



April 2016 - Issue #122

Welcome from Lisa

It has been an exciting month with multiple speeches, conferences/ summits, award ceremonies and events. As one of my articles states, "Collaborate to Thrive", I have been a collaborating fiend lately - it certainly makes life more interesting!

I also had the opportunity to visit my Mom and family in Arizona for Easter and for a long weekend. We have been doing a series of house projects lately - cleaning the garage, clearing out closets, running errands and more. My Mom is excited about a lilac bush I brought on the plane. I hope the Armstrong guru is correct about the type of lilac that will grow in AZ as my Mom is counting on great smells in the near future. She inherited the green thumb of my Grandma as she can make gardenias grow in AZ so I'm hopeful....



My cat, Smokey had a scare this month as well - what we thought was a hairball for two months turned out to be pneumonia. No idea how he got it but after a month of antibiotics, he finally kicked it to the curb. Isn't he adorable?

My pets (Smokey & Abby, a much larger dog that Smokey likes to terrorize) keep me calm amidst all this activity. Speaking of which, here is a list of my latest media activities:

IN THE NEWS

Please check out my latest speeches, articles & quotes:

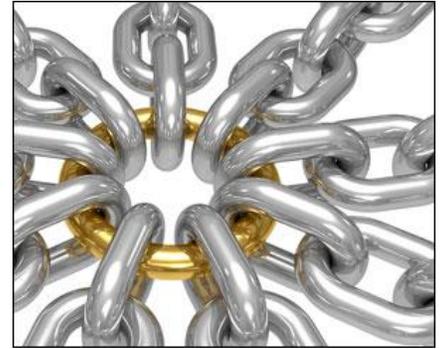
- Quoted in SAC's "*Smart Businesses Learn to Thrive in Era of Volatility*".
- Spoke at the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA) on "*The Amazon Effect: How to Leverage for Business Success*", to *APICS Ventura* on "Priming Your Supply Chain for the Amazon Effect" and to a group of key executives on "Inventory Management".
- Chaired the Innovation Awards for the Manufacturing Council of the Inland Empire's (MCIE) *Manufacturing Summit*.

Enjoy,
Lisa

Email
LMA Consulting Group, Inc.

P.S. Please think of me if you should know anyone who would like to elevate their business performance.

It has been a week of supply chain immersion. We were knee deep in supply chain trends at MCIE's manufacturers' summit, the Supply Chain Summit and the APICS-IE executive panel and networking symposium on emerging supply chain trends. It goes to tell you that the supply chain is a hot topic! For a company to be successful, the supply chain cannot be overlooked.



As always, it is important to keep our ears open for trends and watch-out's. Certainly the latest trends were discussed at each event. What were most interesting were those trends in common among all events and speakers:

- **Speed:** With Amazon on the scene, speed has become the norm. Quick deliveries, rapid access to data, fast turnarounds.... If you aren't thinking about how to double your speed, you'll be left in the dust.
- **Data:** There is quite a lot of discussion on data. How do we collect data? More importantly, how do we access the right data at the right time to make informed yet quick decisions? Can we glean interesting trends from data?
- **e-commerce:** Although it is becoming a bit hum-drum, e-commerce remains a hot topic. How do we ship both pieces and boxes efficiently from the same distribution center? Do customers have access to place their own orders whenever they want?
- **Bitcoins & blockchains:** I heard a fascinating talk on this topic and became convinced that these concepts could have far-reaching impacts on the supply chain. Have you thought about instant, accurate access to inventory across your supply chain?
- **Re-shoring:** Perhaps we should think about this as positioning inventory closer to the customer while increasing control. It is gaining in popularity....
- **Collaboration:** Just think about Southern California (the #1 area for supply chain in the U.S. AND the #1 area for manufacturing in the U.S.) - without collaboration among the ports, railroads, trucking companies, 3PL's, manufacturers and other supply chain partners, it would be a very different world.
- **The increased need for skills:** There is a great need for high-skilled supply chain talent. Technical skills AND the big picture view are critical. With baby boomers retiring and supply chains becoming more complex and interconnected, the demand for skills will continue to rise!
- **Persistence:** Specifically related to CA, we must find a way to partner with government to make it a business-friendlier state. Persistence will pay off!

Which of these trends are most affecting you? If you'd like to discuss ways to drive supply chain performance, **contact us**.

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[Leverage Supply Chain Trends for Success](#)

"Data, data data" seems to be the hot topic for manufacturers and distributors, similarly to "location, location, location" in real estate success. What is going on?

As technologies have come a long way from the "old" days, we have massive amounts of data. I heard this statistic last week - 1 gigabyte cost \$1 million in 1980 whereas it costs 1 cent today. Clearly, data is affordable and accessible. Now what do we do with it?



Here are some options my best clients have been researching:

1. **Dashboards:** Get the "right" ERP system for your needs and display key metrics on a dashboard. We want to be able to slice and dice data to rapidly get to what we want when we want it - in a nice, visually pleasing format.
2. **Demand data is gold:** Undoubtedly, my best clients use demand data from their supply chain to outperform their competitors - and sometimes to collaborate with competitors for win-win outcomes. A forecast is better than guesswork but actual consumption or demand data from your customer trumps all.
3. **Big data:** There is more hype over big data than anything else; however, since there is a ton of data available these days, those executives who figure out how to make good use of this data will succeed.
4. **Connections with data:** The internet of things is spurring new uses of data. How do we connect data from our fit monitors, alarm systems, appliances etc. in a meaningful and useful way?
5. **RFID & Barcoding:** Although these can be considered "old school", they are also solid tools that can provide tangible benefits in the right situation.

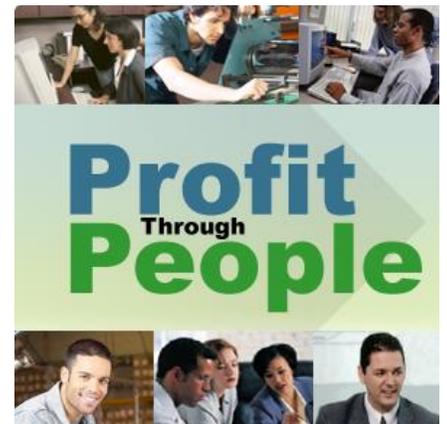
Don't just collect data to collect data. It might be similar to being a hoarder. Although data can be stored on tiny devices, the key is not to collect it but to USE it to achieve business results. If you'd like to talk further about how to do that for your company, **[contact us](#)**.

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[The Power of Databases](#)

In the last week, we've had the opportunity to hear the leading experts in manufacturing, distribution and logistics. There were a few common threads among EVERY expert yet one stood out from the rest - the skills gap remains alive and well.

For example, the Southern California Logistics & Supply Chain Summit keynote speaker was an Amazon executive. When asked what he wanted to talk about at the symposium, he chose "People, Careers and the Supply Chain: the Innovative Practices".

Whether \$8 million, \$50 million or a facility / division of a multi-billion dollar company, every one of my manufacturing and distribution clients state manufacturing and supply chain talent as a top concern. I facilitate a Harvey Mudd executive roundtable with the head of the manufacturing



program at Harvey Mudd. At every roundtable meeting in the last few years, this topic arises.

What can we do to alleviate this skills gap?

- **Retain top talent** - Let's start with what is often overlooked. Look carefully - you probably have underutilized and emerging talent. According to Gallup surveys, only 30% of the workforce is engaged. That is horrific! Imagine the fact that the majority of your people are not engaged; worse yet, there is a good percentage actively disengaged. Thus, there is VAST opportunity to engage and retain talent.
- **Mentor program** - With baby boomers retiring, it is wise to consider putting a win-win mentor program in place. We guarantee your long-term employees have more knowledge in their head than you realize - until you try to replace it. And, often, if set up with win-win objectives, the younger workers can be inspired by retiring workers - and vice versa.
- **Training & development** - Often-times, offering training and development programs (such as those offered by my *APICS chapter* on the fundamentals of manufacturing, distribution and supply chain) can be quite valuable in providing a common language, bringing ideas and inspiration to the forefront AND, most importantly, in giving employees the knowledge that leaders are interested in investing in them.
- **Performance management** - Who has time? Well, we need to make the time to talk to our people. If we can find time to interview replacements, we can find time to talk with our employees about objectives and performance. Spend a few minutes to help employees think through a career plan. Address non-performers. You'll be amazed at the results.
- **Don't hire fast talkers:** It is extremely challenging to be a great interviewer. Be careful not to be enamored with fast talkers. Fast talkers do not equate to results. Ask your network for feedback!

Since those who have the best people thrive, it is in all of our best interest to figure out how to retain, develop and find the best people. In our experience, this is the #1 indicator to long-term, sustainable success. It is worth investing the time in your #1 asset. If you want to talk about ideas to make this happen, [contact us](#).

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[Employees: Your #1 Asset](#)

Eagle Eye
Collaborate to Thrive

It was not only a week of summits and symposiums but it was also a week for awards and recognition. In watching closely who won the top awards across the board, we saw a common thread in the winners - collaboration.

One of the award winners spoke directly to the critical importance of collaboration. She is also known for bringing together diverse and often-opposing opinions together to find common solutions.

In another instance, the award winner complimented his business partners during the award speech. In another, a member of his rotary thought so much of the company owner that she went out of her way to make sure he was recognized again. It seems clear that collaboration is key to success.



Who can we collaborate with as a business owner or executive?

- **Executive team:** Certainly, it is a good idea to start with your executive team. A top notch team will make "2+2=16".

- **Peer groups:** My ProVisors group (of trusted advisors) contains an experienced and successful peer group leader ([Ron Penland](#)). His companies grow faster than average, are more profitable than the norm - and SELL at much higher multiples than the industry average. It certainly makes sense not to argue with success.
- **Trusted advisors:** Those with exceptional advisors will perform better than the rest - hands down.
- **Industry groups:** There is a wealth of information and contacts available in the best industry groups. Find those appropriate to you.
- **Alumni:** The point of going to a top rated college is less about the education than it is about the connections. Have you stayed in touch with your alumni groups? There is an instant connection built in.
- **Community:** Some of the best-connected people are community leaders and advocates. Last night, I went to the Claremont rotary's Taste of Claremont. It was the epitome of top leaders and community advocates getting together for GREAT food and drinks. I tell you what - when my house burned down several years ago, I was quite happy when the community fast-tracked inspections and was supportive in general - invaluable!

As I often say in my speeches, collaborate to THRIVE!

Did you like this article? Continue reading on this topic:
[Manufacturers See Critical Importance to Collaboration](#)

Connections

Connections and relationships are the 80/20 of success!

THIS MONTH'S REQUESTS:

- My APICS Inland Empire Chapter Board of Directors would like to invite you to our upcoming executive panel and networking symposium on "Emerging Supply Chain Trends" We have exceptional panelists and are filling up. **Register early.**
- My Ontario ProVisors group of trusted advisors is looking for a an attorney or CPA that specializes in healthcare. If you know of a top notch one in the IE, [email me](#).
- Looking for an exceptional Supply Chain Manager in the Wichita area? I have the perfect person for you! Please contact [her](#) with referrals and ideas.
- If you know of an innovative manufacturer in the Inland Empire. encourage them to apply for the Manufacturers Council of the Inland Empire (MCIE) **Innovation award.**

NOTE: To submit an item for this section, please send me an email with a short description of your needs and an email address. Please note that NOT all requests will be published as it must fit the guidelines and align with the Profit through People brand.

What is Profit through People?

- Our APICS Inland Empire Chapter has a job board - great Inland Empire companies looking for fantastic resources. It is worth **checking out.**
- My Ontario **ProVisors** group of trusted advisors is looking for a an an environmental or immigration attorney. **Email me** with referrals.
- Hard to believe with the skills gap alive and well but I know two outstanding supply chain leaders looking for a job -one in Wichita and one in New York. **Email me** with referrals.
- Refer anyone interested in advancing their supply chain and manufacturing skills to take a look at the best **education and certifications** available.



NOTE: To submit an item for this section, please send me an email with a short description of your needs and an email address. Please note that NOT all requests will be published as it must fit the guidelines and align with the Profit through People brand.



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