



Gartner for Supply Chain

Six Digital Imperatives for Supply Chain Leaders

Preparing the supply chain for machine customers



Over the next 10 years, demand from machine customers will become increasingly relevant, generating more than 20% of revenue. The future supply chain must be able to deal with automated buyers, and the next evolution of the supply chain operating model must match continued acceleration in machine ordering.

Now is the time to build a digital foundation that integrates the partner ecosystem, leverages data throughout the end-to-end supply chain and automates processes and decisions. It's also important to evolve the operating model to enhance supply chain efficiency, capability and capacity. Gartner recommends that supply chain leaders adopt these six digital imperatives to be able to properly respond to accelerating demand from machine customers.

1 Make the supply chain agile and resilient:

- Sixty-four percent of supply chain leaders consider increasing supply chain agility and resilience the most critical action for supply chain transformation.
- Translate real-time inputs into real-time execution to be competitive in an environment driven by machine customer demand.
- Detect and shape incoming demand from autonomous buyers and mobilize supply sources.

2 Guarantee that supply chain data is accessible, secure and unbiased:

- Almost two-thirds of supply chain leaders identify data access as the most critical component of the supply chain transformation strategy. Data security and equity are also critical, say 28% and 26% of supply chain leaders, respectively.
- Governance for machine customer data must be established at the outset to ensure proper data structure, integrity and access rights.
- CSCOs should partner with their CISOs on security protocols to ensure the addition of machine customers doesn't compromise their environments or their customers.

Key Findings

- By 2030, CSCOs expect double-digit growth in demand from machine customers.
- Today, only about 15% of supply chains are ready to respond to machine customer demand.
- However, more than 60% of supply chains are working on or planning to design their machine response strategy over the next three years.

Continued on the next page

Six Digital Imperatives for Supply Chain Leaders (continued)

3 Automate repetitive processes and decision making:

- Sixty-two percent of supply chain leaders consider automating repetitive processes and decision making the most critical action for supply chain transformation.
- The ability to integrate machine customers with machine suppliers — i.e., an autonomous supply chain — presents a competitive advantage, since technology will gain more and more decision-making authority over the next 10 years.
- Investments in hyperautomation will create a fast-paced, data-driven, autonomous supply chain that will change the way companies plan and execute their supply chains across source, make and deliver.

4 Create a digital platform to integrate with the partner ecosystem:

- Three out of five supply chain leaders are considering creating a digital platform to integrate with the partner ecosystem end to end.
- Through the platform, organizations will move beyond connecting with customers by simply digitally exchanging transactions. They'll seek to digitally integrate data and insight flow between organizations.
- The sources of demand will move beyond purchase orders, to sensing the flow of materials in near real time.

5 Attract and retain digitally adaptable talent:

- More than half of supply chain leaders (57%) identify digitally adaptable talent as the most critical component of the supply chain transformation strategy.
- Ready the supply chain organization by attracting new digital adaptable talents while upskilling and reskilling current supply chain employees.
- Work on culture especially so that people feel comfortable with the machine and gain the necessary level of trust and acceptance.

6 Upend customer experience practices:

- Twenty percent of supply chain leaders say overhauling customer experience (CX) management is key to preparing for machine customer demand.
- Accelerate the role of the supply chain as a platform for CX by leveraging masses of data from machine customers.
- Design new CX-oriented roles into the supply chain organization, and upskill employees to serve a more complex customer landscape.

Innovate your supply chain for the future: How Gartner can help

Gartner insights, advice, data and tools help supply chain leaders see beyond the hype of predictions and prepare their supply chains to evolve and succeed during a time of constant change. Visit [gartner.com](https://www.gartner.com) to learn how Gartner enables its 2,500+ supply chain leader clients to build global supply chain management strategies and solutions.

Follow us



[Become a Client](#)

This research is drawn from the Supply Chain Executive Report, "Designing a Digital Supply Chain to Respond to Autonomous Machine Customers."