

Industry Solution

Descartes for Manufacturing

The Shifting Manufacturing Landscape

Manufacturers manage some of the most complex and geographically extensive supply chains in existence today. Many are leveraging low-cost labor markets in foreign countries to reduce costs and increase output. However, managing disparate supply chain processes across multiple time zones can slow responsiveness, limit flexibility and reduce control over the movement of goods.

The volatility in fuel costs and currency exchange rates is putting even more pressure on manufacturers to find the right balance between access to affordable manufacturing resources and managing distribution costs. While some may choose to move production closer to home, others may find ways to strip costs out of the logistics process. Whatever the strategy, technology can enable more effective planning, optimize the decision-making process, ensure efficient execution and provide extended visibility.

Bringing More Effective Solutions to Market

Technology addresses a number of critical areas for manufacturers:

Costs: Without a clear picture of overall supply chain costs, calculating the total landed cost of goods is difficult. To determine financial value with any accuracy, manufacturers must look at all components of the shipment process – from sourcing materials, to shipping rates and distribution. Costs are also associated with customs clearance, document processing and other fees related to the movement of goods across borders. Achieving a realistic view and improving control of total landed costs requires end-to-end connectivity and communication with supply chain partners.

Accountability: As retailers and other customers move to reduce their infrastructure for handling inventory and distribution, manufacturers are constantly under pressure to take on that burden. To meet customer demand without incurring additional costs, manufacturers need to be more effective in managing production schedules, component availability and assembly processes.

Inventory Control and Information Exchange: Manufacturers require a real-time, end-to-end view of inventory – including goods in transit or en-route – across the various supply chain parties. In addition to visibility, manufacturers can gain efficiencies by having the infrastructure in place to exchange all types of electronic information, from purchase orders and amendments, to shipping notifications and tracking and tracing of deliveries.

Descartes as a Partner of Choice

Since 1981, Descartes has been focused on addressing the needs of the global transportation and logistics sector. It has built its reputation on delivering results for organizations around the world that operate logistics intensive businesses and require visibility and control over multi-channel networks of trading partners and shipment management processes.



Descartes provides the infrastructure manufacturers need to gain control over their supply chain processes and streamline operations for greater profitability and improved customer service. Its end-to-end solutions offer manufacturers the convenience of one-stop-shopping to address the most complex of business needs.

Descartes is:

Customer-focused with a Results-based Methodology: Descartes' customer-focused implementation strategy is based on industry best practices and standardized business processes. Results of phased implementations are validated against predefined, value-based metrics.

Focused on Logistics-intensive Organizations: Descartes' core focus is working with companies that have complex transportation-centric operations and/or differentiate themselves through logistics.

Multimodal, Multi-process and Global: Descartes' Global Logistics Network and applications manage both multiple channels (air, ocean, truck, contract carrier and private fleet) and business processes.

Shipment Lifecycle Management: Descartes ensures the efficient and effective management of the end-to-end shipment process from source to end consumer with ongoing real-time visibility.

Addressing the Multimodal Needs of Today's Manufacturers

Descartes helps manufacturers maintain or improve their customer service levels while lowering costs by providing much needed control over the entire shipment process and visibility into the movement of goods – from parts management and production to shipping and distribution. Descartes' services are available as a software-as-a-service (SaaS) model and utilize a transaction fee-based model. As a result, they support the variable nature of the manufacturing sector and provide the benefits of advanced technology capabilities without the up-front investment and cost of implementing and managing in-house systems.

Descartes solutions are built upon the Descartes Global Logistics Network (GLN), one of the world's largest multi-modal networks of transportation providers, shippers and global customs and regulatory agencies. It enables manufacturers to connect to members of their supply chain – regardless of their system infrastructure and/or IT capabilities – and exchange information seamlessly and reliably.

Value-added application services offered by Descartes enable:

Supply Chain Visibility: Descartes improves logistics efficiency for manufacturers by providing much-needed visibility into transportation, warehousing and supply chain operations. Whether these elements are managed internally or through outsourced 4PLs, manufacturers can make more informed decisions, and optimize and gain real-time control over their inventory, logistics assets and mobile workforce.

Messaging Across the Supply Chain: The Descartes GLN enables electronic communications between manufacturers and their trading partners around the globe, including carriers (90+ air, 30+ ocean, and 1,600+ ground carriers) and regulatory agencies.

Global Customs Filing and Compliance: Manufacturers can comply with stringent customs and security regulations for international shipments; and lower costs and gain control by managing their customs filings directly.

Effective Transportation Management: Descartes' Transportation Management System (TMS) enables manufacturers to plan, execute, settle and report on shipments to customers. Whether manufacturers are shipping high volumes of small packages or large container loads, Descartes picks multiple orders with scanning at source, facilitates the selection of mode and contract carriers, enables rates to be negotiated, ensures compliance and order shipment accuracy, offers detailed reporting and auditing of freight bills and measures shipment performance.

Routing and Scheduling: Whether manufacturers ship goods from their distribution centers (DC) to retail stores or direct to the consumer, Descartes optimizes routes for efficiency and ensures service level agreements are consistently met. Delivery costs can be cut through shorter routes, reduced fuel consumption and enhanced fleet utilization.

Dock Appointment Scheduling: Shippers, carriers and consignees can schedule dock door appointments and gain visibility into requested, scheduled and rescheduled appointments. This optimizes receiving operations for inbound shipments to a distribution centre by ensuring a consistent flow of inventory through the yard and effective dock door utilization according to outbound priorities.

Two-way Wireless Communications: Descartes Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL) solutions provide drivers with turn-by-turn directions and capture critical information such as proof of delivery, seal numbers, etc. Manufacturers are immediately alerted to critical events affecting the distribution of goods to customers, thereby improving overall responsiveness and service.

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Descartes (TSX: DSG) (NASDAQ: DSGX) is the global leader in logistics technology. If logistics is critical to your business, Descartes connects the people and technology to put your organization in motion. We extend the command of logistics operations, helping the world's largest and most connected logistics community to quickly reduce costs, improve service and comply with customs and transportation regulations.

Descartes' Logistics Technology Platform uniquely combines the power of The Global Logistics Network, the world's most extensive multi-modal network, with the industry's broadest array of modular and interoperable web and wireless logistics applications. At our core, Descartes' team of industry-leading logistics experts is dedicated to delivering innovative solutions while working closely with our customers to help ensure their success.

Descartes is headquartered in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada and has offices and partners around the world.

Learn more at www.descartes.com.