

## 5 TRENDS IN SUPPLY CHAIN



### Digital supply chains

The rapidly proliferating, adoption and maturing of technologies (the Internet of Things, digitization of data, big-data, blockchain and 3D printing) have accelerated the pace and accuracy with which the supply chain can execute to a client demand. So whether it is about improving planning and replenishment, creating a lean and balanced supply-chain, product traceability or reducing cost to serve and transact, the supply chain is better enabled through such technologies.



### Near-shoring

As the global economy shifts eastward, many manufacturers are restructuring their supply chains by 're-shoring' operations closer to where the markets are, and are likely to be. Near-shoring offers several advantages which include less distant time zones, greater security over intellectual property, increased customer responsiveness and decreased turnaround times. Some of the key reasons for this trend includes: rising labor costs in China, technology that has reduced the relative cost of labor, political instability and environmental disasters and major time zone differences that make communication between the U.S. and Asia more difficult, issues around maintaining quality standards and guarding intellectual property, among others.



### Sustainability

The global population is projected to touch 8.3 billion by 2030. With the demand for food and energy increasing by 50% and water demand increasing by 30%, we will soon witness an era where demand for natural resources begins to easily outstrip available supplies. Production costs will also likely go up. This trend will revolve around sustainability, regulations on carbon footprint and opportunities in the space for green-technology opportunities.



### Omni-channel proliferation

The growth of e-commerce has forced established retailers to adopt omni-channel fulfillment practices. Inventory optimization will take on greater importance as product availability and timely fulfillment becomes essential across all channels.



### Movement towards a subscription/lease economy

We are already seeing a big trend of customers looking to buy a service rather than a product, even in more traditional product categories. Supply chains will need to evolve to support these needs more efficiently, effectively and with added emphasis on customer experience.