becomes crucial for quality decisions.

Nevertheless, the trajectory is clear. As AI algorithms become more sophisticated and as the hardware supporting them becomes more advanced, their role in quality control is set to become even more pivotal. In a competitive global marketplace, where businesses vie for customer trust and loyalty, quality is paramount. AI, with its promise of precision, speed, and

scalability, is ensuring that businesses can uphold and even elevate their quality commitments.

AI IS TRANSFORMING LOGISTICS & TRANSPORT

China, with its sprawling urban centres, burgeoning population, and rapid industrial growth, has long been faced with transportation and logistical challenges. With cities bustling with activity and a relentless pace of commerce, ensuring the smooth movement of people and goods has always been a priority. However, recent years have witnessed a paradigm shift. Artificial Intelligence, with its multifaceted applications, has begun to reshape the very backbone of China's transportation and logistics sector, promising a future where movement is not just swift but also smart.

Transportation in China, especially in its urban hubs, has historically grappled with congestion, inefficiencies, and pollution. The introduction of AI has been a game-changer. Take, for instance, the realm of public transportation. AI-driven systems now manage traffic light timings, optimizing them in real-time based on traffic flow, thereby reducing wait times and congestion. Advanced predictive models analyse traffic patterns, offering insights into potential bottlenecks or suggesting optimal routes for buses and trams, ensuring timely services.

The advent of autonomous vehicles, powered by AI, further epitomises this transformation. Numerous cities in China

have begun trials for driverless buses and taxis. These vehicles, fitted with a plethora of sensors, cameras, and radars, navigate roads with an accuracy that often surpasses human drivers. They promise a future where transportation is not just efficient but also safer, reducing the scope for human errors, which often lead to accidents.

In personal transportation, AI-driven systems are becoming ubiquitous. Modern cars are now equipped with advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) that can alert drivers about potential collisions, assist in parking, or even take corrective actions in emergencies. Some vehicles even offer semi-autonomous driving modes, where the car can handle highway driving or navigate traffic jams. All these innovations aim to make driving not just a mundane chore but a sophisticated, interactive experience.

However, the impact of AI is not confined to roads. **China, with its vast landscape, relies heavily on railways for long-distance transportation. AI is revolutionizing this space as well.** Intelligent scheduling systems ensure optimal train timings, reducing overlaps and ensuring maximum utilization of tracks. Predictive maintenance, powered by AI algorithms, can detect potential wear and tear in train components, ensuring they're replaced or repaired before they fail. This not only enhances the safety of train operations but also ensures punctuality, a critical factor in ensuring the popularity of rail travel.

When we shift our gaze to logistics, the transformations are equally profound. Warehouses, the nerve centres of logistics, are witnessing an AI-driven renaissance. Robots, powered by AI algorithms, now handle tasks ranging from sorting packages to restocking shelves. They operate with a precision that ensures optimal space utilization, faster processing times, and reduced errors.

Furthermore, AI-driven analytics plays a pivotal role in inventory management. By analysing purchasing patterns, seasonal demands, or even global events, AI can predict inventory requirements with uncanny accuracy. This ensures that warehouses stock just the right amount of goods, reducing holding costs, and ensuring timely deliveries.

Delivery, the final frontier of logistics, is also undergoing an AI transformation. Advanced route optimisation algorithms ensure that delivery vehicles take the most efficient routes, bypassing congestions and reducing fuel consumption. Drones, as previously discussed, are beginning to play a role in last-mile deliveries, especially in urban areas. Moreover, autonomous delivery bots are ensuring that goods reach customers swiftly and safely.

SOURCE	China Supply Chain

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport

2025 ANNUAL RISK REPORT

Everstream Analytics, a leader in supply chain risk analysis, has released its 2025 Annual Risk Report, pinpointing the top five threats that could disrupt global supply chains this year.

The report draws on a vast database of past disruptions to identify trends and help businesses prepare for challenges ahead.

Top Risks in 2025

Climate Change and Extreme Weather (90%)

Flooding and rising ocean temperatures are set to disrupt supply chains on an unprecedented scale.

Small and large flood events alike will test even the best-prepared systems.

Geopolitical Instability (80%)

Global tensions—from the South China Sea to the Russia-Ukraine conflict—threaten shipping routes, logistics operations, and manufacturing networks.

Proposed tariff increases also risk impacting industries like automotive and semiconductors.

Cybercrime (75%)

Supply chains are increasingly vulnerable to cyberattacks due to growing reliance on AI and IoT devices.

Electronics companies and third-party logistics providers (3PLs) face heightened risks of ransomware and phishing attacks.

Rare Metals and Minerals (65%)

Tariffs, sanctions, and reliance on limited suppliers will make sourcing critical materials more expensive and challenging.

China's export restrictions could worsen shortages.

Forced Labour Crackdowns (60%)

Global scrutiny of labour practices is increasing, with new laws pushing companies to find ethical suppliers.

This presents challenges for industries like agriculture, where forced labour issues are prevalent.

Everstream's report underscores the need for proactive planning and strong monitoring to handle these risks. While some risks are unavoidable, early notice and swift action can save inventory and lives in 2025.

DOWNLOAD THE REPORT

SOURCE	Everstream

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport

The Logistics of CNY Foodstuff: Mandarin Oranges

LISTEN   5 min

Celebrating Chinese New Year in Singapore: Traditions, Practices, and the Exchange of Mandarin Oranges

Chinese New Year, also known as the Lunar New Year, is one of the most significant and widely celebrated festivals in Singapore. The festival marks the beginning of the Chinese lunar calendar and is a time for family reunions, feasting, and various traditional practices. In Singapore, the celebration is a vibrant mix of ancient customs and modern festivities.

Traditional Practices and Historical Roots

Chinese New Year celebrations in Singapore are steeped in history and tradition. Some of the most common practices include:

1. Reunion Dinner: The reunion dinner, held on the eve of Chinese New Year, is a time for families to come together and enjoy a meal. This dinner is considered the most important meal of the year and is filled with dishes that symbolize prosperity, health, and good fortune.

2. Lion Dance: The lion dance is a traditional performance that is believed to bring good luck and ward off evil spirits. The dance is performed by skilled dancers who manipulate a lion costume to the beat of drums and cymbals.

3. Red Decorations: Red is considered an auspicious colour in Chinese culture, symbolizing good luck and prosperity. Homes and streets are decorated with red lanterns, banners, and paper cut-outs to welcome the new year.

4. Exchanging Mandarin Oranges: One of the most cherished traditions is the exchange of mandarin oranges. Mandarin oranges, also known as "kumquats," are given as gifts to friends and family as a symbol of good luck and prosperity. The word "kumquat" in Cantonese sounds similar to the phrase "gold" (金), which is why they are considered particularly auspicious.

Historical Roots of Mandarin Orange Exchange

The tradition of exchanging mandarin oranges during Chinese New Year has its roots in ancient China. It is believed that the practice began during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) when mandarin oranges were considered a rare and valuable gift. Over time, the exchange of mandarin oranges became a symbol of good fortune and prosperity, and the practice spread to other parts of the world, including Singapore.

Supply & Import of Mandarin Oranges in Singapore

Singapore imports a significant amount of mandarin oranges to meet the demand during Chinese New Year. The majority of these oranges come from countries such as China, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

The supply chain for mandarin oranges involves careful planning and coordination to ensure that the fruit arrives fresh and in good condition.

Challenges of Importing Mandarin Oranges

Importing mandarin oranges to Singapore comes with its own set of challenges. These include:

1. Quality Control: Ensuring that the imported mandarin oranges meet the required quality standards is crucial. This involves rigorous inspections and testing to prevent the entry of substandard or contaminated fruit.

2. Logistics: The logistics of transporting mandarin oranges from the source countries to Singapore can be complex. This includes managing the cold chain to keep the fruit fresh, dealing with customs regulations, and ensuring timely delivery.

3. Pricing: The cost of importing mandarin oranges can be high, especially during peak demand periods like Chinese New Year. This can affect the price of the fruit in the local market, making it more expensive for consumers.

During Chinese New Year, Singapore imports thousands of tonnes of mandarin oranges to meet the festive demand. The exact amount varies each year, but it is estimated that several hundred thousand mandarin oranges are imported for the celebrations.

Other Imported CNY Foodstuff

In addition to mandarin oranges, Singapore imports a variety of foodstuffs for Chinese New Year. These include:

1. Bak Kwa: A sweet and savoury dried meat that is a popular snack during the festivities.

2. Pineapple Tarts: These buttery pastries filled with pineapple jam are a favourite treat during Chinese New Year.

3. Yusheng: A raw fish salad that is tossed high in the air to symbolize prosperity and good luck.

4. Glutinous Rice Cakes (Nian Gao): These cakes symbolise a higher income or job position in the coming year.

Chinese New Year in Singapore is a time of joy, celebration, and tradition. The exchange of mandarin oranges, along with other festive practices, brings families and communities together to welcome the new year with hope and prosperity.

Despite the challenges of importing mandarin oranges, the effort is well worth it to keep this cherished tradition alive.

Fresh Supply of SGD Notes for 'Hong Bao'

LISTEN 3 min

Every year, as Chinese New Year approaches, Singapore's banks gear up to meet the high demand for fresh and crisp banknotes. This tradition stems from the belief that new money symbolizes prosperity and good fortune.

The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) ensures that around 100 million new notes are issued annually for this festive period.

Issues and Challenges Faced by the Banks

1. Overwhelming Demand: The demand for new notes often exceeds supply, leading to long queues and technical issues with online reservation systems. Banks like DBS and OCBC have reported overwhelming interest, with slots for note collection being snapped up quickly.

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport

2. Technical Glitches: Online reservation systems sometimes face technical difficulties, making it challenging for customers to secure their slots. This can cause frustration and inconvenience for those trying to collect new notes.

3. Logistical Challenges: Managing the logistics of distributing new notes across various branches and ATMs can be complex, especially with the need to ensure that notes are in pristine condition.

4. Environmental Concerns: The production and distribution of new notes have environmental implications. To address this, banks also offer "fit-for-gifting" notes, which are clean and crisp notes retrieved from circulation.

Traditional Practices of Gifting Money

Gifting money, or "hong bao," during Chinese New Year is a deeply rooted tradition in Chinese culture. The practice dates back to the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE), where it was believed that giving money in red envelopes would ward off evil spirits and bring good luck. The red colour symbolizes good fortune and joy, and the money inside represents blessings and prosperity.

Technology Replacing Traditional Practices

In recent years, technology has started to replace some traditional practices associated with Chinese New Year. The rise of e-hongbaos, or digital red packets, has become increasingly popular). These digital versions allow for the transfer of money via mobile apps, reducing the need for physical notes. E-hongbaos are not only convenient but also environmentally friendly, as they eliminate the need for paper and ink.

As Singapore continues to embrace both tradition and technology, the practice of gifting money during Chinese New Year remains a cherished custom.

While banks work to meet the demand for fresh notes, the introduction of digital alternatives offers a modern twist to this age-old tradition.

Whether through crisp banknotes or digital transfers, the spirit of giving and sharing prosperity continues to thrive.

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Humanitarian Aid During Chinese New Year

LISTEN 5 min

Chinese New Year (CNY), also known as the Lunar New Year, is a time of celebration and family reunions. However, it also poses unique challenges for humanitarian aid organisations due to extended holidays and market closures in China. In Singapore, various humanitarian initiatives are undertaken during this period to support local and international communities. This article explores the key aspects of humanitarian aid during CNY, with specific examples from Singapore.

KEY HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS DURING CHINESE NEW YEAR

1. Blood Donation Drives: The Singapore Red Cross often ramps up blood donation drives during CNY. Due to the lower turnout of donors during the festive season, there is a critical need to maintain adequate blood supplies for medical emergencies. In 2024, the Singapore Red Cross and the Health Sciences Authority (HSA) urged Group O blood donors to come forward to restore blood stocks to healthy levels.

2. Relief Supplies for Vulnerable Communities: Humanitarian organisations in Singapore, like the Red Cross, actively engage in distributing relief supplies to vulnerable communities during CNY. For instance, in response to the January 2025 ceasefire in Gaza, the Singapore Red Cross committed $300,000 worth of relief supplies, including food parcels, hygiene kits, and medical supplies, to support the affected communities.

3. Support for Low-Income Families: Local charities and non-profit organisations in Singapore provide essential support to low-income families during CNY. This includes distributing food hampers, clothing, and other necessities to help them celebrate the festive season with dignity.

CHALLENGES FACED DURING CHINESE NEW YEAR

1. Extended Holidays and Market Closures: The extended holidays in China lead to temporary shutdowns of factories and businesses, causing delays in the production and delivery of goods. This can impact the availability of essential supplies for humanitarian aid efforts.

2. Labour Shortages: Many workers return to their hometowns to celebrate CNY, resulting in labour shortages in key sectors, including logistics and transportation. This can affect the efficiency of aid distribution.

3. Increased Demand for Resources: The festive season sees a surge in demand for various resources, including food and medical supplies. Humanitarian organisations must navigate this increased demand to ensure timely and adequate support for vulnerable populations.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

1. Advance Planning: Humanitarian organisations can mitigate the impact of CNY by planning their aid distribution schedules well in advance. This includes anticipating potential delays and securing necessary supplies before the holiday period begins.

2. Collaboration with Local Partners: Partnering with local organisations and authorities can enhance the efficiency of aid delivery. For example, the Singapore Red Cross collaborates with the Egyptian Red Crescent Society to deliver relief supplies to Gaza.

3. Leveraging Technology: Utilising technology, such as real-time tracking systems and predictive analytics, can help organisations monitor and manage their supply chains more effectively. This ensures timely delivery of aid despite the challenges posed by CNY.

Humanitarian aid during Chinese New Year plays a crucial role in supporting vulnerable communities and ensuring that essential supplies reach those in need.

Despite the challenges posed by extended holidays, labour shortages, and increased demand, organisations in Singapore and beyond continue to implement effective strategies to mitigate these impacts.

By planning ahead, collaborating with local partners, and leveraging technology, humanitarian efforts can remain resilient and responsive during the festive season.

SINGAPORE HANDS OVER SIXTH TRANCHE OF HUMANITARIAN AID FOR GAZA

Handover ceremony for Singapore's sixth tranche of aid for Gaza, in Amman, Jordan.

Singapore has handed its sixth tranche of humanitarian aid to Gaza - totalling about $1.3 million. Singapore has now contributed over **$19 million worth of donations to the Palestinian enclave.**

The latest handover of aid by the Rahmatan Lil Alamin Foundation (RLAF) comprised $851,000 to the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation and $435,000 to UNICEF.

Singapore is also work on sending an air shipment of humanitarian supplies to Gaza, in partnership with Jordan.

Singapore will continue to explore ways to support humanitarian and relief efforts in partnership with our regional partners.

SOURCE	Channel News Asia

VIDEO / AUDIO RESOURCES

How Containers Are Stacked and Organised on a Ship

Container ships are the backbone of global trade, carrying everything from electronics and clothing to raw materials and food. But have you ever wondered how these massive vessels efficiently stack thousands of containers?

Modern container ships are engineered for maximum efficiency. Every container is carefully planned and secured based on its size, weight, and destination. This meticulous organisation ensures balance for the ship, safety during transit, and smooth unloading at port.

Check out the video here to see the process in action and discover how container ships have changed the logistics industry, allowing for faster, safer, and more cost-effective global shipping.
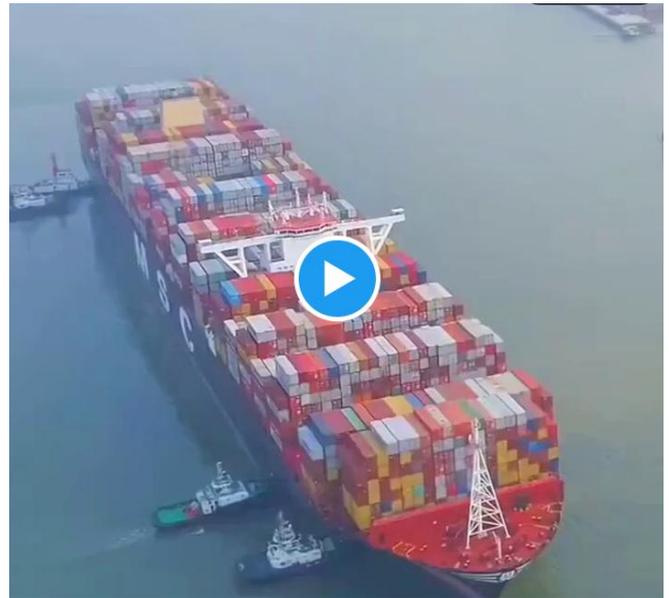
WATCH VIDEO (1:30 min)

SOURCE	Supply Chain 247

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport

Top Cyber Predictions 2025

The rise of generative AI and the swift progression of digital initiatives have compelled organisations to oversee and manage changes in their operations. As leaders in security and risk management navigate the aftermath and renewal stages from recent shifts, they need to incorporate forward-thinking strategic planning assumptions in their resource allocation, product selection and prioritization of services and initiatives. So, how do these leaders stay updated with the future of digital in an ever-evolving landscape?

Join this complimentary Gartner cybersecurity webinar as a Gartner expert explores the top predictions our cybersecurity experts have made for 2024 and beyond. **You will walk away from this session with answers to your vital questions, insights on building a successful ready-to-adapt cybersecurity program tailored for the digital age, a copy of the research slides and recommended actions to help you achieve your goals.**

- **Learn from the past recovery and renewal phases**
- **Fast forward to the future of cybersecurity**
- **Keep track of current trends that will impact you and your organisation**

WATCH WEBINAR (1 hr)

SOURCE	Gartner

Financing a Greener Maritime Future
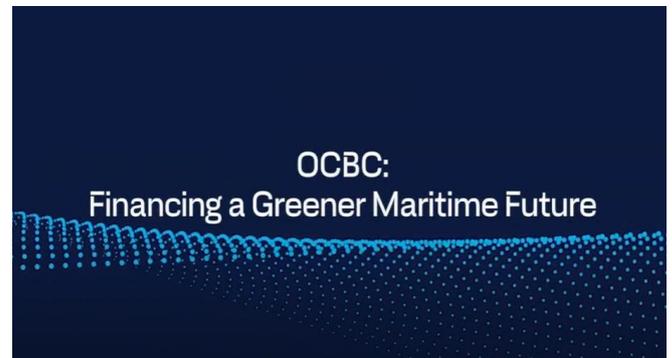
In this third episode of DNV's Singapore Decarbonization Insights, we delve into the role of sustainable financing in advancing maritime decarbonization.

Vanessa Chow, Associate Director at OCBC, shares insights into the bank's commitment to the Poseidon Principles and its support for clients through green loans and sustainability-linked financing.

We also examine the challenges of meeting stringent regulations and highlight the importance of collaboration between financial institutions, industry stakeholders, and regulators to reach net-zero targets by 2050.

WATCH WEBINAR (13 min)

SOURCE	DNV Maritime

This is the **International Transport Forum's Road Safety Annual Report 2024,** which offers the latest road safety data, including preliminary data for the first semester of 2024, as well as a detailed analysis of the road safety developments in 2023.

The Road Safety Annual Report 2024 provides an overview of road safety performance for the 40 countries participating in the International Transport Forum's permanent Working Group on road safety, known as the IRTAD Group. Based on the latest data, the report describes recent road safety developments in these countries and compares their performance against the main road safety indicators.

2025 will be a pivotal year for road safety, marking the mid-term of the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety. The 4th Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, being held in ITF member country Morocco from 18 to 20 February 2025, will provide an opportunity to review progress made so far. It is also expected to inspire renewed commitments from policy makers worldwide, setting the stage for more concrete actions during the second half of the decade to achieve the ambition of halving fatalities and serious injuries by 2030.

[DOWNLOAD REPORT](#)

WATCH: 'Ask the Author' webinar:

SOURCE	International Transport Forum

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Additionally, NTUC members are eligible for Union Training Assistance Programme (UTAP) funding.

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The CILTS [Supply Chain Professional Development (SCPD) Programme](#) comprises two levels, the **Advanced Professional Certificate** (four modules: SCPD05-08) and the **Professional Certificate** (four modules: SCPD01-04).

The SCPD modules, progressively updated to keep abreast of advancements in the industry, have a substantial fit with the [Skills Framework for Logistics](#) published by *SkillsFuture*, a Singapore Government initiative and the [Key Knowledge Areas](#) published by CILT International.

The syllabus for the Advanced Professional Certificate level also addresses the knowledge competency for the **Certified Professional Logistician (CPL)** certification, which is exclusively awarded by CILT Singapore.

CPL candidates taking the four advanced SCPD modules shall proceed to sit for the CPL Examination upon meeting eligibility conditions of work experience and qualifications. Successful candidates shall be awarded the CPL certificate.

Click on image for more information:

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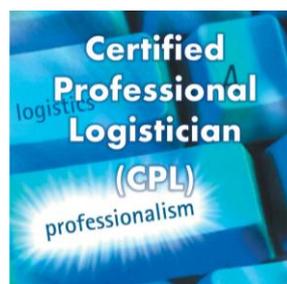
Certified Professional Logistician (CPL)

SCPD modules

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For more career search:

SOURCE	My Careers Future

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EDUCATION

EVENTS ON CILTS WEBSITE

To keep up with the latest developments and sharing in the Supply Chain, Logistics and Transport industry, check out the **EVENTS** section of our website, which includes the following insightful webinars:

WHY YOUR 3PL PARTNER MAY CHANGE IN 2025
5 FEB 2025

With business climates shifting across the country and across the globe, supply chains and their strategic partners exist in a constant state of flux—2025 will continue in the same vein, with some caveats to consider. For existing manufacturers, distributors, and retailers seeking growth opportunities, now is the time to act.

What you will learn from the webinar:

1. Value your 3PL as you value your own business because they are an extension of who you are.

2. Cheaper is a short-term solution and the first step to a long-term problem.

3. Find balance between growth and risk aversion and measure it often.

4. Don't leave your future to chance – set goals and parameters right now.

5. Second-guessing efficiency is like second chances—you've created room for doubt.

TARIFFS, TRADE, AND TURMOIL: STRATEGIES FOR A RESILIENT SUPPLY CHAIN
7 FEB 2025

Key Takeaways:

• **Clarity Amid Complexity:** Understand the real implications of 2025 policy shifts on supply chain operations, costs, and supplier relationships.

• **Actionable Strategies:** Discover practical methods to mitigate risks, adapt sourcing strategies, and optimise workforce management.

• **Resilience Through Data-Driven Tools:** Learn how predictive analytics, scenario modelling, and network design can help you prepare for and capitalize on change.

• **Proactive Adaptation:** See how incremental, strategic adjustments can make your supply chain more flexible and prepared for future disruptions.

DISCUSSING THE AI ADVANTAGE IN MODERN TMS SOLUTIONS
26 FEB 2025

The transportation management landscape is evolving rapidly, and artificial intelligence (AI) is leading the charge in transforming how businesses operate. From streamlining processes to improving decision-making and driving down costs, TMS solutions are revolutionizing supply chains worldwide, but what can AI bring to the table?

KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

CILTS Members have **exclusive access** to our online Knowledge Centre, a rich repository of more than **1,600 publications and webinars on SUPPLY CHAIN, TRANSPORT, MILITARY LOGISTICS AND MANAGEMENT / SELF DEVELOPMENT**.

To access Knowledge Centre, use your CILTS member-registered email address to log in at www.cilt.org.sg/account/knowledge-centre

If you have not set your password yet, click on "Forgot Password". If you need help to log in, please contact secretariat@cilt.org.sg.

PUBLICATIONS

Click on image to read:

Technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) have become key players in the supply chain and logistics world.

A digital supply chain vastly reduces wasted time and energy devoted to repetitive tasks and ensures more accurate results. **Digital twins provide an ongoing view of specific processes and associated bottlenecks across the supply chain in real-time. Problems can be addressed before they balloon with little human intervention.**


In 2023 alone, Indian ecommerce grew annually by of 21.5%, amounting to a total of US$74.8 billion.

E-commerce has changed the way people do business in India, with most of the market's growth driven by an increase in internet speed and smartphone usage. In 2023, tier 2 and tier 3 cities accounted for 18.6% and 37.1% of the overall e-commerce market in India. Tier 1 cities led the growth in e-commerce volumes in fiscal 2023.

Modern Materials Handling magazine conducted its annual Materials Handling Technology Study to **better understand the usage and adoption of technology applications being used and planned for use in materials handling environments.** Where applicable, results are tracked back to prior studies to gauge any changes that may have occurred over time.
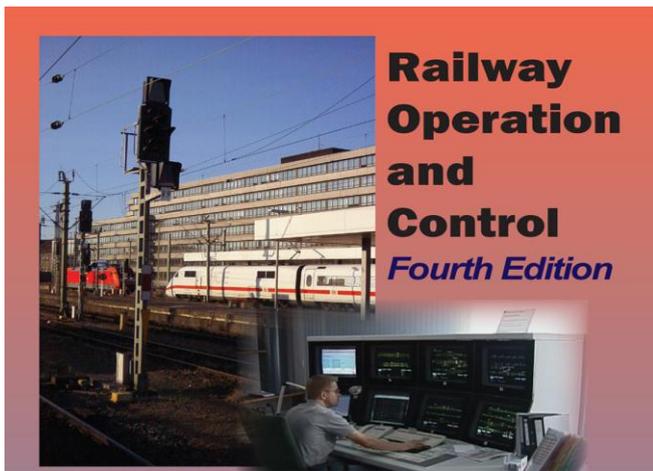
This textbook provides, in a compact form, the **fundamental knowledge in the science of railway operation in a close connection with signalling principles and traffic control technologies.** It was written both as a tutorial for students of railway-related programs and as a reference for people in the industry.

This report helps policy makers to implement new mobility measurement and monitoring frameworks.

This study draws lessons from ten case studies around the world and offers a set of practical recommendations to ensure effective data reporting and monitoring frameworks.
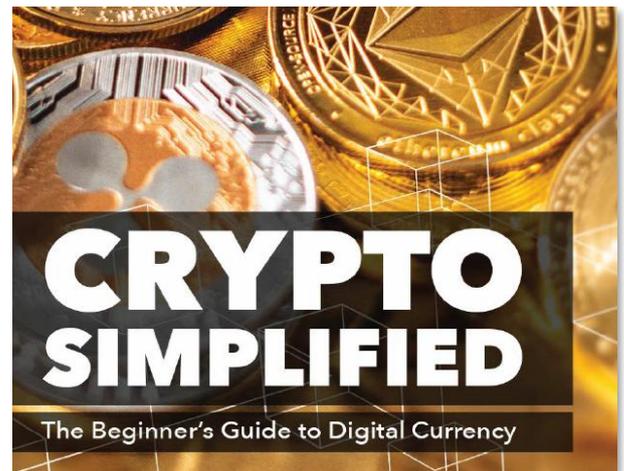
The arrival of cryptocurrency came at a poignant moment in time. As the world reeled from the damaging effects of the 2008 financial crisis, an economic revolution was already underway.

Very little is known about the biggest name in crypto, Satoshi Nakamoto. But in October 2008, Nakamoto laid out the terms for what we would come to know as "cryptocurrencies." Digital finance would never be the same again.

Strategic technology trends are shaping the future by driving innovation while upholding ethical responsibility and trust.

Gartner carefully selected these **10 trends based on their potential to disrupt traditional business models, enable new forms of innovation and address the most pressing challenges facing enterprises today.** They represent strategic imperatives that require thoughtful consideration and decisive action.

Who We Are

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Singapore is part of the leading, global professional body for those engaged in supply chain, logistics and transport – covering all sectors of the industry, namely air, land and sea, for both passenger and freight transportation.

Our primary objectives are to support our members in continuous professional development to future-proof their careers, as well as to work in close collaboration with the public and private sectors, Government agencies and the academia to develop opportunities and synergy for industry transformation and growth, underpinned by strategic thrusts in digitalisation and sustainability.

Contact Us

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Singapore

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