

Supply Chain Summit in Frankfurt: Resilient supply chain in the automotive aftermarket determines business success

Frankfurt am Main/Hanover, 17 June 2024. Decision-makers, users and providers of innovative solutions met for the second time at the Supply Chain Summit on 4 June in Frankfurt to discuss the transformation of supply chains from procurement to recycling in the automotive supply industry.

Michael Johannes, Vice President Mobility & Logistics: "With the Supply Chain Summit, we have succeeded in bringing together experts from different areas and initiating discussions on resilient supply chains in the automotive industry. I look forward to continuing the dialogue with the experts at Automechanika Frankfurt in September."

The conclusion of all participants and speakers at the Supply Chain Summit was clear: a resilient supply chain in the automotive aftermarket is the key to business success. The high-calibre keynote speeches presented a wide range of specific and highly individual solutions for a resilient supply chain in the automotive aftermarket. With more digital applications, more technology, more organisational innovations, more active supply chain management and, above all, more cooperation on both the customer and supplier side, the aim is not only to achieve the necessary supply chain resilience, but also the necessary efficiency and sustainability.

The increased use of artificial intelligence as an important tool for achieving these goals was seen as essential by all speakers. The importance of data was also emphasised, as without data and its targeted processing and use, the benefits can only be achieved to a limited extent. Dr Michael Benz, Managing Partner of Benz + Walter, explained: "At the moment, we are still in the early stages of the transformation process. Increasing data consolidation is leading away from manual silo data analyses and towards generative intelligence, which is essential for the future of automated decisions for supply chains." The complexity of the supply chain in particular will continue to require well-trained and experienced specialists who, together with digital solutions and AI, will contribute to the security and sustainability of the supply chain.

Even though supply chains have currently stabilised again, the pressure to change remains high. This is a key finding of a survey of Automechanika exhibitors on their supply chains, conducted jointly for the first time by LogisticNetwork Consultants and Messe Frankfurt. According to almost half of those surveyed, high cost pressure, changing market conditions and a lack of planning certainty are among the biggest problems. Interestingly, digital solutions, automation, a lack of risk management, lean supply chains and a lack of transparency are not seen as the primary challenges. Instead, solutions that enable cost reductions, efficiency increases and a high degree of flexibility are in demand.

Two thirds of the short-term measures to strengthen the supply chain focus on creating alternative storage options for critical parts, adapting the organisational structure and actively monitoring the supply chain. Many of these measures have already been implemented not only to respond in the short term, but also to ensure the medium and long-term resilience of supply chains.

Another conclusion of the Supply Chain Summit is that there is no one solution for all problems - the "or" must be replaced by an "and". The use of innovative technologies and digital solutions has already changed supply chains in the automotive aftermarket and will continue to do so significantly. Business processes and models are under immense pressure to transform, with the speed of change and availability of resources playing a major role. A revolution is not necessary, but a targeted evaluation and utilisation of new technologies is essential.

This exciting topic will also be on the agenda at the upcoming Automechanika, which will take place in Frankfurt from 10 to 14 September 2024.

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