Scaling a supply chain to help fight hunger

CHALLENGE

Every year, the World Food Programme (WFP) distributes approximately 15 billion rations of food and other assistance to those most in need around the globe. On any given day, WFP has 5,000 trucks, 20 ships, and 92 planes on the move.

The complexity and scale of its operations meant that WFP could only conduct supply chain planning asynchronously and at the regional level. This prevented the organization from efficiently balancing requirements, inventory, and costs across regions.

SOLUTION

Common operating picture

WFP developed a common operating picture across regions and teams with hundreds of data transformations describing their supply chain.

Data about food requirements, nutritional value, purchases, budgets, transportation costs and logistics, and commodity inventory updates daily. WFP can now make changes to its supply chain and optimize inventory and food basket decisions globally.

Holistic country view

Country managers see holistic information about their operations — food requirements at the commodity level, operating budgets, expected deliveries, inventory levels, stock that is about to expire, and expected gaps.

Logistics officers make informed supply chain decisions by tracking the downstream effects of those decisions on other operations.

IMPACT

- In just 3 months, WFP had fully operational pipelines for the global supply chain.

- The organization optimizes food baskets on a daily basis for all countries. In the past, food optimization took 3-4 months for each country and coverage was limited to 3-4 countries.

- Deployment in 6 pilot countries yielded an estimated $30 million in savings. With projected savings of $100 million at scale, this can provide aid to tens of millions of additional people.

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Transforming the day-to-day operations of a global workforce

CHALLENGE

To get shipments from origin to destination, thousands of interdependent tasks must be assigned to thousands of customer service agents. Even one misstep in the chain of tasks can cause serious shipping delays – and frustrated customers move on to competitors.

When a global shipping company set out to reduce costs, they discovered that improving task completion could help save tens of millions of dollars. They needed a technological solution to overcome siloed legacy systems, improve visibility into tasks, and automate manual workflows.

SOLUTION

Applying logic and automation to a unified data asset allows customer service agents to quickly prioritize and complete hundreds of thousands of operational tasks. The solution enables:

Task prioritization

Tasks are now systematically prioritized by impact so agents can focus on completing the tasks that are most important to customer satisfaction.

Task assignment

Task assignment logic allows the company, without any human effort, to intelligently distribute the global workload and incorporate local department-controlled criteria.

Task exploration

A detailed task view joins data from booking systems, container tracking systems, CRM sources, and more – giving agents complete context.

Task monitoring

Management tracks overall performance to monitor how task completion is contributing to organizational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

IMPACT

- Key tasks are scored by impact and prioritized in seconds (versus hundreds of hours) – this helps ensure retention of the organization's most valuable customers.

- Tasks automatically assigned to thousands of agents across more than 100 countries.

- Procedural efficiencies have saved the company tens of millions of dollars.

Improving high-stakes customer service

CHALLENGE

A global logistics company receives thousands of invoice-related inquires from customers every day. To understand the terms that govern the inquiry in question, customer service representatives had to traverse more than 10 systems and manually compare contracts, timetables, and more.

With no simple way to determine the validity of an inquiry, representatives often resorted to discounting invoices to preserve customer satisfaction. Even still, this manual and time-consuming process led to customer frustration and was a drag on revenue.

SOLUTION

Intelligent inquiry routing

Customer service representatives have a complete view of all inquiries with integrated data from 10+ systems. Machine indexing automatically routes incoming inquiries to the correct department. Human reviewers then audit customer service actions to continuously improve the indexing model.

Inquiry context and analytics

Automated logic helps representatives identify the cause of an inquiry so they can give customers a clear explanation for the invoice. To help navigate the discussion, representatives are provided with historical context about the inquiry, such as previous emails and invoices.

Approval workflows

Customer service representatives diagnose the issue and record the outcome of the inquiry. Together, these inputs automatically kick off approval and correction workflows across the organization.

IMPACT

- The company increased annual collections by more than $50 million.

- The number of invoice-related inquiries decreased by 10%.

Realizing post-M&A synergies

CHALLENGE

A global manufacturer had recently expanded its US operations via a major acquisition. Both the target and acquirer companies had significant production capacity and large customer bases. Post-close, data from production, sales, and logistics was spread across multiple legacy and third-party systems – all of it structured differently. To realize deal synergies, such as increased On-Time-In-Full (OTIF) deliveries, the manufacturer needed to quickly integrate operations and harmonize target KPIs across both companies.

SOLUTION

Post-M&A integration

The manufacturer created a consolidated view of its newly expanded company by integrating production, customer, order, scheduling, and third-party logistics data. This laid the foundation for comprehensive top-down and bottom-up supply chain analytics, specifically in managing OTIF deliveries.

Top-down OTIF planning

For top-down planning, global production leads first identify production issues in Foundry. From there, they work with individual regions and plants to correct problems by shifting production based on inventory, demand, and logistics pricing.

Bottom-up OTIF management

For bottom-up management, customer service representatives track orders at risk of delay. Risk factors such as contract pricing or shipping issues are flagged automatically so reps can quickly take action and resolve the issue.

IMPACT

- The company started realizing operational synergies in 6 weeks. Since then, the workflows have been rolled out across 3 continents, with plans to expand to the rest of the company.

- On-Time-In-Full (OTIF) deliveries increased by 8%.