



How granular a view do I need over my supply chain?

Visibility used to be a nice-to-have; now it's the bare minimum. An accurate view of your supply chain is essential no matter your industry or organization's size.

For example, in the automotive, manufacturing and healthcare industries, truck-level visibility alone isn't sufficient as stakeholders must also monitor the conditions of a shipment.

For healthcare, when tracking expensive, life-saving equipment, you need to be able to track the shipment all the way inside the hospital.

Furthermore, stringent regulatory requirements for pharmaceutical shipments may rapidly increase the need for advanced tracking in this market.

Additionally, for manufacturing, you need to be able to track and improve the inbound logistics to the yard, to the right loading dock or inside a factory.

However, a majority of companies have yet to achieve the visibility bare minimum. Those who use GPS, RFID, NFC or barcode technology only have basic or partial visibility (e.g. historical visibility). They experience low location accuracy, no indoor visibility and are unable to trace shipments in transit or monitor conditions.

There's no time to sit back and wait. The base level of granularity we're rapidly approaching is a combination of real-time and multimodal visibility. It includes dwell time of a specific vehicle in transit, humidity changes during transportation and even shelf-level visibility. Also, if you're looking to eventually bring blockchain into the supply chain, real-time visibility-based solutions are imperative.

Customers are seeking a more thorough picture of their shipments and their demands are only increasing. Partial visibility might have sufficed in years past, but a reluctance to get on board with greater end-to-end transparency might get you left behind.

“It is no longer good enough to simply track and trace a shipment. You need the ability to make the supply chain intelligent and be able to handle disruptions as they occur.”

Adam Roark, WW Transportation & Logistics Lead, AWS

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Accurate ETAs are nice. But how else can visibility save me money?

Saving money has certainly been on the minds of many supply chain professionals. Here are the three big ways better visibility can help you avoid fines, optimize inventory and reduce dwell times. Let's make it happen.



Avoid fines and penalties:

When assets are lost, cargo is damaged or a shipment is delayed, you get fined. Thankfully, visibility can help.

For one, better transparency allows you to monitor shipment conditions, so you can maintain the quality of the cargo. If an unexpected change occurs, you can catch it quickly and react appropriately to prevent damage.

Second, visibility works to prevent delays. With comprehensive road coverage and accurate rerouting capabilities based on truck-specific attributes, drivers can avoid traffic accidents, heavy congestion and extreme weather. You can make informed decisions quickly and avoid unnecessary delays (and subsequent fines) while minimizing inefficiencies and additional costs.

Only with a more accurate overview of the entire operation can you optimize, respond and pivot in real-time, saving your company time and money.



Optimize inventory:

Visibility can empower your entire supply chain on the road, in the yard and in the warehouse.

Misplaced items equal lost time and money. Lack of visibility and poor productivity could be costing you. For example, mapping your warehouse can combat loss by helping you better understand the location of your assets as well as streamline productivity by enabling indoor navigation for employees and forklifts. Also, an accurate picture of your warehouse can identify more efficient ways to store and organize goods.

Increased visibility supports shipments, too. Arrivals should be on time; not late and not early. Running late or missing a slot could be costly and arriving too early is not a productive use of your time. Better transparency on the road helps the warehouse manage upcoming arrivals, adjust slots and save space.

When it comes to the yard, using location services to create highly customizable, private maps allows drivers to navigate in and out seamlessly, reducing gate congestion and optimizing slot efficiency.



Reduce dwell times:

With multimodal visibility, companies can identify the root cause of inefficiencies and act accordingly. For example, if Cargo A stays in Distribution Center Z twice as long as usual, is it just Cargo A that's the problem or all the cargo in that center?

Better visibility allows you to know how much freight is at which gate at any given time, decreasing idle times at warehouses and factories. It also ensures that each leg of the journey is prepared to receive the goods, increasing efficiency all around.

“Customers do expect real-time visibility, so the push for it is partly driven by those expectations, but also by the need to improve efficiency and agility. In order to be able to react to disruption, operate sustainably and keep costs down, forward-thinking supply chain managers know they need to have better visibility.”

Glenn Koepke, Vice President Network Enablement, FourKites



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I only have basic visibility. What are the first practical steps towards more?

Visibility has become a requirement and the demands for it are only growing. It's no longer good enough to pinpoint a container in a particular city. Customers now expect real-time, end-to-end multi-modal supply chain visibility, especially for high-value and time-critical goods.

The first practical step towards greater visibility? Conduct an analysis.

Can you identify blind spots or where inefficiencies are occurring within your supply chain? What are your customers' demands? Are you prepared for potential disruption?

An example: If you possess outdoor visibility, consider bringing that level of transparency indoors. Map your warehouses, factories and other indoor facilities to better understand the location of your assets and determine where they should be best placed to fit your employees' movements.

Not only will you achieve a more accurate picture, but you will also enable the seamless transition between tracking in outdoor and indoor environments.

“Today we want to know the precise location of a shipment within a marine terminal, get the ETA and guide or track the shipment all the way inside a yard, hospital or manufacturing plant. It's that level of detail that has evolved over time and location services are helping customers achieve it.”

Bart Coppelmans, Senior Industry Solution Manager, HERE



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I don't want another tool. Can I get more visibility with my existing tools?

Obtaining real-time visibility is not easy. In fact, you need the cooperation of the entire ecosystem to deliver it. Achieving this level of visibility involves hardware OEMs, connectivity and an IoT platform — all of which must be integrated into your systems, ERP, TMS and otherwise.

Without the correct hardware to provide real-time, real-world positioning, location can only be estimated, for example, from check-ins at known locations. As you can imagine, not only does this reduce the accuracy of the results, but the usability as well.

If you cannot achieve your desired level of visibility with your existing systems, then it's time for a better solution.

Another thing to keep in mind is that managing information between silos also introduces complications with standardizing formats, preserving data and so on. So any new solution that promises better forecasting or improved visibility to drive cost savings or increase efficiency must overcome the cost of implementing it in the first place.

If you've decided to layer in some visibility-friendly solutions, you may be apprehensive about the process. Here's what to expect.



Is a smooth integration possible?

Compatibility and integration with existing or legacy systems are top considerations when choosing a platform.

At HERE, we streamline the process in various ways. Here's how:



Being a neutral provider:

The HERE portfolio of supply chain services solves a specific use case – real-time tracking for improved supply chain visibility. It enhances current business processes rather than overhauling them completely. By using HERE for supply chain visibility, location awareness can be added no matter what the current solution stack may be. And you can be confident in HERE's secure and private environment, where your data is never collected and you maintain control.



Offer a wide range of hardware:

Depending on customer needs (e.g. trackers with long battery life, trackers with return logistics built-in and so on), our hardware partners have the right devices readily available. Not only does this satisfy customer requirements, it minimizes cost and the need to find specific vendors and evaluate their solutions.



Provide as much (or as little) of the stack as needed:

Thanks to the HERE platform, we can offer everything from real-time asset visibility, all the way to delivering an end-to-end application complete with a UI for logistics managers. This also means that if other services are required (e.g. indoor maps or yard maps), those solutions can be quickly implemented based on HERE's global content. Additionally, customers can easily integrate their own devices, tools and data to create custom tracking applications.

“Supply chain leaders need to be invested in making sure the right tools are available for supply chain operations. We talk a lot about the talent gap in supply chain, but does the talent have what they need to be effective?”

Glenn Koepke, Vice President Network Enablement, FourKites

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Can a platform approach help my company gain full visibility, and how do I select the right one?

Location data is crucial in the full, end-to-end supply chain process because it streamlines operations and connects and supplies context to disparate datasets.

While data availability and information sharing have improved in recent years, most current development approaches are fragmented and time consuming.

And oftentimes, customers need multiple vendors to get what they need.

Accessing diverse datasets and services through one unified platform can reduce the application's development costs significantly. That's why a horizontal platform that connects different players in the ecosystem and ensures cross-industry collaboration is so important.

If you're a buyer, the first step is establishing your short- and long-term goals. This will help you determine which platform is right for your needs. A one-size-fits-all or a take-it-or-leave-it offering for software developers will not suffice. Instead, you must look for a platform that enables easy access to external data for users and allows maps, algorithms and services to be customized to specific business needs.

It's then imperative to identify secure, reliable infrastructure that allows you to meet customer demands. Select a vendor that adheres to "privacy-by-design" principles and proves their data and services can be trusted. Capabilities such as anonymization, consent management, data privacy and risk quantification should be integral elements of any location platform offering.

At the end of the day, it's not just about choosing a platform, but an experience. It should be a long-term relationship where the platform receives the latest updates and innovations so you can continue to meet the needs of your customers well into the future.

“Having a trusted platform that is secure and resilient allows for stakeholders across the supply chain to use the data to reduce inefficiencies from start to finish and everywhere in between.”

Adam Roark, WW Transportation & Logistics Lead, AWS

Transforming supply chains together



Together HERE and AWS work to transform global supply chains with T&L solutions.

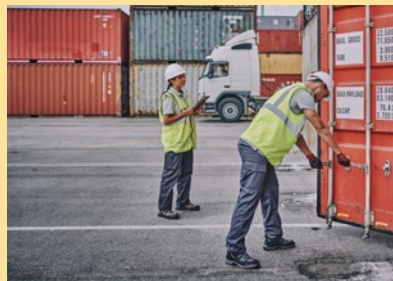
As the #1 location platform,* HERE is proud to be a location partner of choice for AWS, the leading global cloud service provider. HERE and AWS offer seamless integration into existing technology landscapes and bring together the power of location and rapid innovation to help our customers reduce costs and increase asset utilization.

*Omdia's Location Platform Index: Mapping and Navigation, Key vendor rankings: June 2020 update

Further reading



The magic word that bolsters supply chains: visibility



Disrupted? How to future-proof your supply chain with location and real-time visibility



Read these 10 considerations before selecting a location technology provider



Rethink the way you run your supply chain. Become stronger and more resilient with increased efficiency and happier customers.

What will you accomplish with better transparency?

About HERE Technologies

HERE, a location data and technology platform, moves people, businesses and cities forward by harnessing the power of location. By leveraging our open platform, we empower our customers to achieve better outcomes - from helping a city manage its infrastructure or a business optimize its assets to guiding drivers to their destination safely. To learn more about HERE, please visit www.here.com and <http://360.here.com>.

About AWS

Amazon Web Services (AWS) is the world's most comprehensive and broadly adopted cloud platform, offering over 200 fully featured services from data centers globally. Millions of customers—including the fastest-growing startups, largest enterprises, and leading government agencies—are using AWS to lower costs, become more agile, and innovate faster. Visit www.aws.amazon.com to find out more.

About FourKites

FourKites® is the #1 supply chain visibility platform in the world, extending visibility beyond transportation into yards, warehouses, stores and beyond. Tracking more than 1 million shipments daily across road, rail, ocean, air, parcel and courier, and reaching 176 countries, FourKites combines real-time data and powerful machine learning to help companies digitize their end-to-end supply chains. More than 500 of the world's most recognized brands — including 9 of the top-10 CPG and 18 of the top-20 food and beverage companies — trust FourKites to transform their business and create more agile, efficient and sustainable supply chains. Visit www.fourkites.com to learn more.

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