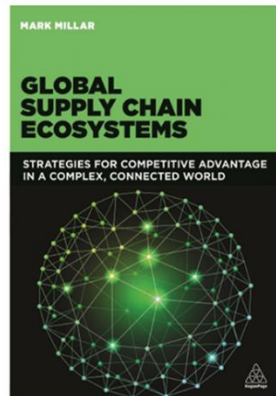


# Global Supply Chain Ecosystems

- *strategies for competitive advantage in a complex, connected world*  
by Mark Millar

***The essential guide to global supply chain success...***



## Global Supply Chain Ecosystems - contents

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In his widely acclaimed book [Global Supply Chain Ecosystems](#), internationally respected industry thought-leader and renowned keynote speaker [Mark Millar](#) vividly spells out the myriad of supply chain challenges and opportunities facing today's international executives.

As indicated in the book's subtitle "***strategies for competitive advantage in a complex, connected world***", no enterprise is immune from the fiercely competitive international market in which success - in some cases even survival - depends on a company's ability to deal with the supply chain challenges presented by a new and fast-changing world economic order.

Commissioned by leading business publisher Kogan Page of London, [Global Supply Chain Ecosystems](#) is essential reading for all executives, managers, practitioners and students involved in logistics, supply chain management and international trade.

In addition, business managers in Marketing, Sales, Manufacturing, Financial, Legal and Administration functions will discover a wealth of valuable information that demonstrates how supply chain functions and activities can and will impact their individual areas of responsibility.

Like the author, the style of the book adopts a real-life, down-to-earth approach with thoughtful consideration of the contemporary supply chain issues facing

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today's international business leaders - including practical examples from Europe, US, China and Asia.

Truly international with in-depth coverage, Global Supply Chain Ecosystems incorporates statistics, quotes and comments from bodies and corporations as varied as Accenture, MIT's Centre for Transportation Logistics, the OECD, World Bank, the Financial Times, Cranfield Business School, Aberdeen Group, World Trade Organisation, Harvard Business School, WPP, Transport Intelligence and the New York Times.

Written in an easy-to-read and engaging style with a refreshing lack of jargon, the 288 page book comprises twelve chapters that address the most pressing topics and latest industry developments facing every manager involved in international trade.

### **Complex ecosystems with profound interdependencies**

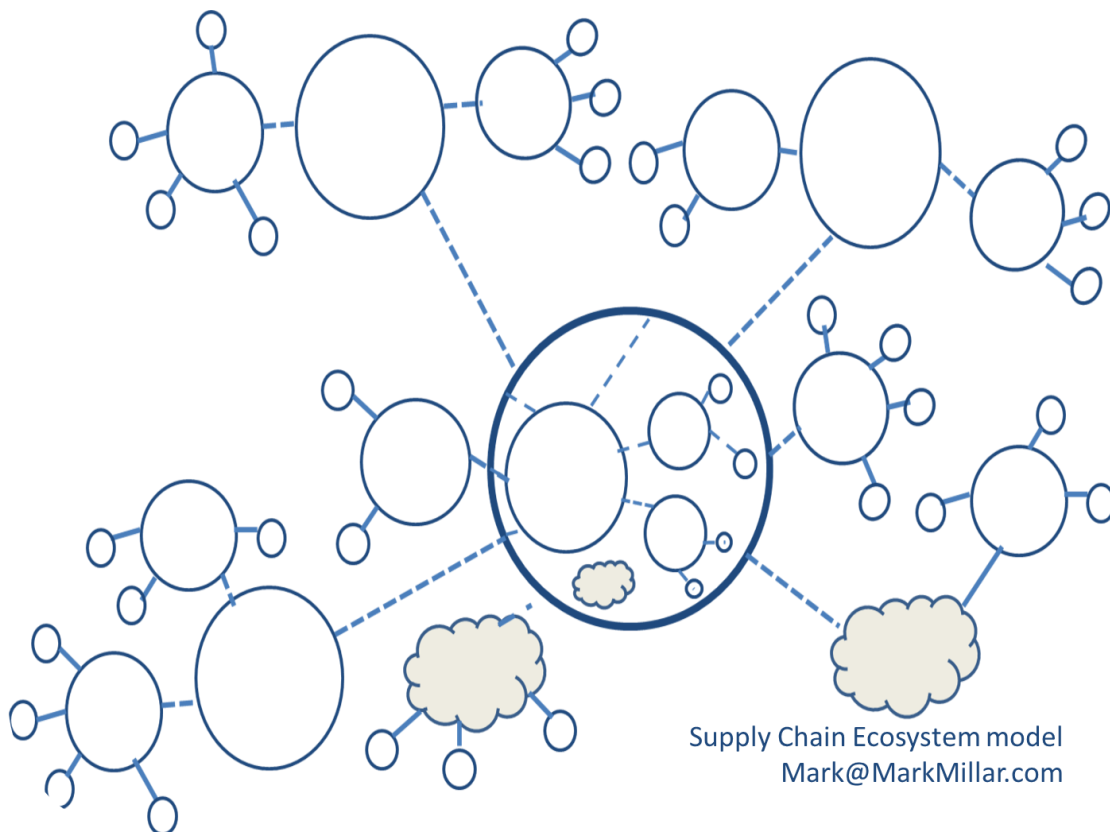
Twenty-first-century supply chains have evolved into world-wide inter-connected supply-and-demand networks with profound interdependencies - comprising vastly more complex operations and with greater exposure to the vulnerabilities of our uncertain world. Today's supply chains have to continually evolve and adapt to the highly competitive, super-connected, fast-changing and increasingly volatile global environment, which has become progressively more difficult to predict.

This is leading to greater use of collaborative partnerships, frequently involving outsourcing and off-shoring, creating elongated networks of organisations comprising multiple stakeholders, which require more sophisticated management, control and communication than ever before. Consequently modern supply chains have become complex, multi-layered and inter-connected distribution systems that enable companies and countries to trade more effectively and efficiently.

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The linear concept of a chain is therefore no longer adequate to describe these complex international networks of suppliers, stakeholders, partners, regulators and customers – together collaborating to ensure the efficient and effective movement of products, services, information and funds around the world. **We are now firmly in the era of Global Supply Chain Ecosystems.**



### Why Visibility matters

While armies are reputed to march on their stomachs, successful businesses are dependent on quality information – and for today’s managers that means making sense of the masses of data to connect the right dots and provide visibility into every aspect and stage of the supply chain process. Visibility empowers business agility – enabling the business to build and manage more cost effective, customer focused and environmentally responsible supply chains. The book examines in some detail various means through which to develop and deploy effective supply chain

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visibility strategies, taking advantage of the latest IT systems, equipment and technologies, and deliberates on how to avoid being swamped by data whilst starving for information.

### **Going green**

Acknowledging the topic that is rising up every corporate agenda – the environment – Mark explores the why, what and how of green supply chains. Global supply chains consume massive amounts of fossil fuels, in turn contributing to climate change and global warming, but for the same reason companies stand to make significant commercial gains by pursuing green supply chain strategies. Less fuel used means lower costs, as well as demonstrating to governments and partners that the industry takes its environmental responsibilities seriously. There is even evidence that a positive environmental performance can boost share prices.

### **Risk management**

International trade has always carried some form of risk, but the sheer complexity and scope of today's global supply chains, operating in a fast-changing and unpredictable world, means companies need more than ever to place risk management high on the agenda. The chapter on risk explores how the trend towards lean supply chains with minimum inventory holdings - in the context of a more volatile macro environment - has introduced increased levels of vulnerability. Companies now face a smorgasbord of potential supply chain disruptions, including inventory shortages resulting in halted production lines or out-of-stock situations, not to mention the effects of supplier failures or delays, strikes, IT system outages, theft, counterfeiting or even volcanic eruptions. Taking the reader through the various types of risk and how to mitigate their effects, the book provides sound and

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practical guidance on how to build a resilient supply chain ecosystem built on a four pillar framework embracing Visibility, Flexibility, Speed and Collaboration.

### **WTO, FTAs and others**

Amongst the proliferation of bilateral and multi-lateral preferential trade agreements, Mark provides a balanced perspective on the role of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and how Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and other trade facilitation measures taken by international bodies help to stimulate international trade. There is no doubt that despite some strong criticism, the WTO has contributed to the enormous increase in international trade during the past thirty years. The chapter on free trade agreements provides readers with valuable guidance on taking advantage of the 300 or more FTAs now in force, offering lower tariffs and preferential terms to those who take the time to understand the way in which the relevant FTAs are applicable for their business.

### **Who or where next?**

Supply chain ecosystems inevitably operate within an international framework that evolves across the global political and economic environment, whereby macro-level developments can lead to seismic geographical shifts in markets and trade flows. The shift in recent decades of manufacturing to China - and how that has fuelled its growing economic power on the global stage - is the most outstanding example of what can happen. In the book, Mark looks in detail at three significant geo-political dimensions that will at some stage, impact every global supply chain ecosystem:

- **The Asian Era** – low cost production fuels high growth consumption. The staggering rise of China as a world economic power is clear to every business executive. Not just manufacturing, but the whole economic centre of gravity has shifted eastwards, with the resulting domestic prosperity empowering the

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workers to become the shoppers. As well as being the centre of low cost country sourcing and therefore major exporters, the emerging and developing economies across Asia are massive consumer markets experiencing exponential growth.

However, wages are rising fast in China which will impact production costs for exported goods, whilst also creating purchasing capacity and domestic demand for more imports of western products. So how will this affect the supply chain ecosystems of importers and exporters?

- **The Silk Road** - once the trading artery of much of what was then the developed world, the Silk Road linking China through the Middle East and beyond to European markets is now being revived for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The New Silk Road Forum has been established to encourage investment and development that will revive the old silk route. This could profoundly affect the new - and still in some cases unstable - economies across central Asia and the Middle East, whilst also impacting the well-established maritime containerised-freight routes from leading Asian ports into the European markets.
- **Who if anyone can follow China?** The book speculates on which countries and economies could next emerge to play a major role in the global economy. Could the relatively smaller but rapidly developing economies in ASEAN such as Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines - or even Myanmar - become the stars of tomorrow? Or can the vast population of India make its great leap forward? What of sub Saharan Africa – is it the next Asia, abundantly rich in minerals, manpower and land, but still subject in so many places to political instability, abject poverty and lack of education?

In all these cases, economic growth totally depends on having productive, efficient, effective and cohesive supply chains, which in turn depends on the expertise and

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resourcefulness of those building and operating local, national, regional, or even global, supply chain ecosystems.

### **Retail Revolution – Digital Consumers and Omni-channel supply chains**

No publication about supply chain management can fail to consider the digital revolution that has enabled shoppers to turn the world into their own personal high street - using their PC, laptop, iPad, smart phone or mobile to purchase online almost any product 24/7/365. The emergence of this vast new way of shopping has wrought – and continues to make – fundamental changes to the way in which large parts of the supply chain operate. Innovative methods for addressing last mile delivery challenges, processing single item orders and piece picks, managing returns and serving a highly demanding customer base of digital natives are just some of the challenges that the book explores in order to help supply chain managers make better informed business decisions.

### **The talent pool**

One of the biggest challenges the supply chain sector faces world-wide is getting the right people in the right jobs. With an ageing workforce in the west, seemingly more attractive careers in the east and patchy education levels across many emerging markets, the book looks at strategies and tactics that will help employers find, attract and retain the right quantity and quality of staff they need to successfully manage supply chains in an increasingly sophisticated, challenging and connected environment.

### **Change is the only constant**

As to the future, Mark reviews several innovations that will influence and impact the supply chains of the future across multiple dimensions - technical, conceptual and commercially creative - and considers how the industry can adapt and take

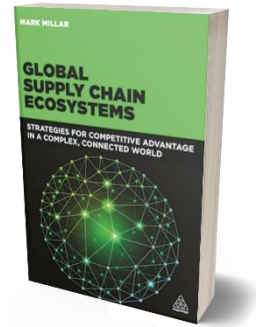


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advantage of whatever opportunities - and challenges - the coming years may present.

Supply Chain Management has become an essential topic across all spheres of management and a strategic agenda item in every boardroom.



[Global Supply Chain Ecosystems](#) provides the practical knowledge and educated insights you need to succeed in today's complex, connected world - ***Informed is Empowered!***

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## About the author

[Mark Millar](#) is an internationally known industry expert who leverages over 30 years of global business experience to deliver practical knowledge and educated insights that help companies navigate the complex landscapes in Asia and improve the efficiency of their supply chain

ecosystems. [www.markmillar.com](http://www.markmillar.com)



Acknowledged as an engaging presenter who delivers a memorable impact, Mark has engaged and enlightened audiences at more than 500 corporate events, client functions and industry conferences, across 30 countries.

A Visiting Lecturer at Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Mark is recognised in the ***China Supply Chain Top 20***; as one of ***Asia's Top 50 Influencers in Supply Chain and Logistics***; and seven times in the annual USA listing of ***Top Pros-to-Know in Supply Chain***.

[Global Supply Chain Ecosystems - strategies for competitive advantage in a complex, connected world](#) - author [Mark Millar](#) - commissioned and published by [Kogan Page of London](#).