

Chapter 24

The Importance of Perception and Appreciation of the Information Management for Effective Logistics and Supply Chain in Transport Sector

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ABSTRACT

The information assumes in the transport industry a central role in supporting the economic activities. Firms today are faced with very low commercial margins due to the instability of fuel prices and increased competition. In this economic operating scenario, only proper information management provides a real knowledge of the activities efficiency and allows the maintenance of the competitive advantage of economic organizations. Data flow diagrams are valuable tools for the identification and articulation of the organizational processes and the different information needs. In this sense, for their simplicity data flow diagrams are important management tools that can be used by managers to identify and optimize the developed processes and activities. This study sought to highlight, through the use of diagrams of data streams, the importance of this analysis in the study of how the company fits its activities and how should face frame through a perspective based on information. The schematic representation of these two analytical perspectives, the first based on an internal perspective and the other base on an outside perspective, shows the significant difference from the potential results to management.

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INTRODUCTION

The evolution of information and communication technologies (ICT) is changing the ways that management should face the organization dynamics and the information contribution to efficiency and efficacy of management (Anunciação, 2008). Information technology has been utilized to support logistics for many years and is seen as a key factor that affects the growth and development of logistics (Purdescu, Moise & Stanculeanu, 2009).

Its importance comes from the fact that information describes all the traditional features and has a set of characteristics that challenge permanently organizational management. The actual knowledge and information society highlight the relevance of information while economic and social asset because they support all the economic agents and citizens activities. They required new capabilities to process, store and flow the information according with the new economic and social requirements and nature of activities. New technologies support global networks that create and stimulate free flows of information. In this context, information generates conditions to knowledge development and gives power to all organizations that can adequately process and extract value from it.

ICTs give a powerful vision and new approaches to the way that we see the world around us. This vision of the world is becoming global and universal, and generates a social, material and symbolic value that, although being individualized and close to those who use them, tends to always represent a global and massiveness asset. This is a new strategic perspective of the information concept dimension. Not only the economic agents but also citizens in general perceive information as a social and economic resource that can and will provide value to them in different ways, such as personal or professional.

In this sense, information is power and its possession constitutes one of the most powerful ways of exercise it, mostly on the economic levels. Information management activities make sense on the new economic and social organisations and his consequent responsibility should be close to the top management. It's on the top management level that all economic responsibilities of the organization are at stake, so top management cannot alienate the world around and the information that it provides. The organization competitiveness is focused on the world around us and on the quick response to all stimulus. Organizational sustainability depends on the capacity of dialog that companies can establish with the world around them (Anunciação, 2014).

In this growing competitive environment companies are pressured to rely on instruments, models and resources that capitalize information, knowledge and all experience acquired on they own activities. Along the way, they are developing information intelligence skills to answer to the new market demands. Therefore, companies must possess capable information systems (IS), properly architected and connected with the exterior (Anunciação & Zorrinho, 2006), where the acquired data are analysed and used to optimize and capitalize all activities, products or services. Decision making is information in action. Managers need to know how to use current information and information technology to support decision making. Decision choices are influenced by the data collected and the way the data is processed. So without the ability to effectively use information systems, an organization cannot compete (McLeod & Schell, 2004).

Managing information it's all about planning, structuring, organizing and controlling data according with the interior or/and exterior scenarios, constantly looking to anticipate the future or to understand and anticipate the movements of the competition.

Information systems and Information and communication technologies (IS/ICT) should consider changing scenarios where the versatility and flexibility of all the company activities, the importance of the human resources and most of all, their integration and adaptation with all the activities triggered by

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