



Trends & Insights Report: Innovation

Report Introduction

Innovation is a business imperative right now. Though the term may immediately bring up thoughts of AI and robots, innovation goes far beyond what's in the headlines.

Innovation touches every aspect of an organization, spanning finance, IT, product, sales, marketing, and much more. Innovation is integral for supply chain-based companies to gain market share, diversify their offerings, create resilience, win customer loyalty, improve brand recognition, and boost profitability.

However, many challenges stand in the way, from supply chain disruption to employee resistance, ineffective strategy, consumer demands, and talent shortages. In this report, we explore current drivers of innovation, what our team is seeing throughout the industry, and keys to achieving innovation success.





SECTION 1

Innovation Overview and Trends

Innovation is especially crucial for today's supply chains as businesses deal with disruption that threatens to derail growth. Workforce, climate change, public health, shortages, and international issues are leading companies to tap into innovation in recent years more than ever. In fact, research found 67% of CEOs plan on increasing investments in disruption detection and innovation processes.¹

Keep reading for the challenges impacting supply chain organizations and how companies are turning to innovation to fill the gaps left behind.

Let's explore the major triggers of supply chain transformation in recent years.

COVID-19 Pandemic



From staffing shortages to logistical challenges and demand fluctuations, there isn't an aspect of the supply chain that hasn't been impacted by the pandemic. In one survey, 72% of senior-level supply chain executives said the pandemic had a negative impact on their company.²

Russia-Ukraine War



With Russia being a major oil supplier and both Russia and Ukraine producing key agricultural products, the ongoing conflict has led to a short supply and rising prices for these goods in addition to increased port congestion, container shortages, and surcharges.

U.S.-China Trade War



U.S. tariffs on \$300 billion worth of Chinese imports have caused increasing supply chain costs, decreasing profits for U.S. industries, further geopolitical tension, and the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Labor Strikes



Public service, rail, and port workers are central to smooth supply chain operations; however, among worsening inflation and living conditions, civil unrest and worker protests are higher than ever. In 2022, the world's ports experienced four times as many labor strikes compared to 2021.³

Shipping Costs



Shipping costs increased by 86% during the pandemic, and consumers are still feeling the impact.⁴ The rise in shipping costs in 2021 also added about two percentage points to global inflation.⁵



Climate Events

Extreme temperatures, flooding, storms, droughts, and fires all wreak havoc on supply chain operations. Research also shows the current path of climate change will cost \$178 trillion from 2021 to 2070.⁶



Material Shortages

Supplier shortages, fluctuating demand, environmental instability, geopolitical events, and shipping limitations are all contributing to material shortages. In 2023, major shortages included food, lithium and electric vehicle components, pharmaceuticals, and semiconductors.



Inflation

Supply chain issues were a major contributor to sky-high inflation in recent years. Thankfully, the pace is slowing. Research shows inflation eased last year to the lowest rate in over two years.⁷



Consumer Demand

With more companies innovating to keep up with disruption, customers have their pick of the litter when it comes to brands to engage with. In fact, 83% of supply chain practitioners said they were being asked to improve customer experience as part of their digital business strategy.⁸



Digital Boom

The emergence and use of new technologies throughout the supply chain has rapidly taken off in recent years. From robotics to digital twins to analytics systems, technology is infiltrating supply chain management in every industry.

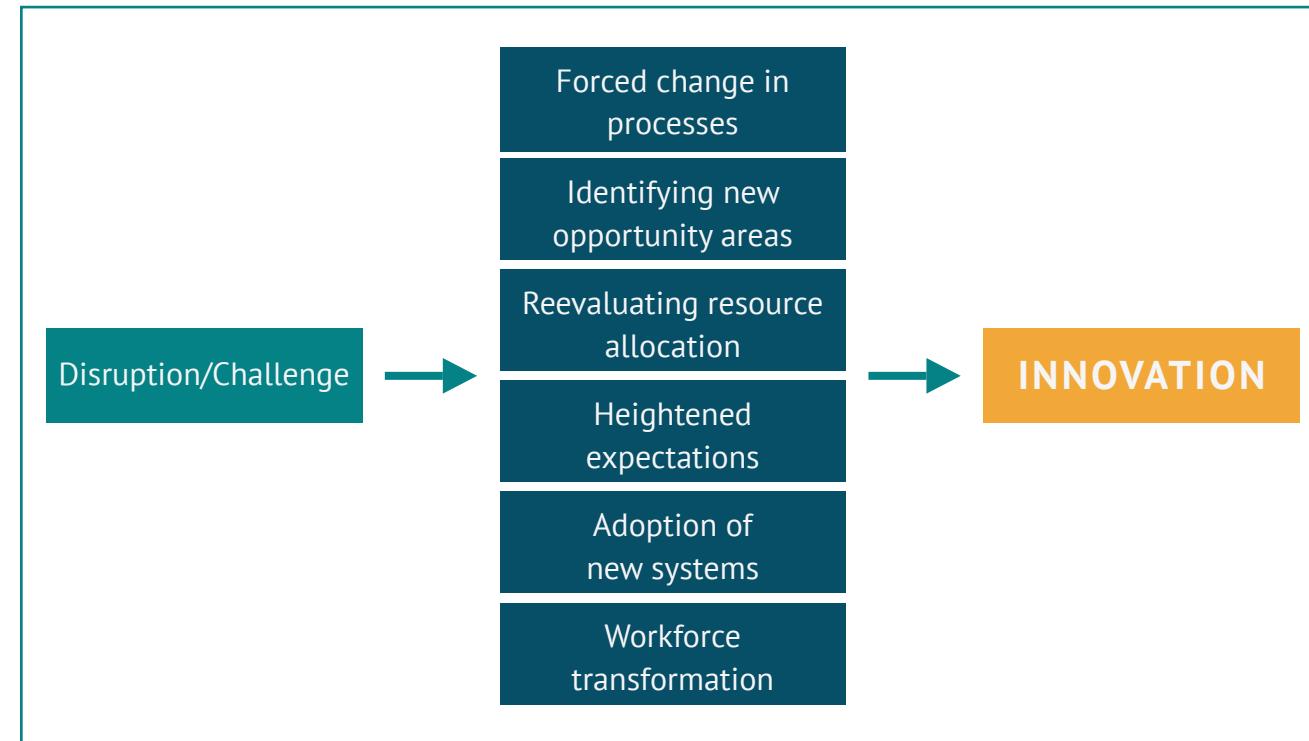
“When thinking about the heightened supply chain focus in recent years, it’s impossible to pinpoint one cause. Rather, these disruptive events together have shed light on the importance of transforming supply chain operations and driving innovation forward.”

– Geoff Olsen, Leader of Supply Chain Transformation at Catena Solutions

The silver lining to disruption? It's fueling innovation.

Even though disruption in recent years has thrown business for a loop, it's not necessarily bad news. Disruption often leads to companies' best innovation as they're pressed to find new methods to tackle new problems.

How Disruption Fuels Innovation

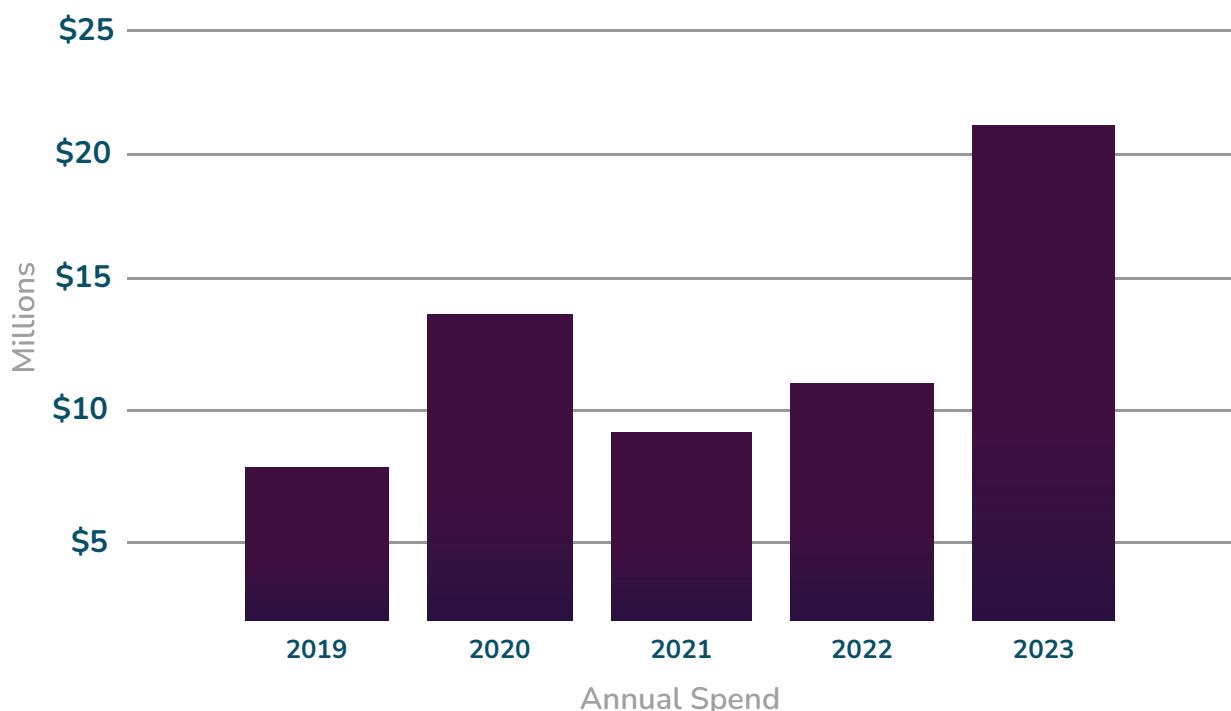


Let's look at COVID-19 as an example. When the pandemic hit, businesses had to pivot to support the new needs of customers. An unintended result of the mayhem the pandemic unleashed? Growth and innovation.

The pandemic drove companies to focus on supply chain resilience, sustainability, and visibility. Further, 64% of supply chain executives said the pandemic accelerated digital transformation and 60% said the pandemic increased their supply chain's strategic importance.²

While the pandemic is a top-of-mind example, organizations are facing many other challenges. Research shows a growing number of companies are bouncing back from the pandemic and are putting their efforts into other ways to improve performance up and down the supply chain. Investments in innovation are at the highest level they've been in the past five years as companies tap into new methods to solve supply chain challenges.⁹

Year-Over-Year Average Investment in Innovations⁹



Disruption and innovation go hand in hand. While these seemingly black swan events transform into regular occurrences, companies will invest more time, money, and resources into innovation to minimize the impact of disruption.



SECTION 2

Innovation Focuses of Supply Chain Organizations

At Catena Solutions, we're seeing innovation fall into four main categories: product, packaging, supply chain, and process.

However, innovation isn't black and white. Any transformation to optimize costs or add value can be categorized as innovation. Innovation initiatives are often driven by sales, marketing, or the C-suite, but cascade across business units and departments.

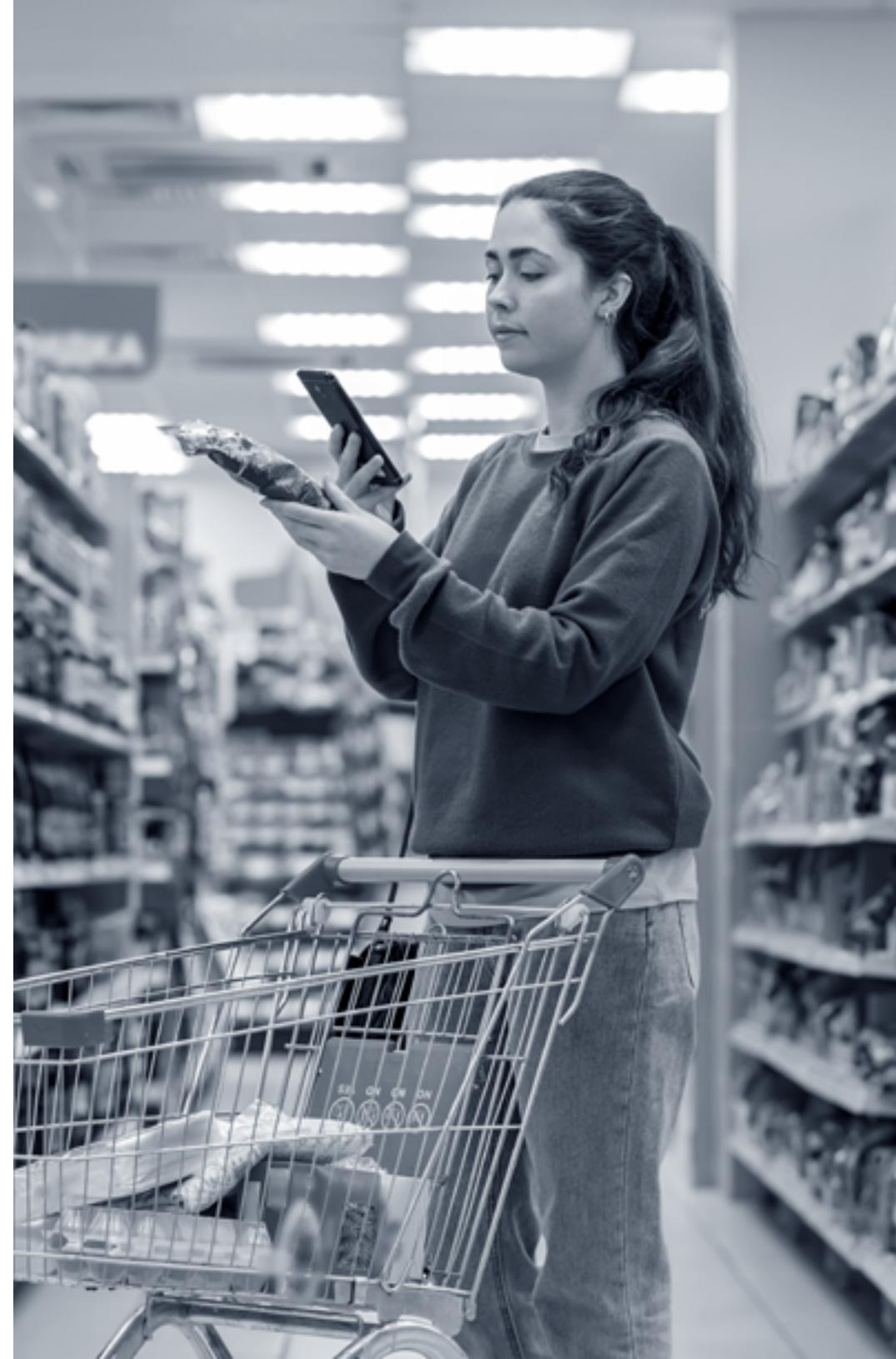
For innovation to succeed, entire organizations must work together to create value in the face of obstacles. Let's see how supply chain companies are innovating right now.



FOCUS #1

Product Innovation

Healthy, sustainable products are all the rage as consumers focus on the health and wellness of themselves and the planet. Private label products are also having their moment as retailers invest in innovation to compete with leading brands and drive new growth.



Healthy Alternatives

Events in recent years have led to consumers placing a heightened focus on products that are better for them.

Consider the stats:

- 50% of consumers in a survey on conscious eating said the pandemic changed the way they eat, including eating fresher, healthier foods (40%), food without artificial ingredients (33%), and cooking more at home (40%).¹¹
- 25% of consumers report eating more plant-based products in recent years, and another 15% plan to start consuming plant-based products soon.¹¹
- 55% of consumers will pay a premium for food that contributes to their wellness.¹²

What we're seeing in the industry aligns with these trends. One of our clients, a major snack food company, is expanding their portfolio of better-for-you products by creating a health and wellness division and buying start-up health food brands. Another food and beverage company we're working with recently completed the acquisition of an energy bar brand to add to their portfolio of healthy offerings.

Sustainability

Nearly three-fourths of consumers agree climate events from the past year have made them more likely to seek out sustainable products, and 66% of U.S. consumers and 80% of young U.S. adults (ages 18-34) are willing to pay more for sustainable products.¹⁰

From the supply chain side, expanding supplier diversity to support sustainability helps companies avoid labor conflict, materials shortages, and logistical disruptions.

A key trend we're seeing are products that can be repaired, reused, or refurbished at the end of their life. This is especially important for the retail industry, which is no stranger to criticism for its negative environmental impact. In the CPG and food and beverage industries, trends include ethical sourcing, regenerative agriculture, and supply chain transparency.

Trend Watch: One of our clients, a major snack food company, is expanding their portfolio of better-for-you products by creating a health and wellness division and buying start-up health food brands.

Private Label Innovation

During the first half of 2023, private label dollar sales across U.S. retail outlets rose 8.2% to \$108 billion, and national brand unit sales fell 3.4%.¹³

Why the rapid growth for private label? Inflation is driving consumers to be more value conscious, and investing in private label products gives retailers greater control over product development and margins. Private label growth is also driving companies to place a greater emphasis on R&D and innovation to stay competitive.

Private label products have historically leaned towards no-frills versions of leading items. But with today's manufacturing and marketing capabilities, retailers excel at creating products that rival those of leading brands. Retailers are now conducting research to see what consumers want then introducing offerings in multiple channels and categories rather than simply cloning top selling manufacturer products.

"A few years ago, consumers gravitated towards trusted brands more than anything. Now, as consumers prioritize health, transparency, and cost, private label brands are taking advantage of these preferences and giving leading brands a run for their money."

– Rich Medrano, Leader of Financial Transformation at Catena Solutions

Case Study: Strategic Planning for Plant-Based Growth

The Challenge: A multinational food and beverage company was focused on accelerating plant-based category growth to keep up with market and consumer trends. The company needed to strategize and present a three-year roadmap for plant-based growth for North America but didn't have the resources to complete it.

The Solution: We deployed a consultant to partner with the Vice President of Marketing to translate the plant-based strategic plan into a roadmap to present to the CEO. This included:

- Leveraging new consumer segmentation work to uncover opportunities to target dairy switchers and plant-based users/enablers to expand usage
- Identifying specific base-types within the plant-based beverage category to drive hyper focus to accelerate growth
- Developing programming ideas to kickstart consumer and retail activation
- Developing a full category diagnostic to understand "where to play" and "how to win"
- Helping build a full storyline on how the plant-based business unit would accelerate growth in the next three years

The Result: The presentation was successful and well received by the global CEO. Additionally, the client was able to use our consultant's presentation as a model for future strategic planning initiatives for their yogurt and coffee creamer categories.

FOCUS #2

Packaging Innovation

Packaging plays a crucial role in business. Packaging not only protects the product, but directly impacts a brand's sales, operations, reputation, sustainability, and cost.

Additionally, packaging enables efficient transportation and warehousing across supply chain operations. Keep reading for major packaging trends impacting the manufacturing, CPG, and food and beverage industries.



Sustainable Packaging

Unsurprisingly, not only are products shifting towards sustainability, but packaging is also trending in the green direction. Factors shaping sustainable packaging include consumer preferences, market trends, impending regulation, and materials shortages.

Specific packaging innovation our clients are focusing on include waste reduction, alternatives for non-biodegradable plastic, packaging that can be repurposed, compostable packaging, and packaging that reduces emissions in transit.

Additionally, consumers are relying on packaging to vet companies' sustainability claims: A recent survey shows that among U.S. consumers who shop for more sustainable products, 72% use labels or third-party certifications to confirm a company or product's sustainability credentials.¹⁰

Interactive and Personalized Packaging

More companies, especially in CPG and retail, are designing packaging that fits consumers' desire for immersive and engaging experiences. Personalized packaging differentiates companies from competitors and speaks to the growing trend of customer centricity. Interactive packaging that leverages technology, such as including a QR code to scan for supplier information, is also increasing in popularity.

Market growth reflects these trends: The global personalized packaging market is expected to grow from \$34.5 billion in 2022 to \$60 billion in 2032.¹⁴

Trend Watch: Many CPG companies are implementing automation technology in the repacking process to increase efficiency and cut down on costs amidst inflation and the high cost of material shortages.

Transitioning to New Materials

Supply chain disruption, materials shortages, and inflation are forcing some organizations to make packaging with cost-effective materials like poly bags, paperboard, and cardboard. However, this can put companies at odds with sustainable packaging, which can cost 25% more compared to traditional packaging materials.¹⁵

Packaging Adapted to E-commerce

With the rise of e-commerce, retailers are faced with adapting their packages to the e-commerce customer journey. This means relying on packaging as a powerful marketing tactic and designing packaging that's sharable and creates a memorable brand experience. E-commerce companies are also prioritizing sustainability, personalization, and return-ready packaging to support enhanced customer expectations.

Food Safety and Shelf Life

After effects of the pandemic and economic uncertainties are contributing to increased value of food safety and shelf life. Consumers want packaging that enables a long shelf life to minimize waste and reduce costs. A recent survey into food and beverage packaging trends found hygiene, food safety, and shelf life as top characteristics U.S. consumers desired in 2023.¹⁶

“Packaging innovation is booming, especially with the heightened scrutiny on environmental and social issues. Companies need to be extremely thoughtful with their packaging choices and use data and market insights to ensure their packaging is conveying the right messages, or their products don’t stand a chance.”

– Lexi Addison, Consultant Engagement Director at Catena Solutions

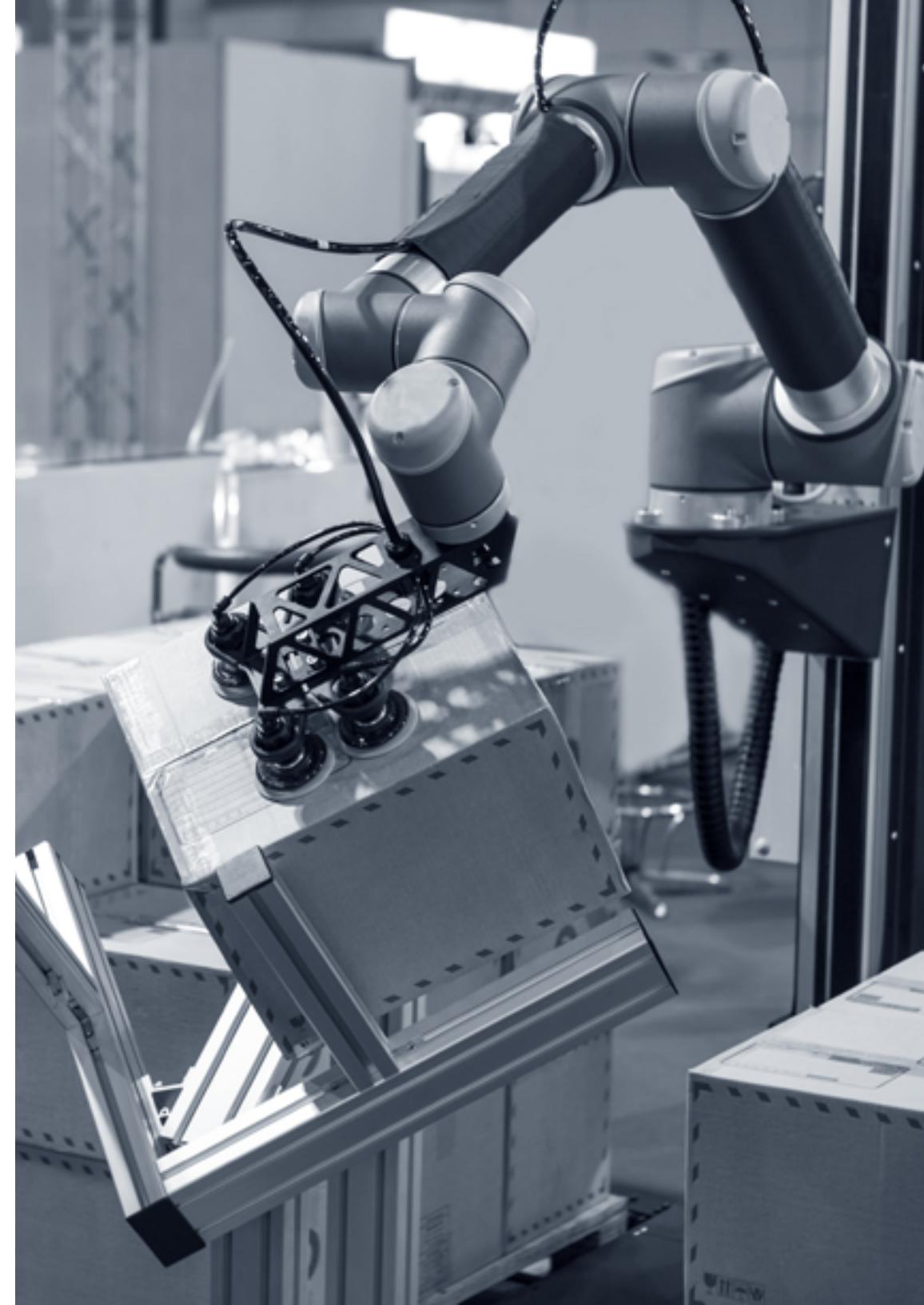
FOCUS #3

Supply Chain Innovation

Robots. AI. Machine learning. Internet of Things. Blockchain. Virtual reality.

One cannot escape technology-focused buzzwords in the supply chain industry right now. These technologies are enabling a massive amount of growth in logistics, manufacturing, and delivery. They are also instrumental in maintaining and boosting productivity in the face of disruption.

For companies we're working with, a trend rising to the top is technology that eliminates redundant or low-skilled manufacturing functions. These technologies increase efficiency by automating manual tasks and freeing up employee time for strategic roles and decision-making. In the following pages, we highlight the supply chain and manufacturing automation areas where we're seeing the greatest growth.



Robotic Arms

The use cases for robotic arms in manufacturing are vast. Businesses we work with use software-powered robotic arms to sort and assemble products, prepare orders for delivery, load and unload cargo, pack and unpack containers, and deliver goods to customers. Data backs up what we're seeing, too—the global industrial robotic arm market is expected to reach \$23.2 billion by 2033.¹⁷

Automated Storage and Retrieval Systems (AS/RS)

AS/RS are software-controlled systems that automatically replace and retrieve inventory. They are extremely precise, accurate, and quick which minimizes waste and boosts output and productivity. AS/RS are being used in a variety of mediums including unit loads, mini loads, vertical lift modules, shuttles, carousels, and more.

“While companies are implementing solutions and technology that reduces human workers on certain tasks, skilled talent is still vital to the supply chain. Workers who can lead supply chain technology innovation initiatives are priceless.”

— Matt Wessels, Leader of Human Capital Transformation at Catena Solutions

Maintenance, Repair, and Operations (MRO)

MRO includes the processes and activities that keep a plant operational. This spans facility maintenance and systems and equipment upkeep. Historically, maintenance crews have been responsible for carrying out MRO activities, but new technology is changing that. MRO is becoming automated, which decreases problems like machine downtime, production stoppage, and delayed delivery times.

Rewrap Automation

Many CPG companies are implementing automation technology in the repack process to increase efficiency and cut down on costs amidst inflation and the high cost of material shortages. Bringing repack operations in-house also gives companies greater control over supply chain processes, enables a quicker response to demand fluctuations, and reduces overhead workforce costs.

Case Study: Repack Transformation Strategy & Execution

The Challenge: A global snack food company had been outsourcing their repack operations to a co-packer, which was costly and inefficient. As part of their supply chain transformation, the company planned to bring repack operations in-house and invest in new automation equipment but needed a resource to project manage the initiative.

The Solution: We led the company through the transformation by:

- Identifying a new automation line vendor that processed more bars per minute, didn't require a proof-of-concept investment, and had an overall significantly lower cost.
- Identifying a solution to bring a significant volume (110 million snack bars annually) from outside vendors to in-network distribution centers.
- Recommending a new scrap vendor to install a baler at no upfront cost, helping the company maximize investment.
- Increasing plant electrical system capacity by making recommendations to rewire and retool the system to support new equipment.
- Advising that adding a second automated line could eliminate the need for a second shift.

The Result: Anticipated cost savings of our strategy to bring repack operations in-house is \$2.3 million annually.

- Transitioning to the new automation line vendor will save the company nearly \$1 million annually in capital expenditure.
- Using the new corrugated scrap vendor will create a future revenue stream of \$57,000 annually and optimize scrap management.
- The recommendations the consultant made for the plant's electrical system will increase capacity by 35%.
- By installing a second automated manufacturing line, the organization will save \$700k in annual overhead costs.

FOCUS #4

Process Innovation

Process innovation provides companies with another opportunity to increase value amidst disruption. By tapping into signature and superior methods of doing work, businesses can boost their competitive edge and customer experiences.



Quality Over Quantity

Organizations we're working with are redoing their innovation teams and processes to focus on quality, not quantity. For example, one company is reducing their number of acquisitions and instead building up their portfolio of product offerings in one specific area. Another major CPG company is having one of its best-selling brands take over the management of a struggling brand to turn around its operations.

Monetizing Processes

More businesses are seeking ways to monetize their operational processes. For example, by offering gift-wrapping and free samples for online orders, we're seeing retail companies use the product delivery process to connect with customers and improve brand value.

Circularity

Circularity is designing a product to be renewed or regenerated at the end of its life, not wasted. Due to the heightened focus on sustainability, organizations are designing more products with circularity in mind. For example, retail companies are using recycled clothes to create new products, and food and beverage companies are formulating their packaging to be reusable for other purposes.

Supply Chain as a Service (SCaaS)

The SCaaS business model is growing in popularity with e-commerce and direct-to-consumer (DTC) brands. SCaaS is the outsourcing of specific functions or the entire supply chain to third-party providers rather than managing these functions in-house. With SCaaS models, companies can scale their supply chains and gain access to specialized resources. However, companies need advanced supply chain visibility and data management to implement SCaaS models, which many companies lack.

Customer Enablement

Customer enablement focuses on helping customers get the most out of a product or service through tools, training, and resources. Companies that focus on customer enablement rather than simply customer satisfaction are twice as likely to receive repeat orders.²⁰ The same research shows 80-90% of supply chain organizations plan to adopt customer enablement across commercial innovation, sustainability, real-time execution, and human-centric work design.

Trend Watch: One company we're working with is reducing their number of acquisitions and instead building up their portfolio of product offerings in one specific area to focus on quality over quantity.



SECTION 3

Strategies for Innovation Success

It's clear innovation is happening at a scale not usually seen. But with greater innovation comes greater challenges and the need for thoughtful execution strategies. As companies undergo innovation initiatives, they must address the following considerations for successful planning, implementation, and adoption.

Product Innovation: Challenges & Considerations

Cost Barriers

Acquiring new products and companies through M&A activities is costly, but so is tackling product innovation internally.

Manufacturing

For companies that want to handle innovation internally, most will have to invest in new manufacturing processes and equipment and train employees how to use them.

Market Analysis

Companies need to conduct comprehensive analyses to find gaps in the market, determine how to differentiate themselves from competitors, and ensure trends aren't fleeting.

Time-to-Market

Getting a product to market can be a months- or years-long process. Seeing ROI takes even longer, so proper planning and dedication are crucial.

Expertise

Many organizations will have to hire or outsource talent to acquire the expertise needed to lead innovation initiatives and product R&D.

Risk

Innovating, or choosing not to, carries risk. Not innovating risks lost market share, brand value, and a competitive edge. Innovating brings the risk of failure and a lost investment.

Packaging Innovation: Challenges & Considerations

Material Availability

Supply chain strains and material shortages are making sourcing materials that are durable, sustainable, and brand-building especially difficult.

Regulation

Regulations around sustainability and deceptive advertising are forcing manufacturers to develop new packaging, but many are unprepared for the switch.

Sufficient R&D

With new and innovative packaging, there's always a risk of failure. Working with different materials can be tricky and ensuring sufficient R&D can draw out the timeline for transition even longer.

Consumer Pressure

Consumers want transparency from companies about the products they're buying, which puts added pressure on packaging innovators to convey the right messages.

Optimizing for Transport

Companies must keep the logistics journey in mind with new packaging, ensuring packaging is stackable, optimized for space, and can withstand the transport journey.

Product Protection

Simplified, clean, and ecofriendly packaging is all the rage, but minimalistic packaging often isn't the most protective and best option for the product.

Supply Chain Innovation: Challenges & Considerations

Investment

Unsurprisingly, advanced technology comes with a hefty price tag. It can also take months, and sometimes even years, to get new systems up and running.

Adoption

Even if employees are open to new technology, getting them to understand and work alongside it is a complex process that requires a mix of communication, psychology, and change management techniques.

Talent

Automation technology still relies on a human component. Companies need automation experts to evaluate, recommend, install, and monitor new systems to ensure they're operating correctly.

Data

Automation is dependent on mapping accurate processes, which relies heavily on data. However, most companies have highly ineffective data management strategies.

Employee Resistance

Many employees fear automation will come for their jobs, which increases employee resistance around learning and working with new technology.

Legacy Infrastructure

Many legacy systems and infrastructure aren't equipped to support new technologies, which makes it increasingly difficult to innovate without first upgrading systems.

Process Innovation: Challenges & Considerations

Lack of Direction

Leaders are facing increasing pressure to streamline processes, but many don't have a strong grasp on how to achieve specific goals or the steps to get there.

Collaboration

Innovating processes involves stakeholders from across the organization working together, which can be difficult without proper planning, project management, and leadership.

Failure

Since innovative processes are often novel, companies may not have the resources or knowledge to get them done. Failure is common with new innovation initiatives.

Real-Time Decisions

Very few companies have advanced data, analytics, and visibility capabilities that enable them to make fast and accurate decisions.

Customer Experience

Organizations struggling with process innovation are finding their supply chains aren't optimized for connected, digital customer experiences.

Keys to Winning Innovation

Innovation success in the face of disruption is an uphill battle. Studies show 60-90% of strategic plans never fully launch.²¹ By using the below considerations to guide strategy, organizations will be on the path towards creating new business value and upping their competitive advantage.



#1: Create a culture of innovation

Creating a culture of innovation is key to fostering and encouraging business growth. This looks like:

Empowering employees to bring new ideas forward

Recognizing worker contributions

Accepting and learning from failure

Challenging traditional methods and procedures

Encouraging and incorporating employee feedback

Ensuring leadership is transparent and accessible

Providing constructive feedback

Prioritizing collaboration and breaking down silos

When employees feel heard and their opinions matter to business decisions, they will be more creative, engaged, and committed. This is where the role of the manager is highly important.

Managers are crucial to encouraging an innovation mindset, however, less than 40% of U.S. and European workers in a survey agreed their managers created and sustained an innovation culture.²² By focusing on the above points, managers can guide their organizations toward innovation.

#2: Don't skimp on change management

Getting employees to embrace new ways of working is a challenge, especially because the percentage of employees who would change to support company initiatives dropped from 74% in 2016 to 38% in 2022.²³

That's why for any innovation initiative, change management is a step that can't be skipped. Companies need to focus on:

Proper executive support and sponsorship.

Executive support is needed to drive innovation forward, give the change credibility, and provide guidance and assurance. Research shows effective executive sponsorship increases a project's chance of success from 25% to 85%.²⁴

Being clear about the new initiative.

Humans are naturally resistant to anything that disrupts the status quo. Pair skepticism with confusion, and a new project is unlikely to get off the ground. Ensure leaders and managers across the company understand the reason for innovation and the roles and responsibilities of employees.

Fostering open communication and understanding.

Research found 73% of change-affected employees report experiencing moderate to high stress levels, and those suffering from change-related stress perform worse than the average employee.²⁷ A comprehensive change plan that prioritizes communication can alleviate organizational anxiety.

Prioritizing project management.

Though innovation is often initiated by marketing departments or leadership, they aren't going to be driving the initiative at every step. Working with a partner to project manage the initiative can ease uncertainty and drive innovation forward.

Change management and transparent communication are especially important for supply chain automation projects, as those employees will likely be highly skeptical. A recent study found Americans worry about automation affecting jobs in retail (55%), customer service (54%), delivery (52%), and supply chain/fulfillment (51%).¹⁸

#3: Get your data right

Data is arguably the most important element of innovation. Data provides insight into consumer preferences, market trends, future disruption, visibility, sustainability initiatives, supply and demand, and everything else that informs innovation strategy.

However, most organizations struggle greatly with data management. It's estimated that bad, inaccurate, or missing data costs companies more than \$600 billion a year.¹⁹ And investing in new analytics tools and systems has only added to problems as companies realize their data isn't set up to provide the insights they desire.

Steps to improving data management techniques include:

1. Establishing the impact of poor data on business
2. Defining a baseline data standard
3. Taking inventory of current data and its quality
4. Identifying and correcting existing data errors
5. Implementing data cleansing and standardization processes
6. Adopting a common data language to break down silos
7. Empowering employees with data management training
8. Ensuring you have the right tools and infrastructure in place

Once organizations enhance their data management techniques, data will be priceless in informing strategy and progress.

#4: Prioritize customers

The role of the customer has evolved drastically in recent years. What used to be the destination of a product's journey now plays a crucial part in driving business decisions. Keeping customer wants, needs, and desires at the core of an organization supports greater profitability and innovation.

Research confirms the front-and-center role customers play in today's supply chains. In a study of 900 global companies, Accenture identified the top 10% of companies with the highest performing and most profitable supply chains.

These top performers have a few things in common:

1. They base their supply chain strategy on delivering experiences linked to customer value propositions
2. They invest heavily in new technologies to turn customer data into insights to drive innovation and collaboration
3. They focus on capabilities that enhance supply chain agility and foster innovation
4. They ensure their CEOs use insights to drive transformation and innovation forward

By integrating customer centricity, data, and innovation into their supply chain strategy, these companies see a higher revenue growth rate, EBITDA margin, and supply chain contribution to total revenue.²⁵

“Focusing on consumer preferences and demands can yield incredible financial results. That's why marrying consumer insights and planning is vital for today's complex organizations to make a splash in the market.”

– Christine Bart, Senior Consultant Engagement Manager at Catena Solutions

#5: Develop and hire the right skills

Though companies are honing in on innovation like never before, getting initiatives off the ground is proving more difficult than expected. A recent PwC supply chain survey revealed that innovation initiatives like digitization, automation, sustainability, and resilience still lag behind basic supply chain priorities like increasing efficiency and managing/reducing costs.²⁶

Upskilling employees and hiring talent with the skills to drive innovation projects is crucial for organizations focusing on value-creating initiatives. Essential skills for the future supply chain include:

Technology literacy. Organizations need workers who not only understand technology but can translate between technology and business to solve problems and drive change.

Data expertise. As we've mentioned, data is the fuel of innovation. Companies need people who can mine, clean, and present data and utilize it to drive strategy.

Cross supply chain planning. Innovation projects span multiple departments and involve people from across the organization. Talent who can solve overarching challenges and lead big picture strategic initiatives will propel innovation forward.

Elevated supply chain leaders. Businesses need CSCOs with sales, customer, talent, and technology expertise to connect the dots between C-suite desires and the workers executing innovation.



Catena Solutions is your strategic innovation partner.

Catena Solutions supports food and beverage organizations, leveraging our expertise to drive growth, optimize operations, and navigate industry challenges. With our network of industry experienced consultants, we advise and execute on client initiatives in the areas of strategy, optimization, people, and regulation.

For more information, visit us at catenasolutions.com



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