

SUPPLY-CHAIN VISIBILITY

ITS ROLE IN LOGISTICS AND YOUR BUSINESS



What is supply chain visibility (SCV) and why is it important?

SCV is the ability to track a product's location, temperature and condition while in transit from the manufacturer to its final destination.

SCV improves and strengthens the supply chain by making data readily available to all parties involved, including the most important investor- the customer. 3PLs such as Choptank Transport utilize SCV technology for several reasons: to promote quick response times when changes need to be made for a shipment, or to inform customers of a shipment's location, temperature and general condition.



How SCV Helps Shippers

Provides Instant Intel

New technologies deliver instant information. Shippers no longer have to feel out of touch with their freight. Having real-time access to this information has multiple benefits:



- **Visibility mitigates risk and adds agility.** If a refrigerated shipment has a temperature alert sensor that tells the driver when a shipment is off-temperature, the driver can immediately address the situation and correct it before the product is compromised. All stakeholders can be notified and the product checked at its destination for possible spoilage. This avoids any later claims.

Gives Peace of Mind

Important information about a shipment's location, temperature and condition can offer the shipper peace of mind and alleviate unnecessary concerns about arrival times and product safety issues. SCV also benefits the shipper/carrier/3PL relationship by keeping lines of communication constantly open and transparent.



Reduces lead-times



Transportation Management Systems (TMS) and Warehouse Management Systems (WMS) track shipments and inventory so that lead-times are more accurate. This heads off problems and delays such as missing raw materials for manufacturing or overstocks of products on shelves that aren't yet needed, saving the shipper money.

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Maintains Compliance

Compliance has become one of the most important words in today's logistics lexicon. It seems as if every month there are new or updated federal or state regulations concerning the transport of goods or the carriers and drivers who are delivering them. In today's strict regulatory climate, visibility is an important step to avoid costly fines for non-compliance. Below are just a few of the most recent changes in regulations.



FSMA – The Food Safety Modernization Act has new, clear and enforceable rules that apply to everyone in the supply chain, from shipper to freight broker to receiver. As a 3PL, offering visibility on every shipment from end-to-end will help avoid steep penalties for non-compliance.

HOS – The Hours-of-Service ruling will soon be even more enforceable with the onset of electronic log books. Drivers can no longer alter the times they are on the job. ELDs are a recent addition to today's supply chain visibility.

Emissions – There are environmental laws in states like California where the largest greenhouse emissions plan in the United States was passed in 2008, requiring low emissions testing for cars and trucks, including big rigs like tractor-trailer trucks. Non-compliance with these regulations can delay shipments and saddle carriers with hefty fines.

A Good SCV Plan Requires Smart Collaboration

Providing access to data about when and where things happen is important for an SCV strategy to be successful. In addition, informing those who bear responsibility for the shipment in real-time is key to visibility. Using the right tools to make this happen should include the following:

- Data collection
- Analysis Software
- Use of the "cloud" for information storage
- Automated business processes
- Integration with a TMS and/or WMS



As technologies become more advanced, and embedded analytics and integration become more commonplace, true visibility in the supply chain will no longer be a topic of discussion; it will be 100% expected. At Choptank Transport, we consider it a necessary part of the transportation process for shippers, carriers and 3PLs alike.

