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| **Location** | SGS Campus |
| **Class Group** | Group 01 |
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***What did I learn?***

In Vietnam, with the rapid growth of e-commerce platforms, the Logistics and Supply Chain management fields are expected to experience a boom in the near future (Hai 2019). This is the main reason why I chose Logistics and Supply Chain Management major as a foundation helping me in my career path.

During the last 9 weeks taking the courses Introduction to Logistics, ‘Topic 4 - Production and Operations management’ and ‘Topic 7 - Warehouse & Distribution Channels’ are the two capturing my attention the most. Firstly, by learning about the production, I realized that production is more than a process of transforming raw materials to the final products (Padariya n.d.), it is how the company drives the needs with the supply chain availability. Production management is not only about working with heavy machinery but it requires all support from each player in the supply chain. Moreover, the topic has revealed how Made-to-stock and assemble-to-order processes are used widely by big companies such as McDonalds, Wipro. Other than that, ‘Topic 7 - Warehouse & Distribution Channels’ delivered a broader picture of how companies utilize their space and time resources to maximize the benefits for both themselves and customers. Learning this topic helps to broaden my knowledge about key product’s characteristics in sorting inventories in the warehouse, as before, the only thing I knew about placing products on the shelves is dividing them based on their colors.

From another perspective, the course was designed with appropriate structure. Beginning with a wide picture of Logistics and Supply Chain which gives students a brief overview of context and definition, then the functions of each stage will be discussed in detail in following topics. This method can prevent students from being overwhelmed by a large amount of information since this lesson plan is built as a mind map. Furthermore, the flexible methods with different types of assignments such as poster (for the assessment 3A), video presentation (assessment 3B) and group report (assessment 2) enhance all skills that employees need in the working environment. While the poster improves the visualization and creativity, video presentation requires the confidence of students in presenting their work. Next, the application of the chosen company in all assessments helps students to know how each lesson is applied into real life situations. Last but not least, Dr Reza - our wonderful lecturer is the most important factor driving to the success of this course. Thanks to his friendliness and sense of humour, I do not feel shy to ask questions anymore and it is ensured that other students can gain knowledge in the most effective way.

***Why does it matter?***

The role of Logistics and Supply Chain management is undeniable to every organisation from family business to co-operative groups (ForceIntellect 2018). An effective supply chain management can benefit the company in many aspects namely production cost, employee encouragement as well as increase the customer satisfaction. Specifically, the logistics supply chain department is the one making decisions on when, where and how to deliver products so that products can be transported to the right time, right place and the transportation cost can be minimized. Appropriate plans and strategies also help boost workers' spirit and productivity as the production flow becomes more efficient. Taking coffee shops as an example, an operative supply chain can lead to the success of the company. A procurement manager who can bargain to get the best price when buying the highest quality ingredients and equipment would make the shop become more competitive in the market in terms of both price and product differentiation. Besides, the customer services department plays their roles as collecting feedback from customers then providing better services to customers. In a different scenario, a franchised coffee shop needs more help from the supply chain as it needs all the information to be visible for each store. Notably, the survey about customers’ drinking habits and trends throughout the time is essential for them to adjust the menu so that both revenue customers’ satisfaction can be maximized. Therefore, not only transportation companies but all firms in any industry should admire the contribution of supply chain management.

***What should be done considering what I have learned?***

The current challenges for companies during Covid-19 situations are the changes in customers’ demand and preferences which lead to the struggle in maintaining the performance of firms, Unilever - Lifebuoy is a typical example. Because of the significant increase in the demand for hand sanitizer, more and more Lifebuoy Hand sanitisers are produced, and also promotional campaigns such as ‘Buy 1 get 1 free’ are run at the same time. The increase in stock volume appears due to the forecasting demand is overweigh the actual demand, since then the company may struggle a lot in facing inventory cost and damaged cost (expiration product). In this scenario, Lifebuoy has flexibility to interact with the changes as they change their production plans, switching the focus on the more needed products - hand sanitiser. However, the bullwhip effect is a consequence of the ineffective process integration. Therefore, improving more accurate forecasting and making actual demand data available for all players in the supply chain is necessary for Lifebuoy to overcome the side effects of production strategy. In order to achieve that, the demand forecasting and planning team need to work well with the marketing as well as operation team so that they can set a desired level which can balance the availability of both supply and demand sides.

In addition, having wide distribution channels of GT and MT helps Unilever maintain their sales performance. The company has built strong relationships with their distributors partners, so it is understandable that when in the shopping mall, Lifebuoy products are placed at good positions in the aisle. Besides, a broad network of distribution also assists Unilever to control the tremendous amount of customers’ data because orders have been placed and confirmed by distributors before sending to the warehouse.

***Observed from the guest speaker and the company site.***

The sharing sessions from Wipro Unza representatives showed me how exactly a supply chain is operated in the real world and how specific each stage is. In detail, with the network of more than 200 distribution centers across Vietnam, the application of SAP must be available at all stages in the warehouse managing system so that inventory can be visible at all time. Moreover, the warehouse structure of Wipro is divided into 4 different categories with 4 different functions, this indicates the company’s organizational structure is built with a solid foundation so that all stages can be performed connectedly. The guest speaker helps me to realize the importance of supply chain technologies, and also draw a more complex picture in my mind of how the actual supply chain system is operated. In short, the guest from Wipro has brought us knowledgeable information which could not be found in any websites or reports and those experiences will be helpful for our career in the future.

***References***

Hai, Y 2019, ‘Demand for e-logistics in Vietnam projected to boom’, *HaNoi Times,* 09 January, viewed 26 August 2020, <http://hanoitimes.vn/demand-for-e-logistics-in-vietnam-projected-to-boom-2145.html>.

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