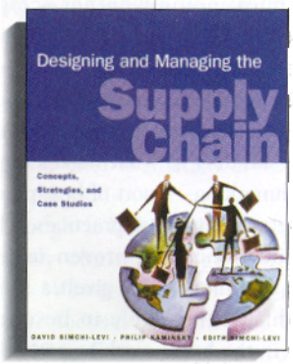
PUBLICATIONS, WEB SITES, & MORE

A Book for Students Everywhere

Designing and Managing the Supply Chain
David Simchi-Levi, Philip Kaminsky, Edith Simchi-Levi
Irwin McGraw-Hill, 2000
ISBN 0-256-26168-7
322 pages, $84.38
To order: Call (800) 262-4729 or visit www.mhhe.com

Very few books on supply chain management succeed as both an instructional vehicle for the student and a hands-on resource for the practitioner. *Designing and Managing the Supply Chain* is the happy exception. This collaboration between academia and the industry (David Simchi-Levi and Philip Kaminsky are university professors, while Edith Simchi-Levi is president of a software-development company) bridges that gap between the pedantic and the pragmatic.



After presenting their view of supply chain management, which closely resembles the Council of Logistics Management's definition—*integrating the flow of goods and information from source to consumer*—the authors turn to what they call the key supply chain elements. One chapter, for example, examines a logistics network configuration. It presents a case study up front, replete with problems and challenges. The instructional part of the chapter then discusses the technology and decision-support tools that can be applied to the case example. By the end of the chapter, the students (whether they be in the classroom or on the job) can address the issues raised in the cases effectively.

That technique is repeated for a number of critical supply chain topics—inventory management, strategic alliances, international logistics, and the often-overlooked supply chain/product design connection, to name a few.

Especially valuable for readers without a strong technical background is the discussion on supply chain information technology and decision-support systems. Though the book does not provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating and selecting technology, it does offer a useful overview of key considerations and trade-offs to keep in mind when selecting software. The explanation of decision-support systems is particularly lucid.

As a bonus, *Designing and Managing the Supply Chain* comes with two instructional games (the Computerized Beer Game and the Risk Pool Game) on CD-ROM to reinforce the book's key points.

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A Web Resource on CPFR

CPFR: Collaborative Planning, Forecasting, and Replenishment
Voluntary Interindustry Commerce Standards Association, 1998
www.cpfr.org

The ability to collaborate among trading partners is viewed increasingly as a prerequisite to supply chain success. Establishing a business plan that will promote successful collaboration, however, is no small feat. A good first step is to check out the Collaborative Planning, Forecasting, and Replenishment (CPFR) Web site at www.cpfr.org. This site is maintained by the Voluntary Interindustry Commerce Standards (VICS) Board.

The group's mission is to develop a set of standard business processes for creating collaborative relationships between buyers and sellers. The user-friendly CPFR Web site contains voluntary guidelines for jointly creating a business plan, making sales and order forecasts, and fulfilling orders. The guidelines are incorporated into a flexible model that provides variations for different kinds of trading partnerships.

The CPFR model does a good job of breaking down the collaboration process into nine steps—from developing a front-end agreement to generating the order. The site then outlines the key activities associated with each of these steps. Although numerous activities are listed, some are covered much more comprehensively than others.

In addition to the general guidelines, the site gives helpful supplementary information, such as a sample front-end agreement, a technology overview, and case studies involving companies such as Wal-Mart, Sara Lee, and Lucent.

Although created for the retail industry, CPFR seems adaptable to other industries as well. The initiative, however, favors companies with a process orientation and a certain level of technological sophistication. Companies should be able to send forecasts in a stan-