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The ash clouds from Iceland's Eyjafjallajokull volcano had a significant impact on European airspace, but posed no real threat to the global supply chains of companies with the right systems in place, says AEB UK's General Manager Mark Brannan. Read full press release: www.logisticsweek.com

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The future of IT in supply chain management

Software can become the critical factor in supply chain success, but this is only true for those who take IT to the cutting edge. Talking about trends has always been dangerous. And supply chain management is one of the most agile branches of business. But discussing trends always means setting trends – in other words, opening up opportunities for success. So let's be brave and talk about five major trends in SCM IT over the next ten years.

Cutting costs. Controlling costs.

The main cost-saving objective of SCM IT is to reduce execution costs for order fulfillment, stock keeping, transportation planning, customs procedures, and so on. Standardization and automation in the field of execution will still be the main driver for IT investments. And the “brave” supply chain managers will see the return on these investments in short order.

Visibility

One of the most compelling concepts in the last ten years has been that of visibility. This trend will gain further impact – as it is still a “concept” for many companies. The coming decade will also show that visibility is not the target, just the tool.

Influence of social media on SCM

There is a close analogy between the organization, structure and principles of a social network like Facebook and the collaboration in a supply chain. Even the terms are the same: the most important tool in Facebook is the “status update.” Just replace people in this concept by goods and tag them with an RFID transponder. Ever heard of the “Internet of things”?

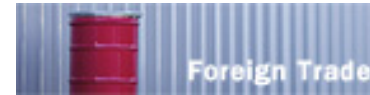
The medium of Twitter will also leave a greater mark on the supply chain community than is possible to imagine today. “Real-time communication” is the key concept here.

Services such as TrackThis (<http://www.usetrackthis.com>) already show it can work: Twitter users can have status updates from parcel services displayed directly in their Twitter timeline.

Sustainability

The most sustainable trend will be toward sustainability. Future transport management solutions will help manage green supply chains. They will provide the necessary data to help make green decisions. SCM solutions will need to support various SCM strategies: using slower modes of transports, avoiding unnecessary transports, optimizing transport capacities, etc.

The magazine *Supply Chain Asia* published an [article by Dr. Torsten Mallée in its May issue](#) that provides a more detailed examination and explanation of the trends sketched out here.



AEB successfully completes EMCS testing in the UK

AEB International has successfully completed Excise & Movement Control System (EMCS) testing using HM Revenue & Customs data and official test service. These tests demonstrate that AEB is able to process the necessary electronic data required of EMCS Functional Stage 0 (FS0) for the discharge of excise movements. Given these positive results, HMRC have added AEB to their website listing of software companies that have tested successfully: www.hmrc.gov.uk/ebu/emcs-online.htm.

Once Functional Stage 1 specifications are finalised by HMRC, AEB will complete a further round of testing to ensure that the EMCS product range also fulfills the requirements for excise movement submissions.

AEB is offering four unique, user-friendly solutions to handle EMCS, each featuring a proven range of functions. AEB's solutions allow users to discharge any e-AAD, regardless of the member state in which it was submitted. On completion of FS1 specifications, the solutions will additionally enable users to make excise movement submissions.

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Exports rising in UK and Singapore

Business Week reports on the economic recovery in Britain and rising exports in Singapore. A UK index of factory orders jumped to a 21-month high in May as the strengthening global economy and the weaker pound boosted export demand, the Confederation of British Industry reports.

>> View full article at www.businessweek.com

Singapore's exports rose in April at the fastest pace since 2005 as a recovering global economy increased shipments by makers of electronics. Singapore has raised its growth forecast twice this year, helped by a pickup in manufacturing as demand from the Asian region and the rest of the world recovers from last year's slump.

>> View full article at www.businessweek.com

This is good news indeed. AEB UK and AEB Asia Pacific in Singapore can confirm increased market interest and a gradual willingness to invest in software again. Previously frozen IT budgets are starting to be re-activated. "However", says Mark Brannan, General Manager of AEB International, "businesses are still hesitant and not ready to 'jump the gun' – investment options, if already available, are carefully considered and thoroughly compared against market offerings before an order is placed." Dr. Torsten Mällée, General Manager of AEB Asia Pacific, adds: "One needs to consider that even though improvements are noticeable, not all businesses necessarily have a better cash flow yet. The latest upward trends still need to be reflected in the actual books, which obviously requires a bit of time."



ASSIST4 Freight: “Freight Calculator” replaces “Calculator”

The new ASSIST4 Freight Calculator is the right tool for fast and easy calculation of freight costs for a particular consignment or sales order. This feature lets you provide your sales team with quick information, for example. The Freight Calculator replaces the current “Calculator” feature. You have the option of calculating package- or item-specific tariffs or testing a specific quote. All you need to do is enter the key consignment data – consignor, consignee, consignment weight, etc. – to see a list of potential carriers and their freight charges. You can apply data from export or freight consignments directly to the Freight Calculator. Your stored quotes and tariffs are automatically applied to the calculation. This ensures that freight information is always based on current agreements. The “Quote” calculation type gives you the convenient option of testing individual quotes.

The new Freight Calculator will be included in the ASSIST4 standard service pack 05/2010. If you are already using the “Calculator,” you must first mark a checkbox before the system will display the new Freight Calculator. Please contact AEB support if you have any questions. If you are not yet using the solution but are interested in learning more, please contact your AEB sales representative. We’ll be happy to assist you.

Volcanic ash no threat to global supply chain

In an AEB UK press release entitled “Volcanic Ash No Threat to Global Supply Chain,” AEB UK’s General Manager Mark Brannan explains that even though we learned earlier this year that ash clouds from volcanic eruptions can seriously compromise global air cargo movements by bringing air traffic in the affected regions to a virtual standstill, companies today can protect themselves from significant impacts by deploying the right tools for supply chain visibility & control and event management. Such software tools, Brannan continues, support transparency throughout the network and among the involved parties, assist in making timely and pro-active decisions, and provide alternative strategies for supply, fulfillment, transport modes and routes in case of discrepancies.

View the full [press release as published online in “Logistics Week” in May](#)



Warwickshire, July 8: The Fresh Connection Finals & SCALA Logistics Debate

Two key logistics events will be held at Wroxall Abbey, Warwickshire on July 8th.

The Fresh Connection Finals is the culmination of an innovative supply chain competition – sponsored by AEB and organised by SCALA Consulting – that has been running since April 2010. This online role-playing competition is the first of its kind in the UK, designed to test best industry practice and provide logistics strategy training. Over six consecutive weeks, competing teams have been trying to improve the financial figures of a fictitious fruit juice producer *The Fresh Connection* and ensure solid, stable development and growth for the company.

As you know from previous publications, an AEB team with members from Stuttgart and Warwick had been battling to save the company. With a positive return on investment of 10%, the company finished with a solid financial basis (compared to a starting ROI of -11%) and managed to continuously increase its ROI over the six rounds played. Nina Hummel from Stuttgart who played the Supply Chain Manager for the AEB team remarked that: 'Everyone on the team became aware that small adjustments in one of the company's divisions can have a significant impact on the whole company. For example, I could reduce the safety stock for finished goods drastically (thereby achieving cost savings) if the Operations Manager were to introduce preventive maintenance on his bottling lines to improve production reliability.' The AEB team finished the crucial final round in 4th place out of 11 teams in its group, narrowly missing-out on the opportunity to advance into the Finals.

On July 8th, the finalists will play three further rounds of The Fresh Connection at Wroxall Abbey, with the winning team becoming UK Supply Chain Champions 2010.

On the same day, AEB will also be part of the SCALA Logistics Debate as sponsor with forum stand representation. The debate will include topics such as supply chain collaboration and effects of supply chain improvements on 'on shelf availability', and will feature prominent speakers from e.g. Pepsi Co, Tesco.com and Cadbury. The debate is followed by a summer evening event, offering further opportunities for the top supply chain professionals to meet and discuss important industry issues.

>> View [SCALA information leaflet for further details](#)

Singapore: successful event on supplier management

As part of the “Insights” series, *ProcurementAsia* hosted an event on May 26, 2010, in the Asian Civilization Museum in Singapore focusing on how to best manage supplier relationships.

The event was very positively received by a total number of over 160 participants.

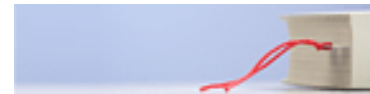
Successfully managing supplier relationships is becoming increasingly important and is a crucial element in ensuring sustainable business. Without proper controls and management in place, the value of a contract with a supplier can degrade quickly and irreversibly, leading to the failure to deliver the projected on-boarding benefit and creating frustrating and unsatisfactory relationships. This in turn can impact service, cost and the ability to adapt to changing market influences. Understanding how to best manage these relationships and the tools available to help you do so effectively can make a real difference in the success of your supply chain.

AEB’s Dr. Torsten Mallée, General Manager of AEB (Asia Pacific), and Markus Meissner, Head of Product Management and Development at AEB, were the guest speaker and special panelist during this important industry gathering. Other speakers included Mr. Andrew Williams, Regional Head of Business Performance Services, Asia Pacific, KPMG; and Mr. Ard Verboon, Director of BU TV Purchasing at Philips Electronics.

For more details, please view the [ProcurementAsia Insights publication](#) after the event.

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Publications



UK magazine features AEB in software-as-a-service article

One of the UK’s leading monthly logistics and supply chain publications – *Logistics Manager* – published a three-page article on software-as-a-service in its June edition. A number of managers from key software suppliers were interviewed for the article, including AEB (International) Ltd General Manager, Mark Brannan. AEB secured yet another high-profile write-up, and this is the third month in a row that AEB has been featured prominently in this magazine.

The article – entitled 'Super size me' – focuses on how software-as-a-service is becoming more established in the marketplace and an option for companies both large and small. Mark Brannan comments on how the recession has increased interest in software-as-a-service solutions.

[>> Article “Super Size me” in PDF format](#)

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ProcurementAsia helpline: tips on supplier management

The Singapore magazine *ProcurementAsia* is publishing a monthly “advice column” called ‘Helpline – Tips from the Expert’. All readers are invited to address their questions. In the June issue of the magazine Dr. Torsten Mällée, General Manager of AEB Asia Pacific, provides answers to the question why supplier management is becoming increasingly important and how this topic is best approached. Mällée details that business’ biggest revenues threats can be identified within their supply chain and recommends “risk scorecards” to asses and qualify these risks. Based on the identified risks, he further recommends three major measures to overcome the business challenges.

>> [View the full helpline article](#)

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