



The Council of Supply Chain
Management Professionals

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September 2024



2024 Supply Chain Survey Results: What it Means for You

The supply chain landscape has undergone seismic shifts in recent years, as globalization, technological innovation, and a growing emphasis on sustainability have reshaped the priorities of businesses worldwide. As we look toward 2024 and beyond, it's clear that supply chain leaders are facing increasingly complex challenges and opportunities. In a competitive marketplace, companies are making strategic investments not just in technology but in how they approach environmental responsibility and operational resilience.

According to the 2024 Supply Chain Trends and Attitudes report, produced by SPARQ360 in partnership with Appalachian State University, supply chain leaders are focusing on several key areas to ensure their operations remain agile, transparent, and sustainable. This report, which surveyed 293 supply chain managers across various industries in the United States, sheds light on the technologies and priorities shaping the future of supply chains. Three areas are worth paying particular attention to: where companies are investing, how size and industry influence these decisions, and what actionable steps businesses can take to remain competitive in the coming years.

For a more thorough review of what all the data from the survey revealed, visit sparq360.com/trendsandattitudes

1. Where Companies are Investing: The Intersection of Supply Chain and Sustainability

The 2024 Supply Chain Trends and Attitudes report reveals a clear consensus: visibility and predictive capabilities are top priorities for businesses looking to improve their supply chain operations. The need for Supply Chain Visibility Platforms, which provide real-time tracking of shipments, inventory, and logistics, cannot be overstated. With an increasingly globalized marketplace and the pressure to deliver products faster and more efficiently, these platforms are essential for improving transparency and responsiveness. By investing in these technologies, businesses can mitigate risks, optimize logistics, and maintain the agility needed to adapt to shifting market demands.



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However, it's not just operational efficiency that's driving investment decisions—sustainability is now a critical concern for supply chain leaders. Some of the most significant innovations are happening at the intersection of supply chain optimization and sustainability. Many companies recognize the value of integrating sustainability into their supply chain strategies. Technologies like Predictive Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, and Circular Economy Solutions are helping businesses streamline operations while reducing environmental impact. Yet, the report shows that companies are still grappling with how to balance short-term costs with long-term gains in sustainability.

Interestingly, the survey highlights a disconnect between the anticipated and ideal levels of spending on sustainability-related technologies. While there is a growing awareness of the importance of renewable energy and green technologies, companies are still hesitant to fully commit resources to these areas. This hesitation likely stems from the perceived high upfront costs and complexity of implementing such systems. However, the benefits of investing in sustainability extend far beyond regulatory compliance. Companies that make strategic investments in sustainability not only reduce their carbon footprint but also enhance their reputation and appeal to eco-conscious consumers and business partners.

In short, the supply chain of the future will be one that seamlessly integrates advanced digital tools with sustainable practices. Those businesses that can bridge the investment gap and align their technological investments with sustainability goals will be best positioned to thrive in an increasingly competitive and environmentally conscious market.

2. Variations by Company Size and Industry Sector: Tailoring Investments to Specific Needs

One of the most fascinating insights from the report is the variation in investment priorities based on company size and industry sector. Larger companies, typically with annual revenues exceeding \$450 million, are more familiar with and more likely to invest in advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, and Automation. These companies often have greater access to capital, resources, and expertise, which allows them to explore cutting-edge innovations that smaller firms may struggle to afford. For these larger enterprises, investing in predictive analytics and AI is not just about optimization—it's about gaining a competitive edge through automation and data-driven decision-making.

In contrast, smaller companies, particularly those with revenues below \$50 million, face a different set of challenges. These firms often lack the financial resources and internal expertise to implement large-scale technological changes. As a result, their familiarity with advanced supply chain technologies like AI and Circular Economy Solutions is lower, which can put them at a significant disadvantage. However, this doesn't mean that smaller firms are excluded from the innovation wave. Many smaller businesses are finding creative ways to integrate sustainability into their operations through partnerships, collaboration with suppliers, and the adoption of LEAN practices, which can help offset the costs of new technology investments.



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Industry sector also plays a critical role in shaping supply chain investment priorities. For example, companies in the manufacturing and retail sectors, where demand can be highly volatile, are more likely to invest in predictive analytics and demand forecasting tools. These technologies allow them to better anticipate market fluctuations and optimize inventory levels, reducing the risks associated with overstocking or understocking. Meanwhile, companies in sectors where sustainability is becoming a key differentiator—such as consumer goods and food production—are placing greater emphasis on green technologies and renewable energy solutions to meet growing regulatory and consumer demands.

For small and mid-sized companies, the challenge is clear: they must find ways to integrate advanced technologies and sustainability into their supply chains without overextending their resources. Collaboration with suppliers, access to shared platforms, and targeted investments in key technologies can help level the playing field and ensure that they remain competitive alongside larger, more resource-rich firms.

3. What Companies Can Do Today to Stay Competitive: Actionable Strategies for 2024

To remain competitive in 2024, companies must balance embracing cutting-edge technologies and adopting sustainable practices. Here are three actionable strategies that businesses can implement today to ensure they stay ahead of the curve:

- **Develop a Roadmap that Integrates Supply Chain Optimization and Sustainability**

Treating supply chain efficiency and sustainability as separate goals is no longer sufficient. Companies that excel in 2024 will be those that develop a comprehensive roadmap that seamlessly integrates supply chain optimization with sustainability efforts. For example, implementing LEAN practices that minimize waste can simultaneously improve operational efficiency and reduce environmental impact. Companies should also explore technologies like AI and Predictive Analytics to identify areas where supply chain performance can be enhanced while meeting sustainability targets. This roadmap should also include a clear plan for measuring the impact of these investments, particularly in terms of cost savings and carbon footprint reduction.

- **Bridge the Sustainability Investment Gap**

The data from the 2024 report makes one thing clear: there is a significant gap between the investments companies are planning and what they should be spending on sustainability. Technologies like Renewable Energy, Green Technologies, and Circular Economy Solutions are critical for long-term success, yet many businesses remain hesitant to fully commit resources to these areas. Companies need to prioritize sustainability investments not only to comply with regulations but also to position themselves as leaders in a marketplace that increasingly values environmental responsibility. By reallocating resources to sustainable technologies, companies can reduce their environmental impact, improve their brand reputation, and appeal to eco-conscious consumers and business partners.



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- **Enhance Supplier Collaboration to Drive Sustainability and Optimization**

Collaboration with suppliers is essential for both supply chain optimization and sustainability. The report shows that companies that work closely with their suppliers are more successful in achieving their sustainability goals. For smaller companies, investing in tools that facilitate better communication and collaboration with suppliers can help overcome resource constraints and drive continuous improvement. Whether through shared data platforms, joint sustainability initiatives, or closer partnerships, companies prioritizing collaboration will see better outcomes in both efficiency and sustainability.

The future of supply chains is clear: it lies at the intersection of advanced technology and sustainability. The 2024 Supply Chain Trends and Attitudes report underscores the importance of aligning investments with operational optimization and environmental responsibility. Supply chain leaders who prioritize visibility, predictive analytics, and sustainability will be better equipped to navigate the challenges of a fast-changing global market.

The key for companies of all sizes is to develop a strategic approach that integrates cutting-edge technologies with sustainable practices. By addressing gaps in technology adoption, investing in renewable energy and circular economy solutions, and enhancing collaboration with suppliers, businesses can build resilient, competitive supply chains that are prepared for the challenges of 2024 and beyond. Ultimately, those who invest wisely today will be the leaders of tomorrow.

To get your copy of the **2024 Supply Chain Trends and Attitudes Report**, visit sparq360.com/trendsandattitudes or contact morgan.anderson@sparq360.com.

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