JULY ISSUE 2024

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport

CILT LINK

"EXPLORE EMERGING TRENDS AND INNOVATIONS IN LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION"

"INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP IN LOGISTICS"
BY NISHAN HEWAGAMAGE

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Editor's Note

We are thrilled to announce the release of the latest edition of CILT LINK magazine, the July 2024 issue. This edition delves deep into the realm of supply chain and logistics, bringing you insights and updates from all corners of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) community.

SAHANA VITHANAGAMA,CMILT

The theme of this issue revolves around innovation and technology in the dynamic and ever-evolving world of supply chain and logistics. As we navigate through unprecedented challenges and opportunities, the magazine serves as a valuable resource for industry professionals and enthusiasts alike.

This year, we are excited to introduce a new initiative: a series of interesting interviews with industry professionals and CILT leaders. These conversations aim to provide in-depth perspectives on the latest trends, challenges, and innovations shaping our industry.

As always, CILT LINK provides a comprehensive overview of the latest happenings in the industry. Readers can find news from various CILT divisions, including the Central Chapter, Women in Logistics and Transport (WiLAT), and Next Generation, and news from corporate partners showcasing the diverse perspectives and initiatives that collectively drive progress in our field.

Throughout the magazine, readers can expect to find engaging content that aims to inspire, inform, and connect professionals from various sectors of logistics and transportation with the aim of encouraging collaboration and idea-sharing that contribute to the growth and excellence of the industry.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my editorial committee, staff, and all readers and authors who have made this issue possible. Thank you for being part of our thriving community, and we look forward to continuing this journey together.

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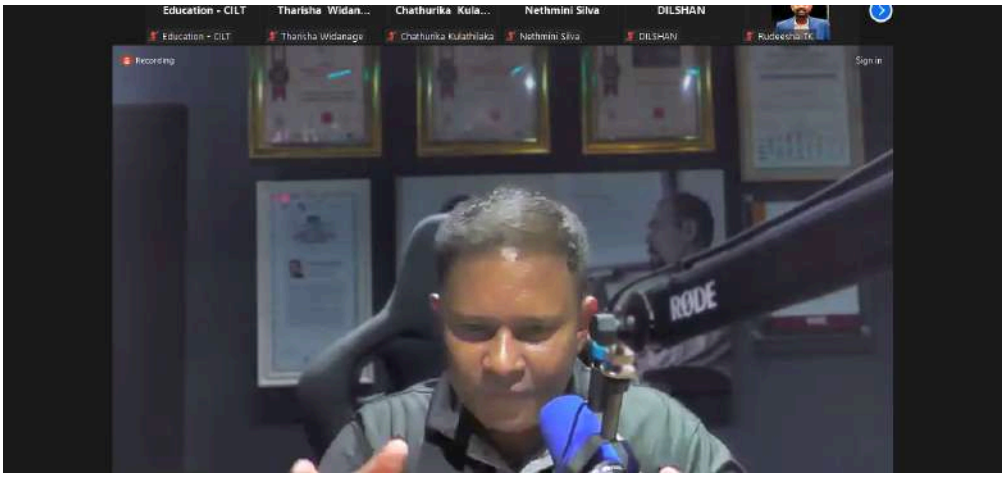
CILT STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

On April 27, 2024, the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) convened a crucial strategic planning meeting at the Royal Colombo Golf Club. The event, which took place from 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM, brought together a diverse group of industry leaders, stakeholders, and experts. The primary focus of the meeting was to chart the course for CILT's initiatives in the coming year, emphasizing the enhancement of efficiency and sustainability within Sri Lanka's transport sector.

CILT SRI LANKA KICK STARTS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE INITIATIVES FOR 2024

CILT President, along with our dedicated team, had the privilege of engaging with the SLTB Chairman and other esteemed representatives. The insightful discussion has left us energized and inspired to further our mission of shaping the future of the land transport industry. As we embark on strategic initiatives for 2024, we look forward to driving innovation and excellence in transport and logistics. This event marks the beginning of a series of initiatives aimed at enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of Sri Lanka's transport sector.



CILT SSMI APPLIED LEAN SIX SIGMA PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATION (ALSSP) FOR SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT, LOGISTICS & TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS

CILT® SSMI® Applied Lean Six Sigma Practitioner Certification (ALSSP) for Supply Chain Management, Logistics & Transportation Professionals offers an in-depth applied understanding of the latest problem-solving tools and techniques used by the world's leading corporations to drive improvements in their business operations and when undertaking improvement projects.

This comprehensive program, led by Mr. Dumidu Ranaweera, CEMBB, Global Director APAC, Middle East, Africa, Oceania & Canada at the Dr. Mikel J Harry Six Sigma Management Institute Inc., delves deep into the latest problem-solving tools and techniques employed by global corporations to enhance business operations and drive impactful improvement projects. This course happens on 10th, 11th ,17th ,18th,24th and 25th of June 2024.The ALSSP offer a flexible 15-hour curriculum (2.5 hours x 6 days) conducted via Zoom from 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM. Enrollees benefit from six months of access to SSMI Asia LMS, inclusive of program handouts, downloadable tools, application templates, and trial versions of the software used during the certification.

"INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP IN LOGISTICS"

INTERVIEW WITH MR. NISHAN HEWAGAMAGE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT EFL 3PL SRI LANKA

Bringing a wealth of experience in logistics to the table and as a talented leader, Nishan Hewagamage, CEO of EFL 3PL, shared insights on how he navigates his leadership role in this constantly evolving industry. He believes that transformative leadership, combined with a forward-thinking vision, is indispensable for driving change and fostering innovation. He further added that, to lead effectively, he focuses on cultivating a culture of continuous improvement, which he considers essential for the sustained success of logistics organisations. He highlighted four key elements in his leadership techniques and strategy. Nishan prioritizes adaptability and flexibility, understanding that the ability to pivot and adjust to new developments, trends, and technologies being crucial in maintaining a competitive edge. He genuinely fosters an environment that encourages continuous innovation. This involves being open to new ideas,

investing in research and development, and embracing emerging technologies that can transform and optimize the processes. Integrating the latest technologies is a cornerstone of his leadership approach too, where he explains that leveraging on digital tools and innovations support logistics companies streamline operations, improve efficiency, and respond proactively to industry changes. He also places great importance on empowering employees by encouraging their engagement and participation in decision-making processes at different levels. He believes that this not only enhances their sense of ownership but also harnesses their unique insights and perspectives, driving the organization forward.

These strategies enable him to not only navigate the complexities of the industry but also turn challenges into opportunities for growth and improvement. Through his visionary leadership, commitment to innovation, and focus on empowering the team, he strives to lead his organization to achieve and sustain success in a dynamic marketplace. Nishan cited, "Throughout my career, I haven't adhered to following a single role model. Instead, I believe in the power of learning from everyone I encounter. Every individual possesses unique skills, characteristics, and experiences that offer valuable lessons. This mind set has significantly influenced my personal and professional growth. By observing and engaging with a diverse range of people, I have had the opportunity to gain various positive traits and skills." He encourages employees to embrace this perspective too. According to him, this approach not only benefits individual growth, but entire organization as a whole creating a dynamic and resilient workforce poised for sustained success.

Nishan recognizes the importance of embracing technology in logistics as the key to success. He stated that technologies play a pivotal role in visualising and optimising logistics processes by enhancing accuracy, efficiency, and decision-making. Globally, logistics has evolved to be much more advanced, using technologies to reap the benefits of saving time and money.

EFL 3PL is familiar with the latest technologies and has currently deployed them in most of its facilities. He mentioned that the Tier-1 Warehouse management System (WMS) and 100% scan-based warehousing operations optimize efficiency by providing real-time inventory tracking, system guided picking operation, analytics reports, and seamless integration with other systems, ensuring precise control and visibility across the entire supply chain.By deploying simulation software, EFL 3PL creates digital twins of distribution centers to optimize processes, layouts, and operations, foresee potential issues, and address them proactively.He also highlighted that data and information are key to success in any supply chain. Hence, EFL 3PL has introduced in-house developed dashboards & mobile apps,

providing all relevant internal and external stakeholders with clear, real-time, and actionable insights to help make proactive decisions. Furthermore, he added that they use Robotic Process Automation (RPA) technology to automate repetitive system operations. Currently, the company is in the process of adopting Intelligent Process Automation (IPA) to take automation to the next level with AI. EFL 3PL is uniquely positioned to provide the best of the best services to delight customers with innovative supply chain solutions that cater to and improve efficiency in value chains. EFL 3PL is exploring all possibilities for leveraging AI technologies to transform operations, ensure enhanced efficiency and proactive decision-making. Nishan provided valuable insight into how the integration of AI will significantly benefit both company and the industry. Moreover, he explained that how AI would help with vital supply chain functions such as integrated planning through predictive analytics and accurate demand forecasting. By analyzing historical data, AI can predict future demand, allowing for better inventory management and reduced market stock outs. On the other hand, AI can also support proactive maintenance of equipment and machinery by keeping detailed records and scheduling maintenance accordingly. EFL 3PL is already driving mechanical automation projects with the help of its own in-housed mechatronics team. Implementing AI-driven automation for repetitive tasks, such as order picking, may significantly reduce human error and processing time. Furthermore, he explained the dynamic AI tools such as AI Based Slotting. The company is currently in the process of adopting AI-Based Slotting (Slotting IQ), which will help them further optimize space utilization, improve order-picking efficiency, and accelerate order processing. Route optimisation tools ensure the most efficient path for delivery, reducing fuel costs, ensuring compliance and safety, maintaining transit quality, and improving delivery lead times. Finally, he added that enhanced data analysis using AI models enables analysing vast amounts of data from various sources to provide actionable insights, supporting more informed decision-making and certainly adding a competitive advantage to EFL 3PL.

CILT CENTRAL CHAPTER

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR 2024

5TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION (CILT)

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transportation (CILT) Central Chapter successfully held its 5th Annual General Meeting on Friday, 19th April 2024. The event, which commenced at 5:30 p.m., gathered CILT industry professional members to reflect on the past year's accomplishments and strategies for the future.

The meeting featured the appointment of key positions within the chapter. Mr. I.W.N Bandaranake was appointed as President, with Dr. Subodha Dharmapriya taking on the role of Vice President. Mr. Praveen Abeysundera was named Secretary, and Mr. Lakmal Senanayake was appointed Treasurer. The committee members appointed included Dr. Jayalath Edirisinghe, Mr. Isuru Hettiarchchi, Dr. Samal Dharmarathna, and Dr. S.K. Navaratnaraja.

Throughout the evening, attendees engaged in meaningful discussions about the logistics and transportation sector, sharing insights and forging valuable connections. The event provided a platform for members to voice their opinions, contribute ideas, and participate in shaping the future direction of the chapter.

The 5th Annual General Meeting underscored CILT Central Chapter's commitment to advancing the logistics and transportation industry. The active participation and contributions of the members were instrumental in making the event a resounding success. The chapter looks forward to another productive year ahead, driven by the collective efforts and shared vision of its dedicated members and leadership team.

"LEADING CILT SRI LANKA THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES"

INTERVIEW WITH DR. NAMALI SIRISOMA, FCILT
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT , CILT SRI LANKA

During your tenure as the president of CILT Sri Lanka, what innovative initiatives or projects were you most proud of, and how did they impact the organization and the logistics industry?

I became the president of CILT Sri Lanka in 2022, a year when the entire country was suffering due to the economic recession. The industry was also undergoing a challenging time because of the supply chain disruptions in the post-COVID era and the economic crisis in Sri Lanka. Since the majority of companies were struggling, our organization found it difficult to secure sponsorships for events. However, with the generous support of the professionals attached to CILT Sri Lanka, we were able to make those dream events come true, resulting in a professional body that concluded 42 events last year.

The CILT Sri Lanka Research Symposium and the CILT Awards were significant events that we successfully concluded. The CILT Sri Lanka Research Symposium started in 2022, and the first conference was held in February 2023, providing a great platform for young researchers and industry professionals. The CILT Awards event was a wonderful opportunity to appreciate companies for their hard work. Furthermore, we initiated a program focused on making school children aware of the logistics industry. After years of struggle, we made this a reality last year. As part of the program, we took school children to the Port of Colombo, where industry professionals conducted lectures for them. Even though we started this program with schools in Colombo, we plan to extend it to children from rural areas as well. WiLAT, a wing of CILT Sri Lanka, conducted many membership drives in and out of Colombo. In addition we have completed the CLLT diploma in Logistics and Supply Chain which is ready to offer school leavers and industry personal. Several programmes were launched under continuous professional development category as Six Sigma programme and Data sciences in Transport and Logistics. For the first time we had a workshop in land transport in collaboration of the National Transport Commission. Collectively, we achieved many things during my tenure as the president of CILT Sri Lanka, and I hope this progress continues in the coming years.

Leading a prestigious organization like CILT must have come with its challenges. Can you share an instance where you had to demonstrate significant courage to overcome a major obstacle, and what did you learn from that experience?

Leading CILT Sri Lanka, a professional body with experts from various industries within the logistics arena, is indeed challenging. This organization comprises professionals working at different calibers in government and non-government organizations and coming from various walks of life. However, this diversity helped us achieve so much and provided a comprehensive perspective on future projections with input from multiple experts.As the president of CILT Sri Lanka, I had the opportunity to voice our recommendations to the Lankan Government for some of their initiatives. For example, we were able to express our suggestions when the government planned improvements in the public transport sector, such as introducing electric buses. Additionally, I contributed to the Sri Lanka Land Transport policy review representing CILT Sri Lanka. During the preparation of the railway restructuring proposal by the Sri Lankan government, I was appointed as one of the council members to finalize the project with our inputs.

I believe in creating a platform for youngsters to express their ideas on the newest projects, and CILT Sri Lanka serves as an excellent platform for this. With the input of young professionals and industry experts, the Sri Lankan logistics industry can significantly improve its quality standards, potentially becoming a major maritime or aviation hub.

How did you incorporate empathy into your leadership style at CILT, and in what ways did it influence the organization's culture and stakeholder relationships?

Since CILT Sri Lanka comprises professionals from all logistics sectors, including maritime, aviation, rail, and road transportation, empathy is a mandatory element to realize our dreams. There have been constructive arguments during strategic planning sessions and other meetups. However, fortunately, we have a special group of individuals who value professionalism and the industry's betterment.

This collective professionalism has helped make CILT Sri Lanka recognized among industry professionals and CILT International and elevate CILT Sri Lanka's status globally. When Her Royal Highness Princess Anne visited Sri Lanka to mark the 75 years of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom, we were invited to meet her, which was a great honor since she is also a Patron Chairpersons of CILT International.

Now, we are focusing more on encouraging our youngsters to achieve professional qualifications to make CILT Sri Lanka more recognized locally, similar to organizations like SLMA and IESL, which require mandatory professional qualifications to become a practicing professional in the industry.

CILT is now present in 34 countries, and CILT Sri Lanka is considered a significant wing, thanks to the tremendous work we have done collectively.

WILAT NEWS

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR 2024

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

On June 1st, 2024, WiLAT Sri Lanka successfully concluded their strategic planning session at the EFL Headquarters. This pivotal event brought together key members of WiLAT to chart for the upcoming year. The session was marked by dynamic brainstorming and in-depth discussions, where participants shared innovative ideas and formulated strategic initiatives for 2024/25. The team is excited to embark on a productive and impactful year, driven by their strategic vision and collaborative spirit.

WILAT NEWS

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR 2024

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WiLAT Sri Lanka's Annual General Meeting (AGM) convened at BMICH Lavender Hall on May 14th, 2024, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Prof. Renuka Herath of Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology was unanimously appointed once again to lead WiLAT team for the year 2024/25. Members gathered to reflect on achievements, strategize for the future, and strengthen networks in the logistics and transport sector. The event fostered dynamic discussions and highlighted WiLAT's ongoing commitment to empowering women professionals. Participants left inspired to advance inclusivity and excellence in the industry following a productive and collaborative session.

WILAT NEWS

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR 2024

OVIKLO INTERNATIONAL WAREHOUSE COMPLEX VISIT FOR MENTEES OF IGNITE 9 PROGRAM

WiLAT SL organized a visit to the warehouse complex of Oviklo International (Pvt) Ltd, Biyagama on 9th May 2024 as part of the Ignite 9 program. Several mentees and students from Ocean University participated in the event and they got the opportunity to visit the warehouse complex of Oviklo International gaining valuable exposure to warehousing and 3PL management operations. Jagath Priyashantha – Director, Mr. Mark Seneviratne – DGM (Business Development) and Mr. Dulan Sampath – Asst. Manager of Oviklo facilitated the event whilst Dr. Priyangani Jayasundara represented WiLAT.

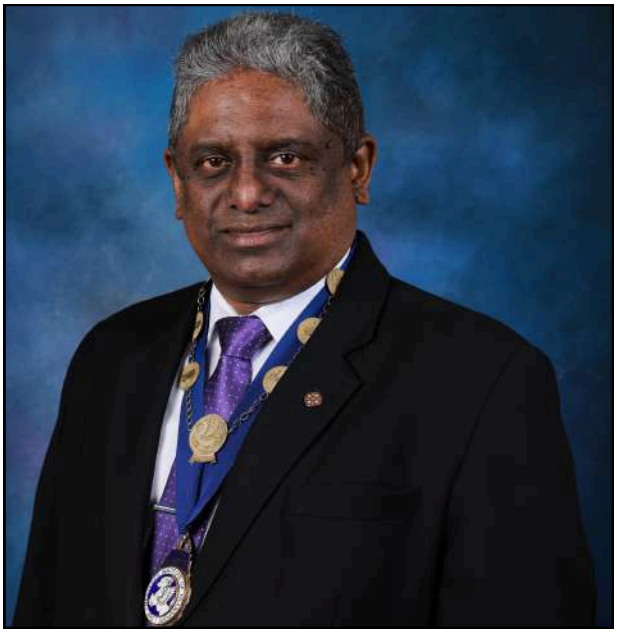
UNILEVER SRI LANKA DISTRIBUTION CENTER VISIT FOR MENTEES OF IGNITE 9 PROGRAM

On June 11th, 2024, Ignite 9 concluded with an enlightening visit to the Unilever Sri Lanka Distribution Center located at Lindel Industrial Zone, Sapugaskanda. This visit marked the culmination of a transformative event that showcased innovation and industry collaboration.
Participants were treated to an insightful tour of the distribution center, gaining firsthand knowledge of Unilever's logistics operations and sustainability initiatives.

The visit to Unilever Sri Lanka Distribution Center not only enriched the Ignite 9 experience but also reinforced the importance of continuous learning and innovation in shaping the future of logistics and transport.

"VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR CILT SRI LANKA"

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. CHANDIMA HULANGAMUWA , FCILT
NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT, CILT SRI LANKA



As the newly elected president of CILT Sri Lanka, what is your vision for the organization in the coming year, and what are the specific objectives you plan to achieve during your tenure?

My vision for 2024/25 is to enhance the visibility and recognition of CILT Sri Lanka as a professional body, particularly within the government sector. We have had productive discussions with several Ministries and other governmental bodies to present our proposals aimed at improving the logistics and transport sectors. We will continue these efforts in the coming years.
Furthermore, we aim to create more value for our existing members and attract potential new members. Our members are the core of CILT Sri Lanka, and we will continue to offer them increased value. Given our reliance on corporate partners, it's our primary objective to demonstrate the benefits our organization provides, ensuring continued partnerships in the coming year.

What do you perceive as the biggest challenge facing CILT SL, and how do you plan to address those challenges? Also, what opportunities do you see in your tenure?

The biggest challenge for CILT SL is the current economic situation in the country, a challenge shared by all public and private institutions. Since we heavily rely on our corporate members, we must add more value to retain their support during these economically challenging times. Rising costs pose a significant challenge, which is why we are focused on strengthening our relationships with corporate partners by offering them more value. We are already working on this and plan to enhance it in the coming year.
I am delighted to announce that we won the bid to host the CILT International Conference in Sri Lanka in 2025. This prestigious event will significantly boost the visibility of CILT Sri Lanka within the industry. We are planning to make it a mega logistics event in 2025. This year, the annual convention was held in Beijing, China and CILT International, officially announced the next year's location as Sri Lanka. We were given the opportunity to make a presentation to the delegation and we did a presentation creating awareness to all delegates who are very much looking forward to participating.

How do you plan to drive innovation within CILT Sri Lanka to better serve the logistics and transport industry?

As a professional body, we have been proactively presenting our proposals to ministries and various government authorities for the betterment of the country. We are planning to set up a new committee comprising of members from our sectional committees (ie. Aviation, Maritime, Land Transport and Supply Chain Management) dedicated to identifying the evolving requirements of each sector and regularly submit proposals to Government Authorities.

Despite being behind other countries in terms of development, we will persistently advocate for our proposals with the government. Additionally, this committee focuses on publishing articles on papers and social media to increase the visibility of our proposals. This will be one of our core objectives for 2024/25.

What are your plans to enhance professional development opportunities for CILT SL members, especially in the context of the rapidly evolving transport and logistics sector?

I encourage students and professionals entering the industry to attain professional qualifications. CILT is among the top institutions supporting individuals in achieving these qualifications in logistics and transport. We've our diploma and advanced diploma courses currently conducted by the CINEC campus, and we've accredited several Logistics degree programs conducted by reputed Universities.

In addition to that, we have recently introduced programs such as the Six Sigma Program and the Data Science Program. Additionally, our research symposium provides an excellent platform for undergraduates to showcase their knowledge and skills to professionals.

Our Educational Committee, comprising representatives from top universities in Sri Lanka, continuously develops programs to benefit individuals entering the logistics and transport industry. We have also developed a diploma program in logistics and transport and are in discussions with several universities to partner with us. We aim to introduce this program at the earliest convenience.

CILT NEXT GENERATION

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR 2024

STRATAGIC PLANNING MEETING

The planning session of CILT Sri Lanka Next Generation was held on 29th May 2024 at the CILT Sri Lanka head office. The newly elected core committee members of CILT Sri Lanka Next Generation gathered to plan for the year 2024/25. The brainstorming and planning session concluded successfully after a fruitful discussion. Excited to embark on a productive year ahead! The committee members demonstrated strong commitment and enthusiasm, ensuring a strategic approach to their initiatives. Their collaborative efforts set a promising foundation for innovative projects and impactful activities in the upcoming year.! The session concluded with a renewed sense of purpose and a clear vision for the future.

MEMBER ARTICLES

REVOLUTIONIZING LOGISTICS: HOW TECHNOLOGY IS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF SUPPLY CHAINS

BY : YUMNA AMANI RUFAHAN
UNDERGRADUATE AT NSBM GREEN UNIVERSITY

Introduction

Imagine a future where products travel from factories to front doors with incredible efficiency and speed. Thanks to revolutionary technological advancements, the supply chain sector is experiencing this now—it's not something out of a sci-fi film. Before our eyes, the logistics and transportation world are changing, from drones delivering parcels to artificial intelligence forecasting demand rises.

Technology in supply chains has advanced dramatically over the years, from manufacturing facilities in the early 20th century to the advanced, automated systems of today. The shift in company practices from manual to advanced digital operations during the last few decades has been especially noticeable. This change has made modern supply chains major competitive advantages by enabling previously unheard-of levels of flexibility and efficiency.

As we explore further, we'll delve into the technologies driving these changes—artificial intelligence, robotics, the Internet of Things, and blockchain—and discover how they fundamentally expand what's possible in this dynamic industry.

Key Technologies Reshaping the Supply Chain

Artificial Intelligence (AI): As we usher in a new era of logistics, Artificial Intelligence stands at the forefront, steering the ship with its sophisticated capabilities. AI is not just a tool but a game-changer in predictive analytics and demand forecasting. Imagine a system that anticipates market demands before they surface, optimizing stock levels without human intervention. Major retailers like Amazon have integrated AI to streamline everything from inventory management to delivery routes, setting new standards for efficiency and customer satisfaction. This isn't just convenient; it's revolutionary, reducing waste and ensuring satisfaction across the supply chain.

Robotics: Step into the modern warehouse where robots and humans work side by side. These robotic systems, designed to perform repetitive and physically demanding tasks, are not only improving safety but also boosting efficiency like never before. They navigate vast warehouse spaces at speed, picking and packing with precision around the clock. This automation extends beyond storage facilities, reaching into the very heart of the logistics process, ensuring products move faster and more reliably than ever.

analyzing data from a variety of sources, including past purchase patterns, seasonal trends, and even local events, Target can predict future demand with an impressive degree of accuracy. This predictive power ensures that each store is stocked appropriately, with just the right amount of inventory to meet localized consumer demands without overstocking. Such precision in demand forecasting helps Target maintain optimal inventory levels, reduce markdowns, and improve customer satisfaction by consistently having desired products available.

Future Trends and Predictions

Emerging Technologies: As we peer into the crystal ball of the supply chain industry, several emerging technologies stand out, poised to redefine the very fabric of logistics and transportation. Quantum computing, though still in its infancy, promises to solve complex logistics problems at unprecedented speeds.

Autonomous Vehicles and Drones: The roads and skies of the near future will be navigated by autonomous vehicles and drones, making last-mile delivery faster, cheaper, and more accessible, especially in remote areas. These technologies are not just reshaping delivery; they are redefining the possibilities of supply chain logistics.

Industry Predictions: Experts foresee a more integrated and responsive supply chain ecosystem as these technologies mature. According to recent studies, the ntegration of AI and IoT (Internet of Things) is expected to boost global supply chain efficiency by up to 30% over the next decade.

The next decade holds the promise of a supply chain that is not only smarter and faster but also more sustainable and resilient. Companies that can adapt to these changes and invest in the right technologies will be well-positioned to lead the industry into a new era marked by unprecedented efficiency and connectivity.

As we've journeyed through the transformative landscape of supply chain technology, it's clear that innovations like AI, robotics, big data, and blockchain are not just enhancing but revolutionizing how we manage logistics and transportation.

Now is the time for industry stakeholders to take bold steps towards embracing these technologies. Investing in cutting-edge innovations and staying abreast of emerging trends is not just an option; it's a necessity for staying competitive and resilient in a rapidly evolving market.

As we stand on the brink of a new era in supply chain management, one question remains: Are we ready to fully embrace the future and harness the full potential of these groundbreaking technologies? The decisions we make today will shape the supply chain of tomorrow, leading us into a world where possibilities are as vast as our imagination.

Big Data and Analytics: In a world overwhelmed by data, the supply chain industry has found its compass in Big Data. This technology doesn't just collect information; it transforms it into actionable insights. Operational efficiency is no longer about guesswork but about strategic decisions driven by data analytics. Every click, every sale, and every shipment generate data points that, when analyzed, can dramatically enhance decision-making and operational agility.

Blockchain: Transparency and security are the pillars of trust in supply chain management. Blockchain technology is the cornerstone of building this trust. It provides an unalterable ledger of transactions that is accessible to all parties involved but secure from tampering. From the origin of raw materials to the final delivery of products, blockchain ensures that every step in the supply chain is visible and verifiable, reducing the risk of fraud and errors, and enhancing the overall reliability of the supply network.

Impact of Technology on Supply Chain Efficiencies

Technological advancements have dramatically transformed the way supply chains operate, particularly in the realms of logistics, inventory management, and demand forecasting. These enhancements not only improve efficiency but also adaptability and precision across global networks, reshaping core operations in fundamental ways.

Logistics Optimization: Consider the logistics giant FedEx, which employs sophisticated AI algorithms to streamline its delivery operations. By analyzing vast data points—including traffic patterns, weather conditions, and package volumes—FedEx's AI systems can dynamically optimize delivery routes. This not only accelerates delivery times but also significantly reduces operational costs and environmental impact by minimizing fuel consumption. The result is a smarter, more responsive logistics operation that can swiftly adapt to unexpected changes and maintain efficiency under varying conditions.

Revolutionised Inventory Mgt: On the fashion front, Zara, a leader in the fast-fashion industry, has harnessed robotics within its distribution centres to revolutionise inventory management. Zara's automated systems rapidly adjust inventory levels to align with real-time sales data and changing fashion trends. This capability allows Zara to reduce waste and ensure that popular items are always in stock, thus meeting consumer demand with remarkable precision. The use of robotics not only speeds up the inventory adjustment process but also significantly decreases the likelihood of stock-outs or excess inventory, aligning production closely with consumer needs.

Enhanced Demand Forecasting: Turning to retail, Target has effectively utilized big data analytics to refine its demand forecasting. By collecting and

AGILE SCRUM APPROACH IN LOGISTICS INDUSTRIES

BY: KIRUSHNANANTHY V , MILT
[BSC (WUSL), MSC (PGIA,UOP), MSC (UOB,UK)

Agile Scrum (AS) approach is a valuable tool for logistics sector seeking for enhancement in their operations, improving customer satisfaction, and withstanding in a competitive marketplace with innovative modernized projects. Logistics industries can streamline processes and increase efficiency by incorporating AS Principles and aspects in logistics projects.

Figure 1: Agile Scrum Framework

The logistics companies can adopt the agile scrum framework in their processing as similar in Fig 1 as par to the scrum principles depicted in Fig 2.

Fig 2: Scrum Principles
(Source: Institute of Project Management)

Few processes of agile scrum approaches mainly applicable in the logistics industries:

Kanban Boards: Kanban boards are visualization tools that assure optimization of the work flow of the organization. They can be used to track shipments, inventory management and transportation schedules. With this visual tool, the prioritizing tasks, identifying bottlenecks and collaboration can be done effectively.

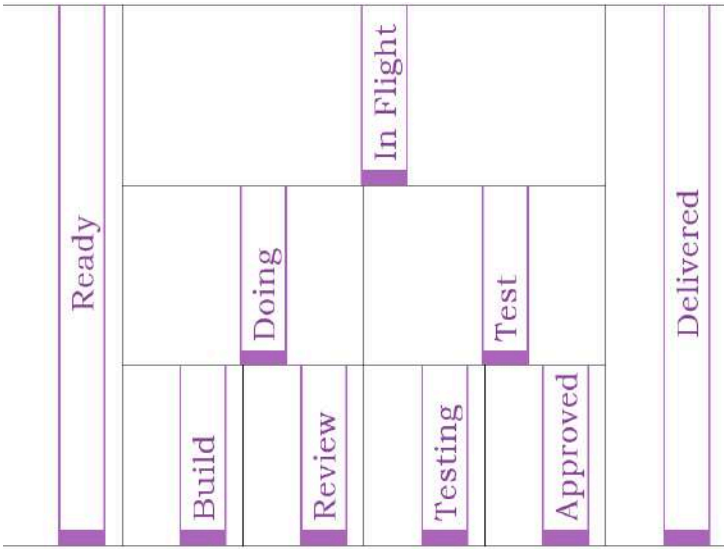


FIG 3: A FORMAT OF KANBAN BOARD VISUALIZING WORK FLOW

Daily Stand-up Meetings: Regular standup meetings can be held to discuss progress, issues and updates related to logistics operations to enhance the communication, alignment and accountability among team members.

Sprint Planning: Logistics companies can use sprint planning to break down large projects into smaller manageable tasks. This iterative approach allows teams to deliver work in shorter, time- boxed intervals, adapt to changing requirements and continuous improvement.

Backlog Grooming: Logistics managers can use backlog grooming sessions to review the most important time sensitive activities to be completed at first.

Retrospectives: After each sprint, teams can conduct retrospectives to reflect on what went well, what to be improved in the next iteration. This feedback loop promotes a culture of continuous learning and improvement within the logistics industries.

Cross-functional Teams: Logistics industries can form cross-functional teams consisting of members from various departments such as material management/warehouse, transportation, operations to enable the collaborative approach with diverse skills for better customer service.

Key areas of Logistics leveraging AS applications:

Inventory management: Agile Scrum can be used to manage inventory more effectively by providing real-time visibility of stock levels, tracking of shipments and forecasting demand. By using sprints to regulatory review and update inventory data, logistics industries can optimize their space availability for storage, reduce wastage and improve order fulfillment rates.

Warehouse Operations: Agile Scrum can be applied to improve warehouse management through sprints to continuously review and improve processes, logistics companies can increase throughput, minimize errors and enhance overall productivity in their warehouses.

Transportation Planning: Agile Scrum can help logistics companies optimize their transportation planning processes by enabling teams to collaborate more effectively and respond quickly to changing market conditions. By using sprints to prioritize tasks, allocate resources and track performance metrics, Industries can enhance their supply chain visibility, reduce costs and deliver goods to customers more efficiently.

Real world examples for AS methodologies adopted in logistics companies:DHL which is one of the leading logistics companies supply chain experienced challenges in its operations and decided to adopt agile scrum. DHL has been able to reduce lead times, optimize inventory levels and increase productivity especially in its package delivery operations, enhance optimization, reduce delivery times and improve customer service by meeting the customer expectations through the AS principles.

By adopting Agile Scrum practices logistics industries can more adaptable, responsive and efficient in managing their supply chains and meeting the needs of their customers. In addition, by leveraging AS practices in logistics operations, the companies can achieve greater agility & transparency.

AI FOR INVENTORY MANAGEMENT: BENEFITS AND APPLICATIONS

BY: SISIRA KALUARACHCHI, CMILT
GENERAL MANAGER – SUPPLY CHAIN |BRANDIX APPAREL SOLUTIONS

Introduction

Inventory management is the process of planning, organizing, and controlling the flow of goods and materials in a business. It involves balancing the supply and demand of products, minimizing costs, maximizing profits, and ensuring customer satisfaction. Inventory management is a crucial aspect of any business that deals with physical goods, such as retail, manufacturing, logistics, and e-commerce.

However, inventory management can also be a complex and challenging task, especially in today's dynamic and uncertain market conditions. Businesses have to deal with various factors that affect inventory levels, such as customer preferences, seasonal fluctuations, product lifecycles, quality issues, supplier reliability, and competitive pressures. Moreover, businesses have to deal with large amounts of data from multiple sources, such as sales, production, and inventory records, which can be difficult to process and analyze manually.

This is where artificial intelligence (AI) can play a significant role in improving inventory management practices.

AI is the branch of computer science that aims to create machines and systems that can perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as learning, reasoning, and decision making. AI can be applied to inventory management in several ways to enhance efficiency and accuracy, such as:

- Predicting future demand and supply using data-driven models and algorithms
- Optimizing inventory levels and controls using mathematical optimization and simulation techniques
- Automating inventory tasks and processes using robotics and computer vision
- Enhancing inventory visibility and traceability using sensors and blockchain technology

Predicting Future Demand and Supply

AI can help businesses to improve their demand and supply forecasting by using data-driven models and algorithms that can learn from historical and real-time data, identify patterns and trends, and generate predictions based on various scenarios and variables. For example, AI can use machine learning, a subset of AI that enables machines to learn from data and improve their performance, to analyze past sales, inventory, and customer data, and use it to train predictive models that can forecast future sales, inventory, and customer behavior.

AI can also use deep learning to analyze social media posts, online reviews, and customer feedback, and use it to gauge customer sentiment, preferences, and expectations, and incorporate them into demand and supply forecasting.

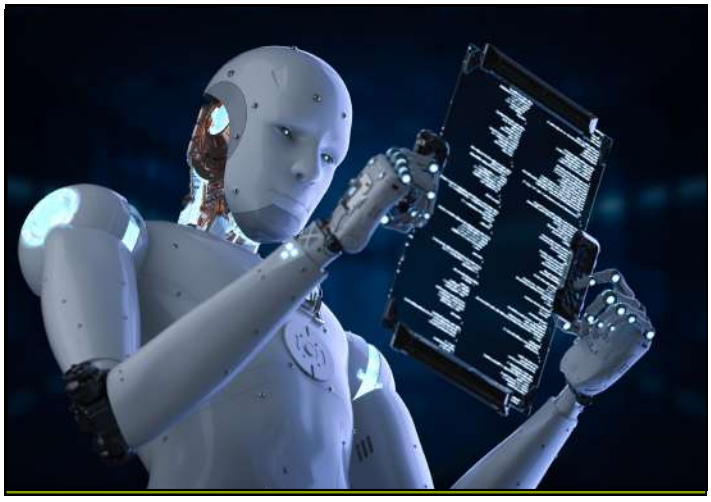
Optimizing Inventory Levels and Controls

Another challenge of inventory management is to optimize the inventory levels and controls, which can affect the profitability and performance of a business. Inventory levels refer to the amount of inventory that a business holds at any given time, which can be influenced by the demand and supply of products, the lead time and cost of procurement, and the storage and handling capacity and cost.

AI can help businesses to optimize their inventory levels and controls by using mathematical optimization and simulation techniques that can find the optimal or near-optimal solutions for complex and nonlinear inventory problems.

Automating Inventory Tasks and Processes

A third challenge of inventory management is to automate the inventory tasks and processes, which can be labor-intensive and error-prone, such as inventory counting, sorting, picking, packing, and shipping. Automating inventory tasks and processes can help businesses to improve inventory accuracy, productivity, and safety, and reduce inventory labor and error costs. AI can help businesses to automate their inventory tasks and processes by using robotics and computer vision, which are subsets of AI that enable machines to perform physical tasks and process visual information, respectively. For example, AI can use robotics to create robots that can move, manipulate, and interact with inventory items, such as inventory counting robots, inventory sorting robots, inventory picking robots, inventory packing robots, and inventory shipping robots. AI can also use computer vision to create systems that can recognize, identify, and track inventory items, such as inventory barcode scanners, inventory image classifiers, inventory object detectors, inventory face recognizers, and inventory RFID readers.



Enhancing Inventory Visibility and Traceability

A fourth challenge of inventory management is to enhance inventory visibility and traceability, which can be limited and unreliable, especially in complex and global supply chains. Inventory visibility refers to the ability to access and monitor the inventory information, such as the inventory location, status, and condition, at any point in the supply chain. Inventory traceability refers to the ability to track and verify the inventory history, such as the inventory origin, movement, and destination, at any point in the supply chain. Enhancing inventory visibility and traceability can help businesses to improve inventory security, quality, and compliance, and reduce inventory risk, loss, and fraud.

AI can help businesses to enhance their inventory visibility and traceability by using sensors and blockchain technology, which are subsets of AI that enable machines to collect and communicate data and create and maintain distributed and secure records, respectively. For example, AI can use sensors to create devices that can measure and transmit inventory data, such as inventory temperature sensors, inventory humidity sensors, inventory vibration sensors, and inventory GPS trackers. AI can also use blockchain technology to create platforms that can store and share inventory data, such as inventory smart contracts, inventory digital tokens, inventory distributed ledgers, and inventory decentralized applications.

Conclusion

Inventory management is a vital and challenging process for any business that deals with physical goods. AI can be applied to inventory management in several ways to improve efficiency and accuracy, such as predicting future demand and supply, optimizing inventory levels and controls, automating inventory tasks and processes, and enhancing inventory visibility and traceability. AI can help businesses to achieve various benefits, such as reducing inventory costs, increasing inventory profits, and ensuring inventory satisfaction. AI can also help businesses to overcome various challenges, such as dealing with inventory complexity, uncertainty, and variability.

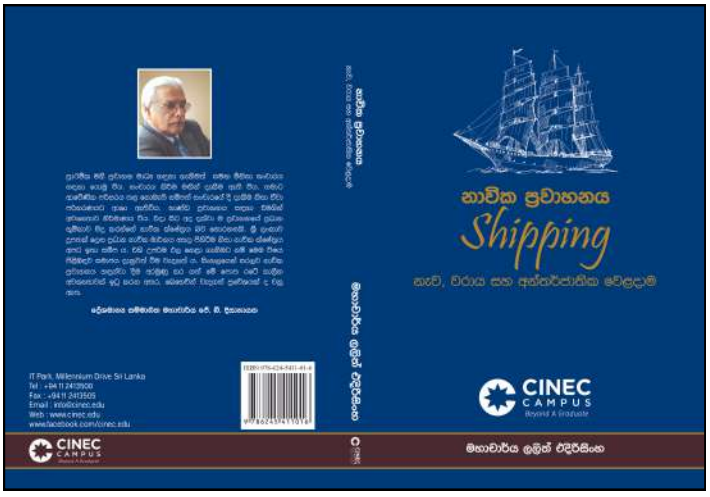
AI can be a powerful and valuable tool for inventory management, and can transform the way businesses manage their inventory in the present and future.

SHIPPING
(A SINHALA TEXT BOOK PUBLISHED FOR ISLAND WIDE STUDENTS FROM 2025)

CAPT. ROHITH FERNANDO , FCILT
MASTER MARINER (FOREIGN GOING)
MARINE CONSULTANT / MARINE SURVEYOR AND MARITIME LECTURERNS

The CINEC Campus in consultation with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Aviation of Sri Lanka has published a textbook in Sinhala titled “SHIPPING” for the benefit of young school-going students in the year 2025. The subject “Commercial Shipping and Maritime Science” though heard and known by children, a deep knowledge of the function of “Shipping” as a whole was not taught and known in detail before.

This new textbook has been authored by Chair Prof Lalith Edirisinghe, Chancellor, Management and Social Sciences of the CINEC Campus, Malabe. In 1981, Chair Prof Lalith started his career as a Deck Cadet Officer on one of the Ceylon Shipping Corporation Ships the m.v. Lanka Kalyani. After completing one sea voyage he decided to leave this career to do further studies in the field of Maritime. This academic education excelled his career to head the CINEC Maritime Campus as a leading Chancellor.



This book covers a vast introduction of various topics and organizations, International and local giving the young student a solid basic foundation on the subject of Shipping. The book initially gives an introduction to the evolution of Shipping as a transport mode and then covers various aspects of Maritime Education, the life at Sea of a Sailor, Transport and Supply Services rendered including the carriage of various types of transport, cargoes including General, Oil, Break Bulk, Frozen, automobiles etc. and the Business Mechanisms in Merchant Shipping. This book sums up a brief overlook of the International Organizations that control shipping worldwide and functions of various local port authorities such as the Customs, Immigration, Port Health and Port Security. Overall, these elaborations have very well explained the complicated nature of shipping in a simple manner. The author establishes the combined impact of economics and science in the shipping business very well.

A special commemorative postage stamp was also issued to mark the publication of this book Having concluded an enjoyable, successful and memorable life at sea, I must
say that I wish all future seafarers studying this book Ä Bon Voyage” and Calm Seas.

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF REVERSE LOGISTICS FOR THE BETTERMENT OF SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT OF AN ORGANIZATION AND THE COUNTRY'S SUSTAINABILITY.

RAJITH RANASINGHE
SENIOR MANAGER LOGISTICS - ALUMEX PLC (HAYLEYS GROUP)

Reverse logistics within an organization refers to the process of managing the flow of goods or materials from their final destination (usually consumers or end-users) back to the organization for purposes such as recycling, refurbishment, reuse, or disposal. It involves activities such as collection, sorting, transportation, and disposition of returned products or materials. Reverse logistics aims to optimize the value recaptured from returned items while minimizing costs and environmental impact. In the Sri Lankan context, reverse logistics initiatives encompass various materials and products, including:

Plastic Bottles : Many organizations in Sri Lanka implement reverse logistics systems for the collection and recycling of plastic bottles.

Consumers are encouraged to return used plastic bottles to designated collection points or recycling centers. These bottles are then sorted, cleaned, and processed for recycling into new products, reducing plastic waste and conserving resources.

Drinks Cans: Reverse logistics processes also extend to the collection and recycling of drinks cans in Sri Lanka. Consumers are incentivized to return empty cans to collection points or participate in recycling programs organized by beverage companies or local authorities. Collected cans are sorted, crushed, and recycled into new aluminum products, contributing to waste reduction and resource conservation efforts.

Iron and Aluminum Scrap Collection: Scrap metal, including iron and aluminum, is another focus of reverse logistics activities in Sri Lanka. Scrap metal collectors collect discarded metal items such as aluminum cut pieces, utensils, and construction materials. These collected scrap metal items are then sold to recycling facilities where they are processed and reused in various industries, reducing the demand for virgin materials and promoting circular economy principles.

Reverse logistics offers a multitude of benefits to both organizations and countries, including:

1. Cost Savings: Implementing reverse logistics processes allows organizations to recover value from returned or discarded products/materials. By refurbishing, recycling, or reselling returned items, organizations can reduce the costs associated with disposal and raw material acquisition, thus improving profitability.

2. Improved Customer Satisfaction: Effective reverse logistics practices enable organizations to offer hassle-free return and exchange policies, enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. By providing convenient return options and efficient handling of returns, organizations can maintain positive relationships with customers.

3. Enhanced Brand Reputation: Adopting sustainable reverse logistics practices enhances the reputation and credibility of organizations in the eyes of consumers and stakeholders. A commitment to environmental responsibility and circular economy principles can differentiate organizations from competitors and attract environmentally conscious consumers.

4. Waste Reduction: Effective reverse logistics systems contribute to the reduction of waste sent to landfills or incinerators, alleviating the burden on municipal waste management infrastructure. By diverting materials from disposal sites, reverse logistics helps mitigate environmental pollution and conserve natural resources.

5. Resource Conservation: Reverse logistics facilitates the recovery and reuse of materials, reducing the demand for virgin resources and minimizing environmental degradation associated with resource extraction. This conserves energy, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and promotes sustainable resource management practices.

6. Economic Growth: Reverse logistics initiatives create opportunities for job creation and economic development, particularly in sectors such as recycling, refurbishment, and waste management. By stimulating investment and innovation in circular economy solutions, reverse logistics contributes to economic resilience and long-term prosperity.

7. Regulatory Compliance: Implementing reverse logistics practices helps countries meet regulatory requirements related to waste management, recycling, and environmental protection. Compliance with waste diversion targets and recycling mandates fosters a culture of environmental responsibility and strengthens the legal framework for sustainable resource management.

In the global pursuit of sustainability, reverse logistics emerges as a critical component in the journey towards environmental stewardship. Reverse logistics, the process of managing the flow of goods in the opposite direction of the traditional supply chain holds immense potential to minimize waste, conserve resources, and mitigate environmental impact. Here, we delve into the multifaceted role of reverse logistics in promoting sustainability and fostering a circular economy mindset.

Reverse logistics processes catalyze waste reduction by facilitating the recovery and reuse of products and materials that would otherwise suffer in landfills or be destroyed. Through efficient collection, sorting, and processing, reverse logistics channels divert discarded items from disposal, thereby alleviating the environmental burden associated with waste management. By reintroducing recovered materials back into the production cycle, reverse logistics conserves raw materials, energy, and water, thus reducing the need for virgin resource extraction and mitigating the depletion of natural resources. The recycling and remanufacturing processes inherent in reverse logistics require substantially less energy compared to the extraction, processing, and manufacturing of virgin materials. By incorporating recycled materials into production, reverse logistics contributes to energy conservation and reduces greenhouse gas emissions associated with resource extraction and manufacturing activities. Through its comprehensive approach to waste management, reverse logistics plays a pivotal role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the product lifecycle. By minimizing the reliance on landfilling, incineration, and virgin material production, reverse logistics mitigates the environmental impact of waste management and manufacturing, thus contributing to global efforts to combat climate change.

At the heart of reverse logistics lies the promotion of circular economy principles, wherein resources are kept in use for as long as possible through reuse, recycling, and regeneration. By closing the loop on product lifecycles and encouraging the reuse and recycling of materials, reverse logistics fosters a sustainable and circular approach to resource management, paving the way for a more resilient and resource-efficient economy. By reducing waste generation, conserving resources, and minimizing pollution associated with waste disposal, reverse logistics actively contributes to the protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural habitats. By preventing the release of harmful substances into the environment, reverse logistics safeguards air, water, and soil quality, thereby promoting environmental health and sustainability on a global scale.

In today's dynamic business environment, the efficient management of reverse logistics has become increasingly important for organizations seeking to enhance sustainability, reduce costs, and improve customer satisfaction. However, the complexities of reverse logistics pose significant challenges that require innovative solutions and strategic approaches. This article examines the key challenges of reverse logistics and offers practical strategies for organizations to overcome these obstacles and achieve success.

Challenges of Reverse Logistics:

Complex Supply Chains: Reverse logistics involves managing the flow of goods in the opposite direction of traditional supply chains, resulting in increased complexity and operational challenges.

2. Quality and Quantity of Returns: Returned products vary in terms of quality, quantity, and condition, necessitating effective sorting, inspection, and decision-making processes.

3. Infrastructure and Technology: Inadequate infrastructure and technology can hinder the efficiency and scalability of reverse logistics operations.

Strategies for Success:

1. Invest in Technology and Infrastructure: Organizations can enhance efficiency and reliability by investing in advanced technology and infrastructure for reverse logistics.

2. Implement Reverse Logistics Strategies: Developing comprehensive strategies that address product recovery, refurbishment, recycling, and disposal is essential for success.

3. Educate and Engage Stakeholders: Educating and engaging stakeholders about the importance of reverse logistics fosters awareness and commitment.

Reverse logistics plays a pivotal role in sustainable resource management, particularly in the Sri Lankan context. By adopting effective reverse logistics practices, organizations can unlock value from returned goods, minimize waste generation, and contribute to environmental sustainability. Despite the challenges, proactive strategies and collaboration among stakeholders are essential for the successful implementation of reverse logistics initiatives, ultimately driving economic, environmental, and social benefits for the country.

FEED TWO BIRDS WITH ONE SCONE

MAKING HAPPY CUSTOMERS WHILE REDUCING THE ENVIRONMENT IMPACT VIA SHIFTING TO ELECTRIC SCOOTERS FROM MOTOR CYCLES ON LAST MILE DELIVERY IN FOOD DELIVERY.

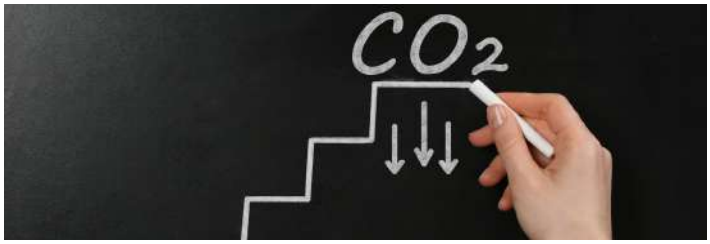
SURANGA CHAMARA WELAGEDARA
LSCM PROFESSIONAL

Have you ever thought that the field of logistics and transportation, which accounts for almost one-third of the world's carbon dioxide emissions? Not only you, 60% of logistician was not aware about it, till it was underlined by the Forbes in year 2023 (Rastogi, 2023).This means we as a Logistician there is mammoth responsibility lies on our shoulder to reduce cardon emission and meet sustainability while driving to our LSCM objectives. Consequently, how we going to do that? Let's dive deeper and see what are the available, most suitable machineries and methods considering Sri Lanaka's context to meet our needs.

Thanks to boost of E –Commerce, most of the business are moving out from the brick & mortar and shifting to B2C, which means more deliveries. The last mile delivery is playing a vital role to develop the business and some case it is the key to build the business or break it.However, the cost of last-mile delivery has risen to up to approx. 53% of overall shipping charges past literature has highlighted that the cost incurred for last mile delivery is worth as correct implementation of the last phases in the delivery process can enhance customer satisfaction and trust (Bloch, 2023). Furthermore, The World Economic Forum projects a 78% increase in demand in urban areas last-mile deliveries by 2030 (WEC, 2020) in the world.

In reviewing the Restaurant industry in Sri Lanka, Statisa (Global data and business intelligence platform) has highlighted that "The Restaurant Delivery market in Sri Lanka is expected to generate a revenue of US$28.69m in 2024 (Statista, 2024)". The rise of online meal delivery platforms is one of the major developments in the Sri Lankan restaurant delivery business. Customers may now more easily explore menus, make orders, and follow real-time delivery tracking thanks to these platforms. Because of this, a lot of conventional eateries have teamed up with these platforms in an effort to broaden their clientele.

According to Department of Motor Traffic under MOTH as published (MOTH, 2024) there are more than 4.8 million motor cycles in year 2022.If we assumed 20% out of it into food delivery (including all type of Hotels and Restaurants'), there will be around 1 million motor cycles roaming in Sri Lanka, 24 hours x 7 days to meet the customer demand. Though there are technologies like Drones and different type of autonomous vehicle available in the world to enhance the efficiency of the delivery, we as a country not yet reached up to particular level, due to lack of financial, technology (AI and robotic knowledge), infrastructure, geographical or social behavior. Nevertheless, we can use somewhat of the technology and with limited financial strength to kick off, to optimize the last mile delivery while accomplishing sustainable goals and satisfied customers. Which already in practice in developed countries.



Just imaging, if we replace 1.0 million motor cycles to ecofriendly solution, like Electric Scooters. Where an average electric scooter want to charge 1 to 3 hours and once it's fully charged it can go up to 60 km 64 km and in an avg motor cycle can go up to 60 km per liter in city areas. Once you shifted to electric scooters, by very next day onwards you will gain benefits. As an organization you have cut down fuel cost totally while reducing the other overhead costs such as motor cycles maintenance, Administration (driving license, vehicle insurance and registrations) plus the investment will be less compared to motor cycle.

After analyzing where the deliveries getting delay, most of the time its due to finding parking space in high populated urban areas. By using electric scooter you don't want to worry much about your where your ridders going to park or are they blocked the parking space of your customers. Not only that you can provide your customer real-time information (Departure time, route, estimated arrival time, Ridder details) and the most important gain is that you have reduce the delivery time compared to your competitors. With the change of electric scooters, your ridder's appearance will be more pleasant and improve, as they don't want to wait in traffic or not required to ride more than 3 km one way. Also, there will be very less traffic accident or incidents compared to motor cycles. By doing so you have reduce your risk and increased your employees' well-being.

Take a look on the impact your organization given to the society. You are no longer adding carbon dioxide to environment via your distribution, since you have shifted to electric scooter how many motor cycles your organization has removed from the road creating space to other vehicles. A joint McKinsey and NielsenIQ study express that "consumer's care about buying environmentally and ethically sustainable products" (McKindsey & Company, 2023). These will add value and reputation to your brand, ultimately it will become your competitive advantage to grow your business.

In contrast, Last Mile Delivery might cost you considerable amount of your shipping cost, however there is plenty of ways and means to optimize the cost by using most suitable delivery methods such as Electric Scooters. **Food delivery through electric scooters are commonly used by "Uber eats" in America and European continents**. Especially in growing food delivery service in Sri Lanaka, shifting to electric scooters helps to meet 3Ps (Planet, Profit and People) in your business and you will create a brand value as one of the organization has taken an action towards suitability.

FIGURE 1 - UBER EATS (DELIVERY VIA ELECTRIC SCOOTER) (BOWDEN, 2022)

WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN THE TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS INDUSTRY: LESSONS FROM CANADA TO SRI LANKA

ANJU ILANGASEKARA (LECTURER - PROBATIONARY AT KDU)
& SABEEN SHARIC (SENIOR LECTURER AT KDU)

In today's fast-paced world, the importance of work-life balance has become a significant topic of discussion, especially in demanding industries such as transport and logistics. This article draws upon a real-life incident involving a Sri Lankan colleague residing and working in Canada. It highlights the stark differences in work-life balance policies between Canada, a developed nation, and Sri Lanka, a developing country. By examining this incident and its implications, we can explore the advantages and disadvantages of such policies and discuss the potential lessons for Sri Lanka's transport and logistics sector.

Our colleague, a dedicated professional in Canada's transport and logistics industry, experienced an eye-opening situation that underscores the importance of work-life balance. Employed by a company with standard work hours from 8 AM to 5 PM, he once sent an email after 5 PM regarding a non-urgent official matter. The next day, his supervisor noticed this and inquired about it, reminding him of the company's strict policy against working beyond designated hours. The supervisor emphasized that this policy was not only a company mandate but also reflected the broader cultural and regulatory stance in Canada, aiming to ensure employees maintain a healthy work-life balance.

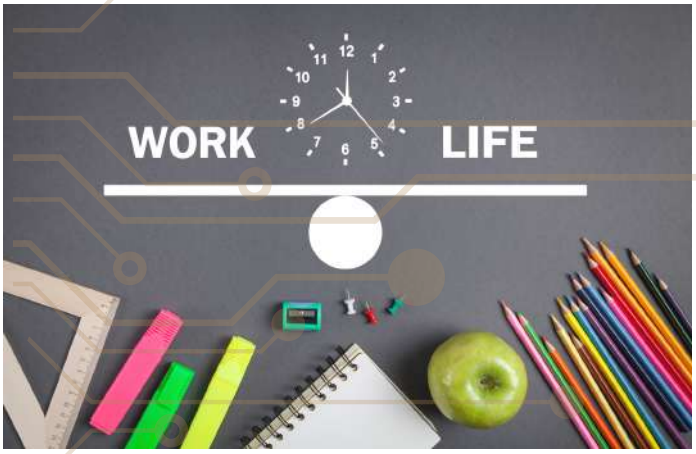
This incident exemplifies Canada's progressive approach to work-life balance, which is deeply ingrained in both corporate practices and national labor policies.

It raises pertinent questions about how such a model could be applied in Sri Lanka, particularly in the transport and logistics industry, where work often extends beyond typical office hours.

In Sri Lanka, the transport and logistics sector is characterized by its round-the-clock nature, driven by the need for continuous operations and immediate responses to logistical challenges. Employees often find themselves working extended hours, leading to a blurred line between personal and professional life. This lack of work-life balance can result in burnout, decreased productivity, and a negative impact on mental and physical health. Several factors contribute to this scenario: There is a cultural acceptance of extended work hours, often seen as a sign of dedication and hard work. Economic pressures drive companies to maximize productivity, often at the expense of employees' personal time. Additionally, the regulatory environment lacks stringent regulations enforcing work-life balance, allowing companies to set demanding work schedules without significant oversight.

Implementing policies similar to those in Canada could offer numerous benefits for Sri Lanka's transport and logistics industry. Ensuring that employees have adequate time to rest and recharge can lead to better mental and physical health, reducing absenteeism and healthcare costs. Well-rested employees are more focused and efficient. Studies have shown that a balanced work-life approach can lead to higher productivity levels.

Employees who feel their personal time is respected are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, leading to higher retention rates. Companies known for good work-life balance practices can attract top talent and improve their reputation both locally and internationally.



However, adopting such policies is not without its challenges in a developing country like Sri Lanka. Businesses might be concerned about the potential short-term loss in productivity and increased labor costs associated with hiring additional staff to cover extended hours. The transport and logistics industry inherently requires flexibility and responsiveness, which can be difficult to manage within strict work-hour policies. Changing the deep-rooted cultural expectations around work can be slow and met with resistance from both employers and employees.

The link between work-life balance and socio-economic development is significant. Countries with strong work-life balance policies often enjoy higher levels of employee engagement and productivity, which in turn drive economic growth. For Sri Lanka, improving work-life balance could lead to a more motivated and efficient workforce, fostering innovation and economic resilience.

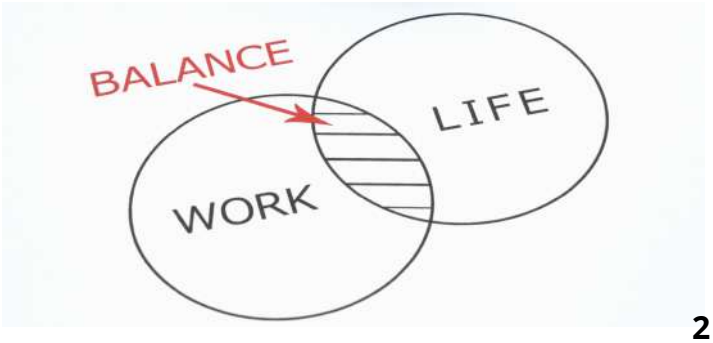
While it is challenging to ascertain whether such policies existed during Canada's development phase, it is likely that the focus on work-life balance evolved as part of broader labor reforms accompanying economic growth. Initially, like many developing nations, Canada may have prioritized economic output over employee welfare.

However, as the country advanced, the emphasis gradually shifted towards sustainable work practices, recognizing that long-term productivity and employee satisfaction are interconnected.

Drawing lessons from Canada, Sri Lanka can consider several steps to improve work-life balance in its transport and logistics industry. Implementing and enforcing labor laws that limit working hours and promote flexible working arrangements is a crucial first step. Encouraging companies to prioritize employee well-being through internal policies and incentives can foster a culture shift. Raising public awareness about the importance of work-life balance and its benefits for individuals and the economy is also essential. Developing support systems, such as employee assistance programs and wellness initiatives, can help employees manage stress and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

The incident involving our colleague in Canada highlights a stark contrast between work-life balance policies in developed and developing countries. For Sri Lanka's transport and logistics industry, adopting similar policies could lead to significant benefits, including improved employee well-being, increased productivity, and enhanced job satisfaction. However, it also presents challenges that need to be carefully managed through strategic policy development and cultural shifts.

By learning from Canada's experience, Sri Lanka can work towards creating a more balanced and productive workforce, ultimately contributing to the nation's socio-economic development. As the industry continues to evolve, embracing work-life balance will be crucial in building a sustainable and resilient future for Sri Lanka's transport and logistics sector.



HOW GENERATIVE AI WILL IMPACT DEMAND PLANNING AND S&OP IN THE FMCG SECTOR IN SRI LANKA

SAHAN L. KURUPPU
DEMAND PLANNER - UNILEVER SRI LANKA

Introduction

Generative AI, powered by machine learning and advanced analytics, has the potential to revolutionize demand planning and S&OP processes. The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies has begun to revolutionize various sectors, including fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and the food industry. In developing countries, where market volatility and supply chain inefficiencies are prevalent, the integration of generative AI into demand planning and Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP) can be a game-changer. This article explores the potential impacts of generative AI on these critical functions, providing industry-specific insights and real-world examples from developing nations.

The Role of Generative AI in Demand Planning

Demand planning is the process of forecasting future customer demand to ensure that products can be delivered to meet that demand. In developing countries, this process is often challenged by inaccurate data, unpredictable market conditions, and logistical hurdles not only limited to developing nations in that sense to be precise. Generative AI can address these issues by, enhanced Data Analysis. Generative AI can process vast amounts of data from various sources, including social media, market trends, and historical sales data, to generate accurate demand forecasts. For instance, a food retailer in the country could use generative AI to analyze seasonal trends and consumer preferences, improving inventory management and reducing waste.

Improved Forecast Accuracy: Traditional forecasting methods often rely on historical data and simple statistical models. Generative AI, on the other hand, can create complex models that account for a wide range of variables and their interdependencies by analyzing extensive historical data to discern patterns and correlations that were previously elusive. This leads to more accurate predictions of future demand. Also, by identifying key drivers such as seasonal trends and emerging market shifts, companies can anticipate demand fluctuations with greater accuracy by analyzing data beyond traditional technical barriers & minimizing the risk of inventory imbalances. An example is Nestlé Nigeria, which could leverage AI to predict demand for its Maggi seasoning cubes more precisely, ensuring better stock levels and customer satisfaction.

These efforts can be powered by machine learning methods enhanced by random forest, decision tree etc.

- **Real-Time Adjustments:** Generative AI can continuously monitor real-time data and adjust forecasts accordingly. This dynamic approach is particularly beneficial in volatile markets. For example, a beverage company in Brazil could use AI to adjust its demand forecasts during major events like Carnival, ensuring optimal product availability. The back-end network of Meta (Also known as Facebook)- TensorFlow is a real game changer in this arena, which is open-source playground for the designers. In any good demand planning process, human touch improvement is a necessity and inevitable part. This might be reasoned due to various factors such as business management need to achieve committed sales targets, data inadequate or too intermittent to build any commendable forecasting model or an innovative product launch with no historical data etc. Sometimes these types of human interventions can also be replaced not by typical time series demand forecasting but a trained/ supervised machine learning algorithm which learns from similar kind of touch processes conducted by planners for a certain period.

- **Execution of postponement and regional forecasting:** In demand planning, it is evident that more you plan holistic (for whole Sri Lanka rather than for Colombo) , longer horizon (for next 3 months rather than next month) for larger time period (monthly rather than weekly); your forecast accuracy is higher. But with greater extent of data availability and machine learning methods you can try to implement aforementioned granularities without worrying on the FA (forecast accuracy). It ultimately makes your company more consumer centric with the level of closeness of the data to the end consumer you plan which is also called as postponement of the supply chain.

Integrating generative AI into S&OP processes in developing countries can offer several advantages:

- **Integrated Decision-Making:** Generative AI can provide a unified platform for analyzing sales data, production capabilities, and supply chain constraints. This integration facilitates better decision-making and coordination between departments. For instance, a dairy company in Kenya could use AI to align its milk production with market demand, reducing surplus and shortages. In here, cross functional robust engagement is key. Fast communications between sales, marketing, brands and supply chain will eventually hold the key to success in utilizing the available resources in the best possible manner.

- **Real-Time Decision Making:** Traditional S&OP processes often lack real-time decision-making capabilities. Generative AI enables autonomous planning, where changes in demand are automatically factored into all supply chain processes, from inventory management to production scheduling. An example would be a snack manufacturer in Brazil uses generative AI to adjust production schedules dynamically based on real-time sales data. This agility allows them to respond swiftly to unexpected spikes in demand during special events or promotions. This really helps any supply chain to be agile and more responsive to customer voice.

So in conclusion, Generative AI has the potential to transform demand planning and S&OP in the FMCG and food sectors of developing countries such as Sri Lanka. By enhancing data analysis, improving forecast accuracy, enabling real-time adjustments, and fostering integrated decision-making, AI can help companies navigate market complexities. However, realizing these benefits requires addressing infrastructure, skill development and shift in mindset. With the right investments and policies, developing countries can harness the power of generative AI to drive growth and efficiency in their FMCG and food industries.

"ADVANCING CILT SRI LANKA'S MISSION"

AN INTERVIEW WITH VICE PRESIDENT-BRANDING & GROWTH CILT SRI LANKA MS. GAYATHRI KARUNANAYAKE, CMILT

As the Vice President of CILT Sri Lanka, how have you contributed to advancing the goals and mission of the institute? Can you share any specific initiatives or projects that you are particularly proud of?

My journey with CILT Sri Lanka started when I joined as a founding member for Women in Logistics and Transport (WiLAT) Sri Lanka in 2013. Gayani de Alwis was the one who inspired me to get the membership and contribute to various events and projects of CILT Sri Lanka. and also, when Gayani proposed me as the founding treasurer of WiLAT my passion towards actively engaging in all WiLAT and CILT events started blossoming. In 2019 during the Covid-19 pandemic, I was heading WiLAT as a chairperson and got more opportunities to work with CILT SL as a Council member.

The most challenging thing that I observed throughout the years with CILT SL, is the difficulty to penetrate into all the industry vertices as an impactful institution. Even though the majority of the professionals from Maritime and Aviation industries have joined CILT SL, the participation of the professionals in road transportation, rail transportation and overall supply chain sectors are comparatively low. As one remedy to this, we decided to revamp the "Logistics Awards concept" to "Supply Chain Excellence Awards" to draw the attention of the majority Supply chain Professionals. We are planning to do this biannually in the coming years with an advance plan to capture all the industry vertices. That is one of the groundbreaking initiatives that we were able to achieve. Since logistics is a part of the supply chain management, it is actually required to get more professionals into CILT SL. In terms of branding, growth and penetration intro many industry levels, we are focusing on awareness sessions, research symposiums, training and development and other interactive sessions to increase the engagement of members and other professionals in the industry.

You are currently heading the autism awareness project under WiLAT. What inspired you to take on this initiative, and what impact do you hope to achieve?

I do consider this a huge privilege to get the opportunity of driving this initiative while interacting with WiLAT global and other global institutions. That is something that i consider as a privilege in my journey with CILT and WiLAT. The WiLAT team in Hong Kong which was the driving force of WiLAT global back in the days gave me the encouragements to actively participate in WiLAT and CILT globally. After my tenure as the Global Vice Chair, I got the opportunity to drive this DEI project globally. "Project Autism". Through research and many other sources, we could find out that there is a huge challenge for the individuals to get a job in the market. This when taken as a percentage is massive in Asian countries, whereas it is comparatively low in America and European countries.That is because some employers are not well aware of how to help those individuals and even some employees are not really aware of coping up with an autistic person.

Therefore, we wanted to execute this project in three stages. Where awareness is created among employers, employees and peer community, then arranging fruitful sessions to develop their professional skills and finally to build a community which is ready to support these people in any situation. In my personal experience, we have seen how people with autism work really good when they are focusing on a single task. And in this manner, when they can be trained really well to follow the SOPs, and they even help out others to follow SOPs. We have achieved great progress in this project. We have signed up on a Beta Platform called "Yongo Me" application, where it allows us to create contents, build communities, share the latest updates, news, ideas as well as educational materials among a community with similar interests. The Global Vice Chairs and the Chairpersons of respective countries are working really hard to take this initiative to the next level.

With your extensive experience in the industry, what do you see as the most significant trends shaping the future of logistics and transport in Sri Lanka and globally?

In my view, the future of logistics and transport is being shaped by several key trends. While digital transformation is often highlighted, I believe the primary focus should be on improving underlying processes to make digital tools truly effective. Key trends include an emphasis on cost management, reducing carbon footprints, ensuring compliance, enhancing customer service, and fostering collaboration. Among these, collaboration is particularly noteworthy. Companies are increasingly working together, leveraging each others strengths to achieve better outcomes. For instance, logistics and manufacturing companies might collaborate to streamline distribution, thereby reducing costs and improving efficiency. The goal is to enhance market competitiveness by optimizing processes and partnerships rather than competing internally. In Sri Lanka, and globally, there is a growing trend towards collaboration. Companies have realized that to stay competitive, they need to work together, leveraging each others expertise. This is especially important in a market where consumers are looking for quality products delivered efficiently. Sustainability is another significant trend. Companies are adopting greener practices to reduce their environmental impact. This not only helps with compliance but also appeals to consumers who are becoming more and more environmentally conscious.

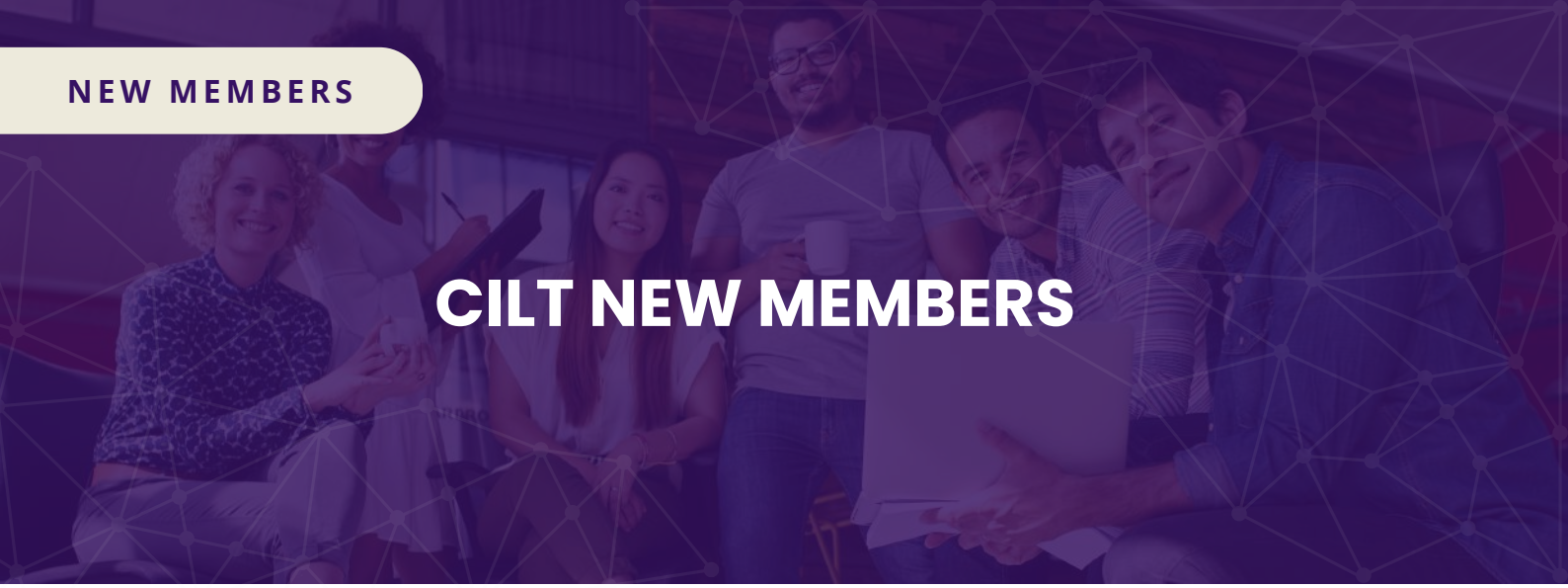
We would like to know how do you manage to maintain a work life balance as a successful professional juggling multiple roles, including being a consultant and a leader in various organizations, and what advice would you give to others striving to do the same?

Balancing work and life while juggling multiple roles is challenging but achievable with the right approach. For me, it comes down to delegation, empowerment, and planning. As a mother, managing family responsibilities is tough, but I rely on my support system, including my husband, parents, and helpers. Delegating tasks at home ensures that my family is taken care of, allowing me to focus on work when needed.

At work, I focus on empowering my team. Training and mentoring them to take on responsibilities confidently ensures that the organization runs smoothly even when I'm not there. This approach not only lightens my workload but also builds a strong, capable team.

Planning is crucial. We should meticulously plan schedules, often weeks or months in advance, to ensure that we can balance both professional and personal commitments. This helps avoid last-minute stress and ensures that everything runs smoothly. My advice to others is to build a strong support network and delegate tasks whenever possible. Empower your team to take on responsibilities and plan your time meticulously. Prioritize the most important tasks and set clear boundaries between work and personal life.

Finally, always strive to make a positive impact on those around you. Whether at work or at home, leaving a lasting positive impression can enhance your overall satisfaction and balance.



CILT NEW MEMBERS

CMILT

Name	Designation
G. W. W. Sujeewa Lasantha Pieris	Delivery Operations Manager
Wasantha Rajapakshe	Senior Manager (Shipping & Logistic)
E. M. Suresh Kaushallya Ekanayake	Logistics - Spare Part Manager
Thilina Liyanaarachchi	Engineer
S. D. Kalubowila	Commissioned Officer
Salpity Koralalage Harshani Priyangika	Superintendent (Operations)

MILT

Name	Designation
M H B R S B Mahagedara	Senior Executive Officer
L W P K De Alwis	Manager
Thiruni Karunarathna	Director - Business Support
A. A. Senith Avishka Perera	Procurement Specialist
D. T. P. C. Mendis	Senior Executie
M. G. N. Mediwatta	Administrative Officer
A.R. Sadun Shanaka Gunarathne	Assistant Manager
W. A. D. Rashmi Wathsala	Junior Executive Operations
Devaprasath Dilakshan Ramasamy	Supply chain Manager
P. L. Sanjeewa Thushara Priyankara	Transport System Analysts
Kushan Sachindra Gedarawaththa	Warehouse Manager
Thambiliya Godagamage Hasini Chamindi	Business Analyst
Gnei Rishna Preena	Assistant Manager - Sales
Weerathunga Mudiyanselage Arosha Dilshani Weerathunga	Lecturer (Probationary)
Heenatigala Kankanamge Mihika Dedunu	Superintendent (Enquiries)
Anvita Salila Nalheer	Superintendent (Operations)
Kalanther Mohamed Irooff	Project/ Development/ Investigation Officer
Meerasahibu Abdul Manaff	Project/ Development/ Investigation Officer

Graduate

Name	Designation
W.A.D.Perera	Work Assistant (Logistics Division)

CILT EVENTS PLAN 2024
UPCOMING EVENTS

JUL

- NATIONAL TRANSPORT COMMISSION - JULY
- CILT SL NG QUIZ MASTER

AUG

- JOHN DIANDAS' MEMORIAL LECTURE CILT
- SL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE - NATIONAL TRANSPORT COMISSION
- MENTORING INAUGURATION CEREMONY 2024

SEP

- MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2
- WORLD MARITIME DAY 26TH SEPT 2024 – COLLABORATIVE EVENT WITH ICS

OCT

- SHORT COURSE ON DATA SCIENCE
- MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 3
- IGNITE 9 INAUGURATION CEREMONY
- INETRNATIONAL CONNFERENCE LOCAL CILT SL

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