

Lisa Anderson's Profit Through People® Newsletter



Celebrating our 200th issue



Enabling Scalable, Profitable Growth No 202, August 2026

As our inaugural newsletter from LMA Consulting's founding in 2005, Profit through People remains our flagship brand because although most clients call us because of our manufacturing, supply chain and technology expertise, the 80/20 of success goes straight to people!

Lisa's Note

Hard to believe it is already almost fall!

I went to Ireland, Portugal, and Germany to meet my global strategy group and to meet with friends and see the sites. Check out the photo of my best friends. We are on a sailing trip in Lisbon, Portugal - such a fabulous day!



I enjoyed Ireland as I've been interested in seeing the Cliffs of Moher (see below) although it was one of the coldest places you can imagine. It is somewhat similar to the saying, "the coldest winter I ever spent is a summer in San Francisco". The food was awesome as well - what's not to like about comfort food! Portugal was great as well from the city streets of Lisbon to the beauty of the island of Madeira (known as the Hawaii of Europe), and Germany was picturesque with its Baroque style and famous castle of Heidelberg.

I have been on the go since my return with many activities and playing caregiver. I have been helping my mom and aunt in Arizona (including a brief hospital stay for my aunt) and dental surgery for their cat. In CA, my cat had a long weekend stay in the ER (definitely not cheap but he is worth it), and I've been nursing him back to health (well best as can be for a 90 year old) with a daily medication routine and various trips to the vet. It takes 3 people to back me up when I go to AZ to help my mom and aunt!

From a work point-of-view, we have been working with clients on [SIOP](#) (Sales Inventory Operations Planning), demand planning, the quote to order process (CRM, CPQ & order management), capacity planning, master production scheduling, distribution planning, [advanced planning](#) (APS/ MPS/ MRP, DRP), inventory management, and several other topics to improve service, optimize profit, and transform the supply chain. Complimentary to planning, we are spending quite a bit of time helping clients better utilize and upgrade ERP, roll out AI, APS (advanced planning systems) and business analytics.

Additionally, while in my strategy sessions (as we had one with the LMA team and another with my global consulting colleagues), I realized it was time for a full branding & website upgrade. Fast-forward hundreds of hours later, and I'm thrilled with the result.

As I sent out in an LMA News & Notes update, we are expanding and better defining our services to best meet the evolving needs of our clients. To better reflect these capabilities,

we have reorganized and updated our website, making it easier to navigate, find relevant resources, and learn more about the services we provide. Our goal is to create a more intuitive experience so visitors can quickly access the insights, expertise, and solutions most relevant to their business challenges. Check out the website & blog [here](#).



IN THE NEWS

I am thrilled to be honored as one of Clarity's [50 Best Thought Leaders in Manufacturing](#) list.

And for the rest:

- Quoted in *Confectionary News* articles, "[Confectionary Sector Braced for Shortages as Iran Conflict Escalates](#)" and "[2,000+ Supply ships stranded: Iran war puts food security at risk](#)"
- Published an article in *Valve Magazine*, "[Rebuilding Manufacturing in the U.S.](#)"
- Published articles in *Adhesives & Sealants*, [Smart Supply Chains Power Bottom-Line Results](#), [Reshaping Supply Chains with Bottom Line Intelligence](#).
- Published additional articles in *Adhesives & Sealants*, [Transportation Trends and Opportunities as Supply Chains Reshape](#) and [AI & Digitization Driving Triple Bottom Line](#).
- Published articles in *Medical Products Outsourcing* (MPO), [From Reactive to Proactive: Planning Strategies for Medtech Customer and Margin Success](#) and [AI and Hyperscale Manufacturing Fuels Hyperscale Growth](#).
- Published articles in *Brushware Magazine*, [Enhancing Visibility to Ensure Supply Chain Success](#) and [Collaborative Vertical Integration with Hyperscale Manufacturers](#)
- Spoke on *Composites Weekly* podcast, "[Where AI is Actually Delivering Value in Manufacturing Supply Chains](#)"
- Spoke on [Leveraged Supply Chains](#) podcast on How SIOP/ S&OP breaks down without supplier communication.
- Spoke on [Professionals of the Inland Empire podcast](#) on the Gulf War, impacts and strategies for the supply chain.
- Led the [Innovation Awards](#) and spoke at the Manufacturers Council for the Inland Empire.
- Spoke and participated on panels on several webinars including [ASCM-IE](#) on Reshaping Supply Chains, [NADM](#) (National Center for Defense Manufacturing and Machining) on the Future of Supply Chains, the [International Institute of Synthetic Rubber Producers](#) on AI & Advanced Technologies in Manufacturing, on a [Tacto](#) panel about tariffs, and on a [Softengine](#) panel about managing cost in the food and beverage industry.
- Quoted in [Kase's](#) article "White Glove Services: Customer Service Matters"
- Quoted on warehousing and logistics in the Inland Empire in the [Press Enterprise](#) on the clean air rule, [Daily Bulletin](#) on wages, and [Press Enterprise](#) on warehouses.

- Quoted in [Deutsche Welle](#) (DW) on the Iran War and in [Supply House Times](#) on distributor end of life programs.
- Published press releases on [Greenland](#), the [Iran Conflict](#), [LMA's 21st anniversary](#), [AI vs SIOP](#) and [SIOP Control Tower](#).

Enjoy,
Lisa

P.S. Know anyone who is interested in getting ahead of the rapidly changing global business conditions by creating predictable revenue and profitable supply? Refer them to [US](#).

The **STRONGEST LINK** in Your Supply Chain™



STRATEGY/ SIOP

Leading Business Transformation: Why Project Management Alone Isn't Enough



Organizations have never depended more on business transformation. Whether implementing ERP, leveraging artificial intelligence, improving [SIOP](#) (Sales Inventory Operations Planning), redesigning supply chain networks, automating operations, or expanding manufacturing capacity, transformation initiatives have become essential to improving operational performance, customer service, profitability, and growth. Yet despite significant

investments in technology, many transformation initiatives fail to achieve their intended business results. Rarely is the technology itself the problem. More often, organizations underestimate what it takes to successfully lead transformation.

Traditional project management focuses on schedules, budgets, milestones, and deliverables. Those fundamentals remain important, but transformation requires much more. It requires leadership, business process expertise, operational knowledge, technology enablement, and disciplined execution. Successful transformations don't occur because [ERP system](#) software goes live or because a merger closes. They occur because people embrace better processes, trust the information they're using to make decisions, and remain focused on achieving business results.

Transformation Begins with Business Design

One of the most common mistakes organizations make is allowing technology to drive the transformation. Instead, successful transformation starts by understanding the business. What problems are we trying to solve? How should work flow across the organization? What decisions need to improve? How will customer service improve? What information do employees and executives need to make better decisions?

Only after those questions are answered should technology configuration begin. Too often, companies automate today's processes without determining whether those processes support tomorrow's business objectives. Technology can improve speed and visibility, but it cannot compensate for poorly designed business processes. In fact, no company should pursue an ERP project simply to automate existing processes. The opportunity comes from improving how the business operates and using ERP to enable those improvements.

For example, a clay manufacturer wanted to maintain strong service levels while becoming more cost competitive. Although accepting credit cards helped trigger the need for an ERP upgrade, credit cards alone would never generate an adequate return on investment. The larger opportunity was to improve planning, inventory, logistics, production, shipping, and retail processes.

We designed the future-state business processes around customer requirements before configuring Microsoft Dynamics. This was especially important because the manufacturer had complex unit-of-measure requirements spanning production, multiple package sizes, inventory storage, shipping, and retail sales. Designing these requirements upfront avoided significant rework because a standard ERP setup would not have supported the company's operational goals. Successful transformation begins with designing the future state. Technology should enable that vision — not define it.

Technology Should Support the Business — Not Dictate It

ERP, AI, advanced planning systems, automation, warehouse management systems (WMS), and analytics are powerful tools. However, they are only as effective as the business processes supporting them. For example, a food and beverage manufacturer pursuing a supply chain transformation wanted to improve master production scheduling (MPS), [material requirements planning \(MRP\)](#), and distribution replenishment planning within Sage ERP. Although the initial system configuration appeared technically sound, planners quickly questioned its recommendations because they didn't align with operational realities or customer requirements.

Rather than forcing adoption, we stepped back. We redesigned the planning process, validated assumptions, improved system parameters, and aligned the technology with how the business needed to operate. That additional design work required patience upfront, but it accelerated adoption because users trusted the recommendations. We solved the business problem first and configured the technology second. Technology should never become the objective. Better business performance should.

Build the Right Transformation Team

Transformation projects are rarely constrained by technology. They are constrained by decisions, and the quality of those decisions depends on having the right people involved. Successful transformations require business strategy, operational, customer, planning, manufacturing, procurement, finance, technology, and organizational change expertise. No single person possesses all of this knowledge.

The strongest transformation teams intentionally bring together process experts, technical experts, functional leaders, and executive sponsors who understand how the business operates from end to end. They must also have the credibility to challenge assumptions and ask difficult questions before significant resources are invested.

At the clay manufacturer, involving production, planning, customer service, inventory, and retail team members in the design, testing, and rollout was instrumental to success. Combining their operational knowledge with specialized business process, ERP, and data expertise allowed the team to develop a stronger design upfront and avoid optimizing one area at the expense of another.

Protect the Critical Path

One of the most overlooked aspects of transformation leadership is maintaining relentless focus on the critical path. The [critical path](#) is more than a project scheduling technique. It identifies the sequence of activities and dependencies that determine whether the transformation maintains momentum and delivers results. Successful leaders understand the connections between business process design, master data, system configuration, testing, training, pilots, and implementation. They distinguish between what is urgent and what is truly critical, resolve roadblocks, address resource conflicts, and keep the organization focused on the activities that determine success.

For example, a fire equipment manufacturer wanted to move from highly skilled planners developing schedules outside its ERP system to automated production planning and scheduling within JD Edwards. The planner alone could not make the project successful. MPS and MRP depended on accurate product configuration, engineering, final assembly, machine shop planning, purchasing, and supplier reliability. We developed a critical-path timeline and weekly scorecard showing progress, upcoming priorities, and potential bottlenecks. This kept the cross-functional team focused and allowed the company to successfully roll out production planning and scheduling. Instead of continually reacting to issues, the planner could focus proactively on exceptions.

Leadership Turns Plans into Results

Technology implementation is relatively straightforward compared with leading organizational change. People naturally question new processes, systems, and ways of working. Successful leaders address those concerns through consistent communication, collaboration, empowerment, accountability, and a continued focus on business objectives. Perhaps most importantly, they build trust. The best leaders will not assume people are afraid of change; in fact, most of the time, they are concerned about how to serve customers successfully with detailed requirements.

A building products manufacturer demonstrated the impact leadership can have while transforming its supply chain. The company implemented SIOP, leveraged SAP and advanced planning, and established weekly cross-functional accountability meetings. Executive sponsorship was central to the effort. The VP of Operations challenged and motivated the team while listening to concerns, and the CEO participated in most weekly meetings to reinforce the importance of customer results. Service levels improved dramatically — from approximately [38% into the 90% range](#) — while the organization also improved lead times and supported capacity growth. Leadership creates the environment where transformation can succeed.

Measure Business Success — Not Project Completion

Many organizations declare victory when the project goes live. In reality, implementation is only the beginning. Transformation should be measured by business results: customer service, forecast accuracy, inventory, lead times, productivity, working capital, profitability, scalability, and decision quality. User adoption matters as well. If planners override every recommendation, employees create manual workarounds and spreadsheets, or executives don't trust the information, the transformation is incomplete regardless of whether the software works.

Technology should simplify decision-making — not create additional complexity. Most importantly, no transformation project is worth pursuing unless it delivers [substantial business results](#). Our clients have achieved results ranging from a 50% reduction in inventory while maintaining service levels to 20-100% revenue growth, 50% reductions in lead times, and 20-30% improvements in cost and waste.

Business Transformation Is a Competitive Advantage

The pace of change will only accelerate. Artificial intelligence, [advanced planning technologies](#), automation, and increasingly connected supply chains are creating tremendous opportunities for organizations willing to rethink how they operate. The companies that consistently outperform their competitors understand that transformation is not an IT project or software implementation. It is a strategic capability.

Successful transformation occurs at the intersection of strong leadership, deep process expertise, disciplined execution, and technology enablement. Organizations that integrate these capabilities don't simply complete projects, they build more agile, scalable, resilient, and profitable businesses. Technology will continue to evolve. Customer expectations will continue to rise. Markets will continue to change. Organizations that develop the capability to successfully lead business transformation won't simply keep pace. Instead, they will define the future of their industries.

[Did you like this article? Continue reading on this topic:](#)
[Supply Chain Transformation: Predictable, Profitable, Intelligent](#)

Timely News, Updates & Strategies: Supply Chain Bytes

Supply Chain Bytes is our quick-hitting video series that delivers concise, impactful insights on the latest supply chain changes, strategies, trends, and impacts—all in under 90 seconds. Stay ahead with quick updates that keep you informed in the rapidly evolving supply chain landscape. See the full series - [SupplyChainBytes.com](https://www.supplychainbytes.com)



PLANNING

Supply Chain Network Strategy & Optimization: Building for Profitable Growth

Supply chain networks are under increasing pressure. Rapid growth, changing customer requirements, tariffs and geopolitical risk, reshoring and nearshoring, capacity constraints, and evolving technologies are forcing manufacturers and distributors to rethink where and how they produce, source, store, and distribute products.



A network that worked well five years ago, or even last year, might not support where the business is headed next. Companies must continually evaluate whether their manufacturing, supplier, inventory, distribution, and transportation networks can support changing demand while achieving customer service, growth, profitability, cash flow, and resilience objectives. The most successful companies don't simply optimize today's network. They design a network capable of supporting tomorrow's business.

Start with Demand: What Must Your Network Support?

Network strategy should start with the customer. Which products, markets, channels, and geographies are expected to grow? What lead times and service levels will customers require? How will new products, programs, or acquisitions change demand?

Demand planning and [SIOP](#) (Sales Inventory Operations Planning) provide the foundation. Instead of relying solely on historical sales, companies should develop a forward-looking view of demand and evaluate what that demand will require across the network. For example, in a fast-growing life sciences manufacturer, we reviewed growth trends, key customer programs, and new product and program rollouts to develop a directionally correct forecast by product grouping and key customer. Through SIOP and demand planning, we translated the high-level dollar forecast into products and equivalent units of measure.

This provided visibility into the highly skilled production resources, manufacturing cells, labs, and quality resources required to support growth and enabled executives to approve capacity investments proactively. The SIOP process supported the successful doubling of a critical business segment within the next year.

Align Manufacturing Capacity with Growth

Once future demand is understood, companies must determine whether the manufacturing network can support it. [Capacity](#) should be evaluated across facilities, production lines, equipment, labor, suppliers, utilities, and other critical resources. Would it make more sense to expand an existing facility, move production between plants, outsource production, automate a process, reshore manufacturing, or add another facility? Adding capacity in the wrong place can tie up significant capital without resolving the constraint that actually limits throughput.

A food and beverage manufacturer faced this challenge while preparing for peak season and simultaneously upgrading internal production lines, which required taking them out of service for several months. We translated the SIOP demand plan into requirements by channel, facility, region, co-manufacturer, co-packer, and work center.

We rolled out advanced planning, MPS, [MRP](#), and capacity planning and developed what-if and scenario-planning capabilities. Based on this information, the company optimized its production, subcontract, and distribution network and built inventory to support peak-season availability while optimizing manufacturing, purchasing, logistics, and freight costs. The upgrades also positioned the company with reliable production equipment to support future requirements.

Build a Resilient Supply Network

Network optimization extends upstream through suppliers and the extended supply chain. Supplier capacity, lead times, transportation, tariffs, geopolitical risks, critical materials, and dependencies several tiers into the supply chain can dramatically affect performance. The lowest purchase price is not necessarily the lowest total cost.

For example, an industrial equipment manufacturer needed to scale rapidly as demand outstripped internal capacity. The company outsourced several complex, custom products to support growth rather than extend customer lead times. Although one supplier offered a competitive price, unreliable deliveries disrupted downstream operations, creating delays, overtime, expediting costs, and additional overhead.

We expanded the [SIOP process](#) to incorporate outsourced supplier capacity and developed capacity, cost, and margin analyses. The analysis showed that the low-cost supplier actually had a higher total cost than a higher-priced supplier with greater capacity and capability. The company reduced volume with the unreliable supplier to a level it could support and transferred additional volume to the more capable supplier, improving customer and bottom-line results.

Optimize Distribution and Inventory

The downstream network is equally critical. Where should inventory reside? How many distribution centers are required? Which customers should each facility support? Should products ship from a distribution center, manufacturing facility, supplier, or third-party

logistics provider? Adding distribution centers can improve proximity and service but increase facilities costs, inventory, complexity, and working capital. Consolidating inventory can create efficiencies but potentially increase transportation costs or customer lead times.

A building products manufacturer with a significant distribution network needed to maintain short customer lead times, yet overhead and logistics costs were too high to support pricing and margin expectations. We performed a distribution and service policy analysis incorporating internal locations and 3PL options. Using SIOP, cost, and service data, we determined that a distribution center in the Northeast could be closed and its customers supported from the local facility with minimal additional resources. The decision reduced freight, logistics, and inventory investment while supporting growth objectives.

Optimize the End-to-End Supply Chain

One of the greatest risks in network optimization is improving one area while creating problems somewhere else. Purchasing might reduce material costs by sourcing overseas while increasing lead times and inventory. Manufacturing might maximize equipment utilization with long production runs while creating excess inventory and reducing responsiveness. Logistics might reduce freight costs through consolidation while negatively affecting customer service. Each decision might appear optimal independently.

The end-to-end supply chain tells a different story. Successful network strategy connects demand, suppliers, manufacturing, inventory, distribution, transportation, and customers. It evaluates tradeoffs across customer service, cost, cash, capacity, growth, and risk. The objective isn't to optimize each function. It is to optimize the business.

Use Scenario Planning to Prepare for Multiple Futures

Network strategy cannot be based on one assumption about the future. What happens if demand increases? A supplier cannot scale? A facility reaches capacity? Freight or commodity costs change? Customer demand shifts geographically? Scenario planning allows executives to evaluate alternatives before making significant investments.

For example, a storage equipment manufacturer wanted to determine whether it should purchase additional equipment and hire highly skilled resources at an overloaded facility or transfer volume to another facility. Freight and commodity costs had a significant influence on profitability, making the answer more complex than simply adding capacity.

Using quotes, orders, SIOP demand and capacity plans, we developed scenarios by region and evaluated supplier capacity, freight, and labor costs. The analysis determined that volume could be transferred to the facility closest to key customers, supporting growth without adding equipment and at a lower total cost. To learn how to roll out SIOP, download our complimentary eBook, "[SIOP: Creating Predictable Revenue and EBITDA Growth](#)".

Scenario planning gives companies the ability to identify which decisions should be made now and which should be triggered as conditions change.

Technology Enables Better Network Decisions

[ERP](#), advanced planning systems, network optimization software, digital twins, artificial intelligence, and analytics have dramatically increased what companies can evaluate. However, technology doesn't determine the strategy. The quality of network decisions depends on the data, assumptions, business processes, and people involved. Sophisticated software can produce a mathematically precise answer that makes little operational sense if the assumptions are wrong.

Technology should enable executives and planners to evaluate alternatives, identify constraints, improve visibility, and make better decisions. Business requirements should drive the model — not the other way around.

Build the Network for Profitable Growth

Network strategy only creates value when it translates into action. Decisions about facilities, production capacity, suppliers, inventory, transportation, and technology must

flow into capital plans, budgets, supplier agreements, inventory policies, hiring plans, and implementation priorities. Just as importantly, network strategy should connect back into ongoing SIOP, demand planning, capacity planning, production planning, and inventory planning. As demand and conditions change, executives should continually reassess whether the network can support what comes next.

The lowest-cost supply chain isn't necessarily the best supply chain. Companies need networks capable of supporting customers, growth, profitability, cash flow, and resilience simultaneously. Companies that continually evaluate demand, capacity, sourcing, inventory, and distribution and use scenario analysis to stay ahead of changing conditions will be better positioned to capitalize on growth opportunities while maintaining service, profitability, and resilience. The question isn't whether your supply chain network works today. Instead, it is whether it will support where your business is going next.

[Did you like this article? Continue reading on this topic: Maximizing Performance and Margins with SIOP](#)

Listen to a Client Example Case Study

Thrilled to share our client's success story related to key improvements in order management and commercial integration, capacity planning and scheduling to support revenue growth, enhanced & predictable customer service, and optimized operations. Our client discusses process upgrades, ERP optimization, and collaborative success.



Supply Chain Chats: Trending Podcast

From manufacturing and logistics to AI and global trade, Lisa talks with thought leaders and dives into the critical issues impacting businesses today. Stay informed, stay ahead and make smarter supply chain decisions. See the full series - SupplyChainChats.com



ERP & RELATED TECHNOLOGIES Order Management & Commercial Integration

Connecting Customer Demand with Operational Execution

Winning an order is only the beginning. The ability to anticipate customer demand, translate it into an executable plan, and reliably deliver on customer commitments becomes increasingly important as businesses grow and complexity increases.



Engineer-to-order (ETO) and configure-to-order (CTO) manufacturers must look beyond booked orders to opportunities in the pipeline, translating CRM and CPQ information into engineering requirements, material needs, capacity requirements, projected lead times, and predictable revenue. Consumer products and e-commerce companies face a different challenge: keeping pace with rapidly changing trends and buying patterns across brands, channels, SKUs, promotions, and customers while positioning inventory appropriately.

Companies need an end-to-end commercial process that connects opportunities, forecasts, and orders with inventory, capacity, production schedules, material availability, distribution, and customer commitments.

ETO and CTO: From Opportunity to Engineering to Delivery

ETO and CTO manufacturers have some of the most complex order management requirements. The process may begin in CRM with an opportunity that will not become an order for weeks or months. CPQ capabilities determine product configuration, specifications, pricing, and estimated lead time. Once the customer commits, design and process engineering may still need to finalize drawings, bills of material, routings, and customer approvals before a firm order can drive [MPS and MRP](#).

Operations cannot wait until that point to think about capacity, and purchasing cannot always wait for finalized designs before addressing long-lead materials. Rapidly growing ETO and CTO manufacturers should translate the CRM and quote pipeline into a forward-looking demand and capacity picture. Scenario analysis can evaluate what happens as major opportunities are won, delayed, accelerated, or lost, enabling better decisions about resources, capacity, materials, and lead times.

For example, an industrial equipment manufacturer was constrained by growth and could not reasonably predict revenue because it lacked visibility across CRM, CPQ,

engineering, and purchasing. By the time operations could respond, it often had to compress workloads by 50%, creating inefficiencies, overtime, and little agility to respond to changing conditions.

We rolled out a [SIOP process](#) that reviewed quotes, orders, and forecasted spares with Sales and translated key product groupings into capacity requirements for bottleneck work centers and forecasts for long-lead commodities. We also connected CRM, CPQ, and ERP data in a Power BI dashboard with alerts and exceptions and tracked orders through engineering, customer approval, planning, material availability, and scheduling.

With visibility months in advance, the company could plan staffing, capital investments such as a paint line and laser machine, and material purchases. The upgraded process created a reliable revenue forecast, supported 30-40% growth, and enabled bottleneck operations to double output with minimal additional resources.

Consumer and E-Commerce: Keeping Pace with Changing Demand

Food, beverage, consumer products, and e-commerce companies face a different type of complexity. Instead of a smaller number of highly engineered orders, they may manage thousands of SKUs across brands, channels, marketplaces, locations, and customer segments.

A total company [sales forecast](#) is not sufficient when demand varies by brand, channel, SKU, promotion, geography, or fulfillment location. Promotions, launches, seasonality, channel shifts, changing preferences, and returns can quickly alter the demand picture. CRM, e-commerce platforms such as Shopify, ERP, inventory planning, and warehouse and distribution systems must therefore translate changing demand into production, purchasing, inventory, replenishment, labor, storage, and freight requirements.

A bike parts distributor with nearly 30,000 active SKUs was struggling to keep up with changing demand while running out of warehouse space. Promotions and closeouts could significantly change requirements, forcing operations to react to last-minute labor and storage needs. We implemented a sales forecasting process by category, brand, and vendor and aligned it with replenishment and operational forecasts. Customer and product demand was translated by location size, packaging, product type, ABC classification, and freight mode into labor, storage, product build, and freight requirements.

With a large number of low-volume SKUs, the key was focusing attention where it mattered most: roughly 80% of picks came from less than 1% of the SKUs. By reorganizing the warehouse and positioning A items closer to the dock doors, the distributor improved labor efficiency by more than 20%, improved inventory accuracy on critical SKUs, optimized storage, and extended the life of the existing warehouse to support growth.

Proactively Manage Orders and Backlogs

Regardless of the business model, entering an order into ERP is not the end of [order management](#). It is the beginning of execution. Companies need to know whether inventory is available, materials will arrive when required, production and logistics capacity are available, and promised dates remain achievable. Instead of waiting for customer service to discover that an order is late, leading organizations continually evaluate open orders against inventory, production schedules, supplier commitments, and material availability.

ERP, MRP, [advanced planning and scheduling](#) (APS), and supply chain visibility can highlight exceptions before they become customer problems. If a critical component is delayed, the organization should quickly determine which production and customer orders will be affected and evaluate alternatives such as expediting supply, changing priorities, transferring inventory, using alternate suppliers, or adjusting schedules.

For example, a building products manufacturer struggled with service following a cyberattack and pandemic-related disruption. We tightened its demand planning process and better utilized CRM inputs, statistical trends, promotions, and advanced planning capabilities. More importantly, we connected the sales forecast to production and

distribution plans, upgraded MPS, MRP, and DRP processes, and clarified service policies.

Instead of reacting to inventory shortages, the team developed predictive models to identify potential shortages and implement action plans. Demand and capacity were aligned through SIOP, supported by weekly operational reviews of upcoming bottlenecks and corrective actions. Service levels improved from 38% to 92%.

Turn Order Visibility into Customer Service

Customers do not expect every supply chain to operate perfectly. They do expect reliable information. Yet customer service representatives often spend significant time chasing order status across planning, purchasing, production, engineering, and warehousing.

An integrated order management process should provide sales and customer service with [visibility](#) to order status, material constraints, production dates, inventory availability, and projected shipment dates. More importantly, companies should communicate proactively. If a delivery date is at risk, customers should hear about the issue and recovery plan before they have to ask.

The industrial equipment manufacturer extended its order management process from forecast and inception through engineering, customer approval, scheduling, key work centers, outsourced suppliers, assembly, paint, and shipment. With this information readily available, the company condensed lead times, absorbed additional revenue without adding headcount, improved supplier communication, and made proactive insource/outsource decisions.

Build a Scalable Commercial Engine

Rapid growth magnifies weak processes. Spreadsheets, tribal knowledge, and constant communication may work at lower volumes but quickly become bottlenecks as orders, products, channels, customers, and facilities increase.

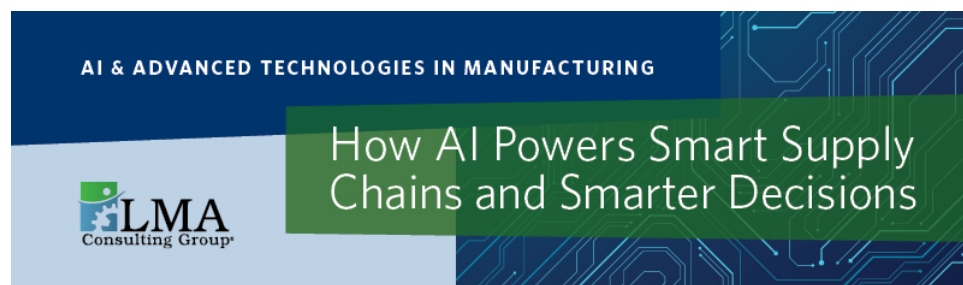
Technology can provide powerful capabilities, but implementing software is not the objective. The objective is an integrated commercial and operational process that answers a few fundamental questions: What demand is coming? What are we committing to customers? Do we have the materials and capacity to deliver it? What could disrupt the plan? And what should we do about it now?

Companies that can answer those questions quickly and reliably can provide realistic lead times, improve customer service, optimize inventory and capacity, proactively address shortages, and generate more predictable revenue. Ultimately, effective order management and commercial integration connect customer demand with operational execution — creating the visibility, coordination, and decision-making capability required to support scalable, profitable growth.

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Demand and Supply Execution: Its All About the Order](#)

AI & Advanced Technologies in Manufacturing

Our eBook shares critical insights into how AI powers smart supply chains and smarter decisions. [Download](#) your complimentary copy.



Experience in Working with LMA

Our client Armacell talks about their experience in working together from the CEO, General Manager of Operations, Integrated Business Planning (Supply Chain/ SIOP), and Sales point-of-view



Connections

THIS MONTH'S REQUESTS:

- If you have a supply chain or operations position, post it on our Association for Supply Chain Management Chapter (ASCM/ APICS) [website](#).
- Do you know a top notch investment banker with key clients in Southern California area interested in growing his/her business and meeting top-notch trusted advisor colleagues in the Inland Southern CA area? If so, I lead a group of top notch trusted advisors (with hybrid capabilities), [ProVisors](#) Ontario group, and we have an opening for someone interested in super charging their network, stimulating commerce, community and collaboration. Please introduce [me](#).
- If you know of a strong, hands-on planning/ supply chain leader in Southern California interested in a job at an innovative, growing company, [contact me](#).

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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