



Voice-enabled technology - streamlining processes in logistics

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Technology is a great enabler for innovation. And when we talk about antiquated paper-based systems such as those in logistics, technology can go a long way in transforming the mundane to the magnificent. Voice-enabled technology is one such buzzword that offers a plethora of benefits when applied to the logistics industry be it in warehousing applications, or in other areas of the logistics value chain.

Voice-enabled technology has evolved over the past few decades and has become more and more sophisticated in its applications. From the voice-recognition software systems of yesteryears to the Artificial Intelligence driven Siri and Alexa of the technology world, voice-enabled technology has indeed come a very long way. And, voice is a core element of the supply chain of the future. It acts as the bridge between people and technology, connecting human interaction with devices, computers and systems.

In the logistics industry, staying competitive necessitates optimising processes and thereby distributing more goods in less time. This would in turn entail shrinking delivery windows and reducing production costs, with an optimal workforce. These achievements would potentially result in lowering prices for customers, increasing company profits and hiking employee wages. All this becomes possible with Voice. This is so mainly due to its defining role in the next-generation supply chain technologies that streamline and standardise processes.

Voice is partly automation, and partly human interaction. This combination makes it possible to appropriately merge futuristic technologies into the apt warehousing processes of today.

Going forward one can only expect consumer expectations for faster, more accurate delivery of goods to increase. Leveraging futuristic technologies to optimise the supply chain provides a logistics provider with a competitive edge by streamlining workflows. With voice as an enabler and a connector, logistics providers can reap the full benefits of futuristic solutions to today's challenges – higher throughput, better customer satisfaction, lower cost per order, decrease in returns, improved employee morale and more.

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In recent times, as computers are getting more compact and robust, and software for voice recognition and synthesis has significantly improved, increasingly more companies look to adopting voice technology for supply chains. The sales of such hands-free, eyes-free voice-enabled systems are reportedly increasing at over 50 percent a year.

In a best-case scenario, the investment in a voice technology system can be reimbursed from the savings in cost and efficiency in a year or less. And with technological advancements, costs have already come down and will likely drop further as voice-enabled technology achieves greater maturity. Moreover, economies of scale are also contributing to make it more affordable. Voice technology has found itself a spot in a small percentage of distribution centres, and growth is on a steady rise. Newly introduced features such as multilingual voice recognition and synthesis will also enhance its efficacy and appeal.

With substantial benefits over conventional methodologies, voice technology seems to be a tool poised to find its way into many warehouses, distribution centres, and in other areas of the end-to-end logistics value chain.

