



CLOSE COLLABORATION



Worldwide Chain Stores (WCS) is a leading provider of supply chain execution technology. We ask CEO Joshila Makan how it has been able to effectively collaborate with technology suppliers as well as its customers.

SHD Logistics Magazine (SHD): What were your assessments of last year's WCS User Conference and how the event has helped forge or develop relationships with key technology influencers in the supply chain community?

Josh Makan (JM): The event was a huge success. It allowed us to confirm some of our thoughts with our customers and our broader partner community, around the real challenges and opportunities these businesses face across the industry. It's an invaluable platform for our customers as it enables them to

garner real insights amongst their peers.

We found that overall there were many factors affecting their ability as retailers to remain competitive such as ageing workforces, health and safety complexities, the cost and availability of labour, driver storage, climate changes, the generation of food waste, significant consumer change as instant gratification hits the supply chain. And ultimately the legislative and economic pressures of Brexit.

As these retailers look 10 years ahead, it was clear across the 2 days of the forum that technology is going to play a pivotal role in enabling them to remain competitive. Modernising



and investing in their supply chain technology platforms will continue to be instrumental to their success in the years to come.

Across the forum, our customers shared their views on what technology would gain traction in their supply chain and which are on their horizon for pilots and adoption over the next 3 years. WCS was able to practically deliver in terms of live technology innovation to our customers.

We also announced two strategic alliances that we hope will have a big impact on the success of our customers. DroneScan is a rapidly growing partner, and we are also a distributor for their technology in the UK, which allows us to provide their drone solution to our existing and new customers easily. We are also expanding the integration to make it more real-time.

Optricity plays another key role in our business today. Over the last year having worked closely with several customers we realised there was a need to bring further enhancements to our slotting capabilities. WCS has been known for its strong static and random slotting which has been called out by our customers, but there is a need for dynamic slotting as traditional logic is not dynamic enough for e-commerce or to handle next-day delivery fulfillment efficiency.

SHD: Your products and services range throughout the supply chain, from warehouse management, billing, procurement through to voice, labour management, POD, asset management and analytics. What would you say your customers are most looking for when they come to WCS asking for help with their supply chain operations?

JM: WCS customers are primarily looking for help in two main areas:

Omnichannel – with the move to omnichannel and the growing focus on inventory, the ability to support different

size and different type of customer orders is needed. CSnx is providing additional flexibility in terms of consolidating orders, integration to different types of automated material handling equipment. Indeed customers are turning to WCS for assistance in warehouse design and selection of the most appropriate automated handling equipment for their business.

Growing our planning capabilities – incorporating some of these advances into the supply chain planning process.

SHD: CSnx, your next generation technology platform, is your flagship product. How is your platform being received amongst the supply chain community? And what are the key differentiators between what WCS offers compared with your direct competitors?

JM: A differentiation point for WCS has always been the integration between execution and supply chain planning. This is something that we are extending in the CSnx environment. It has always been a priority for WCS customers that demand and supply planners and replenishment buyers have real time visibility into the execution and operational environment.

SHD: How do you assess the technology landscape within the logistics market? Are we truly heading towards a fully automated supply chain?

JM: I think there are areas where automation is growing and is going to take a more significant role. There have been areas where the flexibility of the automated material handling equipment has allowed customers to be really focused on their investments focusing in on specific areas that will

give them the most ROI.

However, from a supply chain planning point of view we will probably see technology helping automate simpler problems and manage certain types of exceptions allowing a supply chain planner to focus more on the areas that their expertise can be of most value.



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Talk to Josh today during the networking breaks or contact the company via: sales@wchain.com