Unit Two Logistics Information Management

Section A Text

***Pre-reading Discussion*:**

1. What is logistics information?
2. What is logistics information management?
3. How many kinds of logistics information technology do you know? Please give some examples.

Introduction

1 Part of an organization's ability to use logistics as a competitive weapon is based on its ability to adjust logistics performance in real time. This means the ability to monitor customers' demands and inventory levels as they occur. A logistics information system which will impact all of the logistics activities must be integrated. Such system also must be integrated with other members of the supply chain, to provide accurate information throughout the channel from the earliest supplier to the final customer.

Logistics Information

2 Logistics information can be considered in both narrow and broad ways. According to a narrow definition, logistics information means the information related to the logistics activities, such as transportation, storage, package, distribution processing, etc. To be more specific, selecting transporting tools, choosing optimal route, determining quantity of unit delivery, **tracing** goods in transit, maintaining high level **utilization** of storage facilities, improving standard of customer services, all need **thorough** and precise logistics information.

3 In a broad point of view, logistics information also contains **commodities** trading information and marketing information. Commodities trading information means selling and purchasing information, order and acceptance information,

delivering and receiving information and so on. Marketing information means the information concerned with market activities, such as consumers' demand information, competitors and competitive products information, sales and promotion activities information, transportation and communication **infrastructure** information.

4 Nowadays, logistics information is closely related to commodities trading information and marketing information. This broad conception of logistics information can both integrate manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and the final customers, and make the high efficiency of the whole supply chain possible by implementing information technology. It is to say, logistics can help each enterprise to efficiently control the activities of planning, coordinating, customer services and so on.

5 Logistics information is one of the key factors of logistics system. It has its own **features**. (1) Large Quantity: Logistics information **generates** from logistics activities and the exchanges of commodities. The **flourishing** trading activities lead to increasing quantity of logistics information. And the trend is going to continue. (2) Fast Changing: New trends of logistics activities, such as small quantity but more varieties production, and high frequent delivery bring fast changing of logistics information. (3) Various Sources: Logistics information includes both the information from internal and **external**. Production information and inventory information are examples of internal information. Outside the enterprise, the information of public infrastructures and other competitive organizations is also very important.

Logistics Information Management

6 Logistics information management is defined as the information processing of collecting, **reconciling**, communicating, storage and utilizing of all the information generated from logistics operations.

7 Logistics information management is not only about dealing with the information about procurement, selling, storage, transportation and other logistics activities, but also every decision-making about supplier selection, marketing plan and customer analysis, including providing solution, collecting and **analyzing** all kinds of logistical information data based on data processing abilities of a computer.

Through these analyses, better decisions can be made. Enterprises can then improve their production efficiency and overall performances, and enhance their competitive advantages. The **traits** of logistics information management are specialization, wide **range** and **flexibility**. It is obvious that logistics information management is specialized to deal with the logistics information and to help the day-to-day task of logistics activities. And the object is of wide range. It can involve goods conditions, staff facilities and equipment information, operation techniques and methods information, time-space information, etc.

8 For an **enterprise**, logistics information management has two aspects, within the enterprise and among enterprises. Within the enterprise, information is mainly about manufacturing and selling. Among enterprises, things become more **complicated**: procurement ordering, POS data collecting and **forecasting**, customer analyzing and interaction.

9 According to the process of logistics operation, information management can be **identified** as material requirement information management, procurement information management, inventory information management, and transportation information management.

Mode of Logistics Information Management

10 Manual managing is based on paper work. That means data information would be manually recorded, **calculated**, and reconciled. It is what happened in the past. Now, some changes have taken place. Sub-systematic managing is now a method used by a large number of companies. It focuses on a single activity, with the help of computer to manage the information flow, like POS and WMS. More and more companies turn to systematic managing style. It is based on computer and network technology, to integrate several subsystems and share the information to realize a higher total efficiency.

Logistics Information Management Technology

11 Auto identification systems such as bar coding and electronic scanning are developed to facilitate logistics information collection and exchange. Increased domestic and international competition is driving shippers, carriers, warehouses, wholesalers, and retailers to develop and utilize Auto ID **capability** to compete in today's marketplace, to replace former paper-based information collection and

exchange processes that were error-prone and time-consuming.

12 Bar **Code** is the placement of computer **readable** codes on items, cartons, containers, pallets, and even rail cars. It is usually dark ink on a light background to create high and low **reflectance**. Bar code stores data in the widths and spacing of printed **parallel** lines. It can be read by **optical** scanners called bar code readers or scanned from an image by special software. Most consumers are aware of the Universal Product Code (UPC) that is present on virtually all consumer products. UPC bar codes, first used in 1972, **assign** a unique 12-digit number to each manufacturer and product. Standardized bar codes reduce errors when receiving, handling, or shipping products. For example, a bar code distinguishes package size and **flavor**. European Article Numbering (EAN) is the European and United Nations' standard for bar coding of items. It is likely that the UPC and EAN systems will become more **harmonized** due to pressures of global trade.

13 Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) is an automatic identification method, relying on storing and **remotely retrieving** data-using devices called RFID **tags**. Most RFID tags contain at least two parts. One is an integrated **circuit** for storing and processing information. The other is an **antenna** for receiving and transmitting the signal. It can be used to identify a container or its contents as it moves through facilities or on transportation equipment. RFID places a coded electronic chip in the container or box. As the container or box moves through the logistics process, it can be scanned for an identifying code or even for the list of contents. Retailers begin to use RFID to allow entire **cartloads** of merchandise to be scanned **simultaneously**.

14 EDI is short for Electronic Data Interchange, defined as inter-company computer-to-computer exchange of business documents in standard formats to facilitate high-volume transactions. EDI are quickly becoming the standard for effective, accurate, and low-cost information exchange, like internet. It involves both the capability and practice of communicating information between two organizations electronically instead of via the traditional forms of mail, **courier**, or even fax.

15 GPS is short for Global Positioning System, which is based on **satellite** technology. GPS allows communication across a wide **geographic** area such as a **region** or even the world. The technology is similar to **microwave** dishes used for

home television in areas outside the reach of cable. This satellite based technology provides a fast and high-volume channel for information movement around the globe. Logistics **participators** can **mount** on their trucks to enable two-way communication between drivers and their **dispatchers**. Such real time interaction provides up-to-date information regarding location and delivery information and allows dispatchers to redirect trucks based on need or congestion.

Logistics Information Management System

16 To successfully manage the **vast** volume of logistics information generated from the active logistics operations, a logistics information system is needed. Logistics information system is usually a **subset** of a firm's total information system, and it is directed to the particular problems of logistics decision-making. Like other information systems, logistics information system is also based on computer and network technologies. The key point is the **systematic** conception, integrating all the factors of logistics operation, and processing the data to optimize the decision-making.

17 The **distinct** elements of the information system are input, the database and its associated **manipulation**, the output. First of all, acquiring the data items needed for the logistics system from customers, company records, published data and management. After determining the content of the database, data maintaining, processing and analyzing is followed up. Then, the final step is output. It reports the result of data process and analysis. And efficient decision will be made upon these outputs. It is why we say the major purpose of the system is to be a decision support tool for planning and operating.

(***words*: *1332***)

New Words

trace /treis/ *v.*	追踪,回溯,描绘
utilization /ˌjuːtəlaiˈzeiʃn/ *n.*	利用
thorough /ˈθʌrə/ *a.*	彻底的,完全的
commodity /kəˈmɔdəti/ *n.*	商品,日用品
infrastructure /ˈinfrəstrʌktʃə/ *n.*	基础建设,基础设施
feature /ˈfiːtʃə/ *n.*	特征,特点

generate /ˈdʒenəreit/ *v.* 产生,引起
flourishing /ˈflʌriʃiŋ/ *a.* 繁荣的
external /ikˈstəːnl/ *a.* 外部的,外面的
reconcile /ˈrekənsail/ *v.* 和解,使一致
analyze /ˈænəlaiz/ *v.* 分析
trait /treit/ *n.* 特征
range /reindʒ/ *n.* 范围
flexibility /ˌfleksəˈbiləti/ *n.* 灵活性
enterprise /ˈentəpraiz/ *n.* 企业,公司
complicated /ˈkɔmplikeitid/ *a.* 复杂的
forecast /ˈfɔːkɑːst/ *v.* 预测,预报
identify /aiˈdentifai/ *v.* 鉴定,认出
calculate /ˈkælkjuleit/ *v.* 估计,计算
capability /ˌkeipəˈbiləti/ *n.* 能力,才能
code /kəud/ *n.* 编码,原码
readable /ˈriːdəbl/ *a.* 可读的
reflectance /riˈflektəns/ *n.* 反射比
parallel /ˈpærəlel/ *a.* 平行的
optical /ˈɔptikl/ *a.* 光学的
assign /əˈsain/ *v.* 分配,指定
flavor /ˈfleivə/ *n.* 味道,香料
harmonized /ˈhɑːmənaizd/ *a.* 和谐的
remotely /riˈməutli/ *ad.* 遥远地
retrieve /riˈtriːv/ *v.* 检索,收回
tag /tæg/ *n.* 标签
circuit /ˈsəːkit/ *n.* 电路,回路
antenna /ænˈtenə/ *n.* 天线
cartload /ˈkɑːtləud/ *n.* 大量,一车的载量
simultaneously /ˌsimlˈteiniəsli/ *ad.* 同时地
courier /ˈkuriə/ *n.* 速递
satellite /ˈsætəlait/ *n.* 人造卫星
geographic /ˌdʒiəˈgræfik/ *a.* 地理的
region /ˈriːdʒən/ *n.* 地区

microwave /ˈmaikrəweiv/ *n.* 微波
participator /pɑːˈtisipeitə/ *n.* 参与者
mount /maunt/ *v.* 装上,配上
dispatcher /diˈspætʃə/ *n.* 调度员
vast /vɑːst/ *a.* 广阔的,巨大的
subset /ˈsʌbset/ *n.* 子集
systematic /ˌsistəˈmætik/ *a.* 系统的,成体系的
distinct /diˈstiŋkt/ *a.* 不同的,明显的,清楚的
manipulation /məˌnipjuˈleiʃn/ *n.* 处理,操作

Useful Terms

optimal route 最优路线
unit delivery 单元配送
goods in transit 在途物资
promotion activity 促销活动
data processing 数据处理
procurement ordering 采购订货
Universal Product Code (UPC) 通用产品代码
European Article Numbering (EAN) 欧洲商品代码
Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) 射频识别
Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) 电子数据交换
Global Positioning System (GPS) 环球定位系统

Notes

1. According to a narrow definition, logistics information means the information related to the logistics activities, such as transportation, storage, package, distribution processing etc.

按照狭义的定义,物流信息是指与物流活动(如运输、储存、包装、流通加工等)有关的信息。

transportation 意为“运输”;distribution processing 意为“流通加工”。

2. To be more specific, selecting transporting tools, choosing optimal route, determining quantity of unit delivery, tracing goods in transit, maintaining high

level utilization of storage facilities, improving standard of customer services, all need thorough and precise logistics information.

具体来讲,运输工具的选择,最佳运输路线的确定,每批运送数量的确定,在途货物的跟踪,仓库库存的有效利用,客户服务水平的提高,都需要详细和准确的物流信息。

3. Commodities trading information means selling and purchasing information, order and acceptance information, delivering and receiving information and so on. Marketing information means the information concerned with market activities, such as consumers' demand information, competitors and competitive products information, sales and promotion activities information, transportation and communication infrastructure information.

商品交易信息是指销售和购买信息、订货和接受订货的信息、发出货物和收到货物的信息等。市场信息是指与市场活动有关的信息,如消费者的需求信息、竞争者和竞争性商品的信息、促销活动的有关信息、交通和通信基础设施信息等。

4. This broad conception of logistics information can both integrate manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and the final customers, and make the high efficiency of the whole supply chain possible by implementing information technologies.

广义的物流信息不仅能起到连接整合从生产厂家经过批发商和零售商最后到消费者的整个供应链的作用,而且通过应用现代信息技术使整个供应链的活动实现高效化成为可能。

5. Logistics information management is defined as the information processing of collecting, reconciling, communicating, storage and utilizing of all the information generated from logistics operations.

物流信息管理被定义为对物流全过程的相关信息进行收集、整理、传输、存储和利用的信息加工过程。

6. Logistics information management is not only about dealing with the information about procurement, selling, storage, transportation and other logistics activities, but also every decision-making about supplier selection, marketing plan and customer analysis, including providing solution, collecting and analyzing all kinds of logistical information data based on data processing abilities of a computer.

物流信息管理不仅包括采购、销售、存储、运输以及其他物流活动的信息处理,还包括对物流过程中的各种决策活动,如供应商的选择、营销计划、顾客分析等,提供决策支持,并基于计算机的处理功能汇总和分析各种各样的物流信息数据。

7. According to the process of logistics operation, information management can be identified as material requirement information management, procurement information management, inventory information management, and transportation information management.

根据物流运作的进程,物流信息管理可以分为物料需求信息管理、采购信息管理、库存信息管理和运输信息管理。

8. Now, some changes have taken place. Sub-systematic managing is now a method used by a large number of companies. It focuses on a single activity, with the help of computer to manage the information flow, like POS and WMS.

现在,物流信息管理的管理模式已经发生变化。子系统管理已是被许多公司所采用的一种方法。它利用计算机系统来管理信息流动,从而对物流的单项活动进行集中管理,如销售点信息管理系统(POS)、库存管理系统(WMS)。

9. Increased domestic and international competition is driving shippers, carriers, warehouses, wholesalers, and retailers to develop and utilize Auto ID capability to compete in today's marketplace to replace former paper-based information collection and exchange processes that were error-prone and time-consuming.

国内与国际日趋激烈的竞争,驱使着货主、承运人、仓库、批发商和零售商在当今的市场竞争中开发并利用自动识别技术,以取代先前纸质媒介的信息采集和交换过程,那种老式的交换过程总是易于出错且耗费时间。

10. Such real time interaction provides up-to-date information regarding location and delivery information and allows dispatchers to redirect trucks based on need or congestion.

这种实时的交互方式可以提供及时更新的定位信息和货物运输信息,使得调度员可以按照需求或避开拥堵而重新指派卡车。

Background Tips

物流信息管理

物流信息管理是信息管理的一个分支,是信息管理在物流领域的应用,是对物流信息的收集、整理、存储、传播和利用的过程。也就是物流信息从分散到集中,从无序到有序,从生产、传播到利用的过程。同时,对涉及物流信息活动的各种要素,包括人员、技术、工具等进行管理,实现资源的合理配置。

物流信息管理是人类为了有效地开发和利用物流信息资源,以现代信息技术为手段,对物流信息资源进行计划、组织、领导和控制的社会活动。物流系统是一个有着自身运动规律的有机整体。物流信息经收集、加工、处理后,成为系统决策的依据,对整个物流活动起着运筹、指挥和协调的作用。相反,如果信息失误,运筹、指挥活动便会出现失误。物流信息对交易、管理控制、决策分析以及战略计划起着强大的支持作用。主要表现在:①使物流各环节的工作更加协调;②信息共享,提高效率;③信息统一管理,较少冗余,避免信息不一致;④提供决策支持;⑤与客户的信息共享、互动;⑥提高服务质量,改善客户关系。

具体来说,物流信息管理可按物流传统的职能大致分为物料需求信息管理、采购信息管理、库存信息管理和运输信息管理。

随着计算机技术和网络技术的日趋发达,越来越多的企业不断采用物流信息系统对物流相关信息进行加工处理,以达到企业对物流、资金流的有效控制和管理,并为企业提供信息分析和决策支持。

Exercises ⟹

Task One Vocabulary

Ⅰ. Choose the correct words to fill in the blanks.

management	logistics system	systematic
marketing	information	

1. _____ information refers to information concerned with market activities, such as consumers' demand information, competitors and competitive products information.

2. Within the enterprise, _____ is mainly about manufacturing and selling.

3. According to the process of logistics operation, information management can be identified as material requirement information _____, procurement information management, inventory information management, and transportation information management.

4. Logistics information is one of the key factors of _____.

5. The key point is the _____ conception, integrating all the factors of logistics operation, and processing the data to optimize the decision-making.

Ⅱ. Match the words with their exact definitions.

1. external	A. a system of symbols that represent a message
2. trait	B. using light for reading or storing information
3. calculate	C. far away from other communities, houses, etc
4. code	D. to bring or get something back
5. readable	E. a particular quality in your personality
6. optical	F. happening or done at the same time
7. remotely	G. an electronic device that is sent into space
8. retrieve	H. coming from outside
9. simultaneously	I. easy to read
10. satellite	J. to use numbers to find out a total amount

Task Two　Reading Comprehension

Ⅰ. Tell whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F) according to the text.

(　　) 1. According to a broad definition, logistics information means the information related to the logistics activities, such as transportation, storage, package, distribution processing, etc.

(　　) 2. Production information and inventory information are examples of external information.

(　　) 3. Logistics information management is defined as the information processing of collecting, reconciling, communicating, storage and utilizing of all the information generated from logistics operations.

(　　) 4. The traits of logistics information management are specialization, wide range and flexibility.

(　　) 5. EAN bar codes, first used in 1972, assign a unique 12-digit number to each manufacturer and product.

Ⅱ. Cloze.

technology	central	distribution	nature	information
response	emergence	driving	customer	operations

Increasingly, it seems that successful companies have one thing in common—

their use of __1__ and information technology to achieve quick __2__. Information systems are reshaping the organization and also the __3__ of the linkages between organizations. Information has always been __4__ to the efficient management of logistics, but now, enabled by __5__, it is providing the __6__ force for competitive strategy.

The __7__ of integrated logistics systems links the __8__ of the business, such as production and __9__, with the supplier's operations on the one hand and the __10__ on the other. These systems are often referred to generically as ERP. Already it is the case that companies can literally link the replenishment of their suppliers through the use of shared information.

Task Three Translation

Ⅰ. Translate the following phrases and sentences into Chinese.

1. procurement ordering
2. goods in transit
3. customer services
4. purchasing information
5. communication infrastructure
6. broad definition
7. information processing
8. supplier selection
9. In a broad point of view, logistics information also contains commodities trading information and marketing information.
10. It is to say, logistics can help each enterprise to efficiently control the activities of planning, coordinating, customer services and so on.

Ⅱ. Translate the following phrases and sentences into English.

1. 客户需求
2. 促销活动
3. 狭义概念
4. 营销计划
5. 顾客分析
6. 物料需求信息管理

7. 子系统管理

8. 库存管理系统

9. 物流信息包括来自企业内部的信息和企业外部的信息两方面。例如,产品信息和库存信息就是内部信息。在企业外部,公共设施信息和其他竞争企业的信息也很重要。

10. 物流信息管理涉及到货物的状态,人员、设施设备信息,操作技巧和方法信息,时间和空间信息等。

Section B Case Study

Information Management System of Cisco

1 Since its founding in 1984, Cisco has always seemed to be able to look a bit further over the **horizon** than its competitors. It **concentrated** on networking when the rest of the world was point-to-point. It **specialized** in the enhanced functionality of **routing** when most people thought **switches** were all they need. And it moved rapidly to put a large **portion** of its sales operations online before most people thought this was practical.

2 As a result, Cisco now manages 75 percent of its **revenues**—MYM 25 million per day, MYM 8 billion per year—through its website. This is believed by many industry **observers** to be the largest electronic commerce site in the world.

3 Despite Cisco's **indisputable** record of success, the journey hasn't always been an easy one. Growth was one reason. By 1994, Cisco had rapidly **outgrown** its application systems. "We were experiencing growth rates of more than 70 percent per year," says Andy Starr, IS Manager. Cisco Systems reported sales of US $10.4 billion, up 10 percent from a year earlier, despite economic weakness in some parts of the world. To remedy the situation, Cisco **embarked** on an **aggressive** ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) implementation using an Oracle database and applications. In 1995, after only 9 months, the company went live with a big bang implementation—a complete switch of all worldwide transactions systems. Five thousand orders in backlog were **converted** in just one weekend. Peter Solvik, Cisco's CIO says, "The applications provided the **architecture** on which we could very, very rapidly grow, **adapt**, and scale the company."

4 **Acquisition** was another reason. In 5 years Cisco has acquired 27 companies. When acquiring a company, systems integration is **critical** to support the 60-to-90-day closing period applied by Cisco. The goal is to take orders for that company's products on Cisco's information system on the day the deal is closed. The acquired firm's **legacy** systems were then **replaced** quickly, creating a common worldwide ordering environment. "We wouldn't provide value to our customers or our shareholders," says Solvik.

5 Cisco's ERP **framework** has grown from a single server into three U. S.-based servers and one in the Netherlands. This network of servers coordinates Cisco's manufacturing and order fulfillment processes, providing **immediate** response to requests and better availability of products to its customers.

6 Cisco was the first company to integrate its website with an Oracle Applications ERP infrastructure. The Cisco Connection Online internet site offers customers and suppliers global communications with support service, product and contact information. It operates with **dedicated** servers that support 200 offices in 54 countries around the world. Within the CCO is the "Internet Product Center" where customers can **configure** and place orders; look up pricing, lead times, and order status; access invoicing information. This has reduced order entry cycle time from 1 week to less than 3 days. It has also reduced order **acknowledgment** in the next 6 months. Cisco has the unique ability to process billing in multiple currencies and manage tax and regulatory issues in every country where it conducts business, yet **consolidate** financial performance based upon U. S. currency. "The CCO allows the salesperson to focus on the strategic aspect of the relationship," says Solvik, "and improves responsiveness to the customer through automation of **mundane** tasks."

7 Thanks to the capabilities of its Oracle ERP infrastructure, Cisco has been able to add outsourced manufacturing to its operations over the last 4 years. "Over 50 percent of the units shipped are untouched by a Cisco factory or a Cisco employee," Solvik says. "We run our worldwide outsource factory across almost 50 suppliers entirely on the ERP application." Cisco has also extended its communications throughout the supply chain to about 100 suppliers. Most importantly, Solvik can appreciate the benefits of a good relationship in dollars and cents. "By adding together the benefits of electronic commerce, electronic self-

service, manufacturing **initiatives**, and a few benefits offered by the Internet, the annual contribution to the company amounts to over 55 million from these top areas alone."

(***words*: *664***)

New Words

horizon /hə'raizn/ *n.* 眼界,范围
concentrate /'kɔnsentreit/ *v.* 集中,聚集
specialize /'speʃəlaiz/ *v.* 专业化,专门从事
route /ru:t/ *v.* 安排线路
switch /switʃ/ *n.* 转换,转变
portion /'pɔ:ʃn/ *n.* 部分,一份
revenue /'revənju:/ *n.* 收入,收益
observer /əb'zə:və/ *n.* 观察者,评论者
indisputable /ˌindi'spju:təbl/ *a.* 无可争辩的
outgrow /aut'grəu/ *v.* 长得过大而不适于
embark /im'bɑ:k/ *v.* 从事,着手
aggressive /ə'gresiv/ *a.* 积极进取的,攻击性的
convert /kən'və:t/ *v.* 转变,改变
architecture /'ɑ:kitektʃə/ *n.* 布局,安排
adapt /ə'dæpt/ *v.* 使适应,改造
acquisition /ˌækwi'ziʃn/ *n.* 收购,购置
critical /'kritikl/ *a.* 决定性的,重要的
legacy /'legəsi/ *n.* 继承物,遗留物
replace /ri'pleis/ *v.* 代替,取代
framework /'freimwə:k/ *n.* 架构,构造
immediate /i'mi:diət/ *a.* 立即的,直接的
dedicated /'dedikeitid/ *a.* 专注的,献身的
configure /kən'figə/ *v.* 配置
acknowledgment /ək'nɔlidʒmənt/ *n.* 承认,感谢
consolidate /kən'sɔlideit/ *v.* 使巩固,使加强
mundane /mʌn'dein/ *a.* 平凡的,单调的

initiative /iˈniʃətiv/ *n.* 动机,初衷

Useful Terms

electronic commerce 电子商务
ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) 企业资源计划
systems integration 系统整合
financial performance 财务业绩

Exercises

Group Discussion

Read the case → find out some background information about Cisco → unite several students as a group → read the following questions and discuss them → organize your ideas into a short passage → give a two-minute presentation in class

Questions:

1. What are the two problems Cisco encountered during its developing?
2. How did Cisco solve these problems respectively?
3. Did ERP improve Cisco's performances? And how?
4. What do you think of the importance of logistics information management in this case?
5. What do you know about ERP? Please introduce it by checking books or internet materials.

Section C Supplementary Reading

Information Flow of Logistics

1 Information flow identifies specific locations within a logistics system that has requirements. Within individual logistics areas, different movement requirements exist with respect to size of order, availability of inventory, and urgency of movement. The primary objective of information flow management is to reconcile these differentials to improve overall logistics performance. It is important to stress that information requirements parallel the actual work performed in market

distribution, manufacturing support, and procurement. Whereas these areas contain the actual logistics work, information facilitates coordination of planning and control of day-to-day operations. Without accurate information the effort involved in the logistical system can be wasted.

2 Logistics information has two major components: planning or coordination and operations. The overall purpose of planning or coordination is to identify required operational information and to facilitate supply chain integration via strategic objectives, capacity constraints, logistical requirements, inventory deployment, manufacturing requirements, procurement requirements, and forecasting. Unless a high level of planning or coordination is achieved, the potential exists for operating inefficiencies and excessive inventory. The challenge is to achieve such planning or coordination across the range of firms participating in a supply chain to reduce duplication and unneeded redundancy. The primary drivers of logistics are strategic objectives derived from enterprise goals. These initiatives detail the nature and location of customers that logistics operations seek to match to the planned products and services. The financial aspects of strategic plans detail resources required to support inventory, receivables, facilities, equipment, and capacity.

3 The second purpose of accurate and timely information is to facilitate logistical operations. To satisfy logistics requirements, operational information is required in six related areas: order processing, order assignment, distribution operations, inventory management, transportation and shipping, and procurement. Order processing refers to the exchange of requirements information between business related members involved in product distribution. Order assignment identifies inventory and organizational responsibility to satisfy customers' requirements. Distribution operations involve information to facilitate and coordinate work within logistics facilities. Inventory management is concerned with information required to implement the logistics plan. Transportation and shipping information directs inventory movement. Procurement is concerned with the information necessary to complete purchase order preparation, modification, and release while ensuring overall supplier compliance. The overall purpose of operational information is to facilitate integrated management of market distribution, manufacturing support, and procurement operations. Planning or coordination identifies and prioritizes

required work and identifies operational information needed to perform the day-to-day logistics.

(***words*: *391***)

Useful Terms

information flow	信息流
market distribution	营销渠道
day-to-day operations	日常操作
strategic objective	战略目标
inventory deployment	存货部署
order processing	订单处理
order assignment	订单任务