

manage inventory across all channels from a single pool.

Conclusion Third-party logistics providers have evolved from simple freight brokers into strategic partners essential for modern supply chain success. By outsourcing logistics to a capable 3PL, companies can reduce costs, focus on their core business, scale flexibly, and access world-class expertise and technology.

However, outsourcing is not a hands-off endeavor. It requires careful partner selection, clear communication, rigorous performance monitoring, and a relationship built on trust and mutual goals. When executed well, a 3PL partnership is far more than a cost-saving measure—it is a competitive advantage that fuels growth and customer loyalty.

As supply chains continue to grow in complexity, the role of the 3PL will only become more central. The companies that learn to leverage these partners effectively will be the ones that thrive in the dynamic global marketplace.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE IN LOGISTICS: THE KEY TO SUPPLY CHAIN SUCCESS

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For decades, logistics was viewed purely as a cost center—a back-office function measured solely by how cheaply and quickly a pallet could move from Point A to Point B. Today, that paradigm is obsolete. In an era of next-day delivery, real-time tracking,

and viral unboxing experiences, logistics is no longer just about moving freight; it's about moving feelings. Customer service has transitioned from a support function to the primary differentiator in supply chain success.

When a supply chain fails, it doesn't fail in a vacuum. It fails in a customer's living room on a birthday morning, or on a construction site waiting for a critical part. How you handle that failure defines your brand more than a perfect delivery ever could. Here is why customer service is the new battleground for logistics supremacy.

The "Moment of Truth" Has Shifted In traditional retail, the moment of truth was the shelf—did the consumer pick your product? In e-commerce and modern B2B, the moment of truth is the doorstep. The delivery experience is often the only physical touchpoint a customer has with a brand. Industry data consistently supports this: the physical condition of packages upon arrival remains a top benchmark for customer satisfaction, underscoring that how an order arrives is a critical brand impression.

A logistics customer service team acts as the guardian of that moment. When a shipment goes dark or a pallet arrives damaged, the customer service representative (CSR) isn't just solving a problem; they are performing emergency surgery on the brand's reputation. A supply chain that operates with robotic efficiency but lacks a human safety net is a supply chain waiting to hemorrhage customers at the first sign of disruption.

Proactive Communication: The End of the Black Hole The cardinal sin of logistics is silence. A customer can accept a delay due to a snowstorm or a port strike; they cannot accept being ignored. Reactive customer service—waiting for the customer to call and complain—is no longer viable. Research emphasizes that stronger supplier communication is key to unlocking customer delight, yet many organizations fail to share critical feedback with their partners .

Leading logistics providers treat communication as a core competency. This involves what industry leaders call "disturbance management": alerting the customer to a problem before the customer feels the pain. By leveraging real-time visibility data, a CSR can call a client and say, "Your truck has hit traffic in Atlanta and will be 90 minutes late. We've already alerted the receiving team and rescheduled the dock

appointment." That interaction transforms a logistics failure into a service victory. It proves to the customer that they aren't just a tracking number.

The measurable impact of proactive communication is substantial. Studies in e-commerce logistics show that implementing real-time tracking can reduce the cart abandonment rate from 70% to 45% and complaints per 100 shipments from 12 to just 4. This demonstrates that visibility is not just an operational tool—it is a customer retention mechanism.

The Human Firewall Against Technology Gaps Supply chains are drowning in data but often starving for wisdom. Automated systems can trigger an alert when a temperature-sensitive pharmaceutical shipment deviates by 0.5 degrees, but only a human can assess the nuanced risk, contact the driver to check the reefer unit, and coordinate with the pharmacist on whether the \$2 million payload is salvageable.

Logistics customer service acts as the translation layer between machine data and human relationships. Technology tells you where the freight is; a skilled service professional tells you what you need to do about it. They are the empathetic problem-solvers who can de-escalate a warehouse manager screaming about a missed delivery window by offering creative, immediate solutions that an automated portal simply cannot generate.

Value-Added Services as a Revenue Driver The most sophisticated logistics companies have flipped customer service from a cost center to a profit center. This is achieved through "white-glove" logistics support. It's not just about delivering a hospital bed; it's about delivering it, assembling it in the patient's room, removing the packaging, and training the nursing staff on the new features.

In the 3PL sector, this principle is particularly well-established. Contracts are won on cost and capability, but they are kept on experience. When inevitable exceptions are handled transparently and professionally, customers feel supported and are more likely to expand their relationship with the provider. This turns customer service from an expense into a retention and growth engine that compounds over years.

Turning Complaints into Continuous Improvement A complaint is the cheapest market research you will ever buy. A warehouse worker might not know why orders

are wrong, but the customer service team listening to complaints knows immediately that the pick-pack system is generating incorrect labels because three different customers called with the same issue in the last hour.

Integrated customer service loops are the nervous system of a healthy supply chain. Academic research confirms that customer service fully mediates the relationship between supply chain integration and firm financial performance . In other words, supply chain integration alone does not directly boost the bottom line—it only translates to better financial results when it leads to improved customer service. A separate study of US manufacturing firms further documents the significant positive relationship between supply-chain relational capabilities, customer service, and financial performance . This means the feedback loop from the customer service desk to operations is not a nice-to-have; it is the mechanism through which supply chain improvements deliver measurable business value.

Conclusion: The Balance of Speed and Empathy As artificial intelligence and automation accelerate logistics to previously unimaginable speeds, the human element becomes paradoxically more scarce and more valuable. You can automate a warehouse, but you cannot automate away the anxiety of a bride waiting for wedding decorations that are stuck in customs.

Customer service in logistics is the art of restoring control to a customer who feels powerless. The supply chains that will succeed in the coming decade are not necessarily the ones with the fastest drones or the cheapest freight rates. They will be the ones that understand that at the end of every tracking link is a person with a problem, and that solving that problem with empathy, speed, and competence is the ultimate supply chain success.

Here is a curated list of references that support the key themes in our article. You can integrate these into the bibliography or cite them throughout the text to strengthen your arguments.

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SAFETY ISSUES IN LOGISTICS: PROTECTING PEOPLE, ASSETS, AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

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Logistics is the engine of global commerce, but it is also an industry defined by inherent risk. From the warehouse floor to the open highway, safety issues are not merely operational concerns—they are ethical imperatives and financial liabilities. According to the International Labour Organization, the transport and logistics sector consistently ranks among the most hazardous industries worldwide, with warehousing alone accounting for a significant portion of occupational fatalities and injuries.

A single safety failure—a forklift collision, an unsecured load, a fatigued driver—can cascade into lost lives, shattered reputations, regulatory fines, and disrupted supply chains. In an era of faster delivery promises and denser automation, safety must transition from a compliance checkbox to a strategic priority. This article examines the most critical safety issues in logistics and outlines how leading organizations are building cultures of safety that protect both their people and their bottom line.

The Human Cost of Unsafe Logistics Before discussing processes and technology, the human dimension must be centered. Logistics workers face a disproportionate risk of injury compared to other industries. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the transportation and warehousing sector recorded a fatal injury rate of 14.5 per 100,000 full-time workers in 2022, one of the highest of any industry group (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023). Non-fatal injuries, from