

WHITEPAPER

# Supply chain visibility:

No longer a pipe dream  
for supply chain leaders



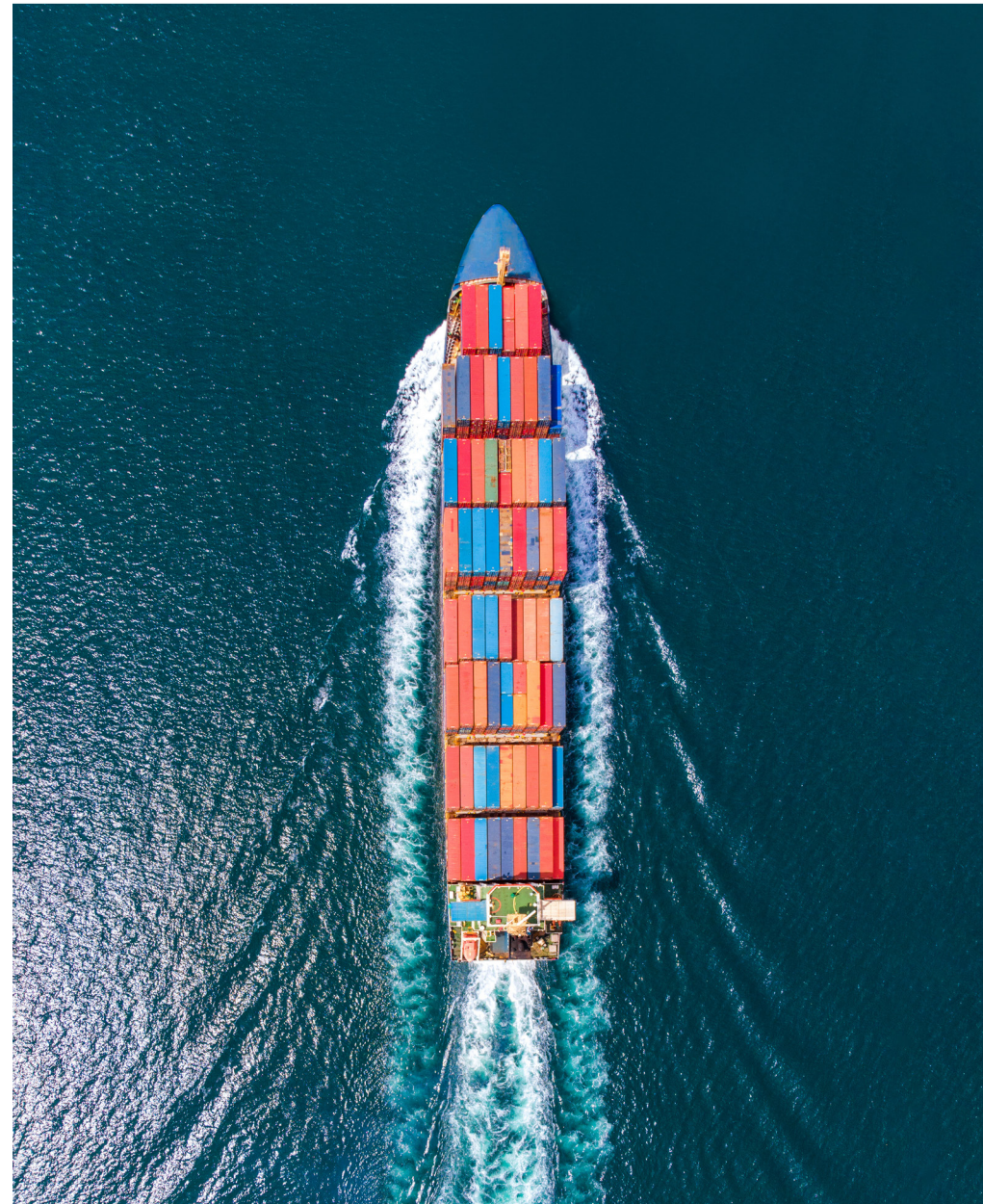
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Supply chain visibility is key to unlocking operational excellence and driving resiliency, yet it remains one of the top challenges facing enterprise leaders today. Research from McKinsey found that [nearly half of supply chain businesses](#) either lack upstream visibility or can't see beyond their first-tier suppliers. Uncovering similar findings, Deloitte reports that just [13 percent of organizations](#) can map their entire supply chain network today.

Yet supply chain visibility, or the lack thereof, isn't inherently a problem. It's a symptom of a much bigger business complexity that most supply chain organizations struggle to fully solve: fixing the brittle, legacy data plumbing system that extends across the supply chain network.

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**of organizations**  
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chain network today.”

**Deloitte.**



# Unraveling data complexity upstream, downstream, and everywhere in between

According to the [World Economic Forum \(WEF\)](#), enhanced data sharing is the most critical building block of supply chain visibility. But as the sheer quantity of data grows day over day, so do the complexities of sharing it. Among the key data-sharing challenges, the WEF points to legacy systems, a lack of interoperability, and data silos as primary friction points.

For example, most supply chains rely on internal systems such as enterprise resource planning (ERP), supply chain planning, order management, warehouse management, and transportation management systems to manage operations. When connecting these systems to up- and downstream tools, supply chain leaders face three key challenges:

**⚠️ Partner networks with varying tech stacks and expertise.**

Not only do suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors all use different combinations of systems, clouds, and tools, but the technical aptitude among partners can vary drastically as well. The complexity of integrating so many first- and third-party tools can be so great that many organizations settle for maintaining the status quo and plugging gaps via manual sharing processes.

**⚠️ Limited scalability due to legacy integrations and IT complexity.**

Brittle connections also inhibit an organization's ability to scale. Architected during the initial contract signing, connections to partner systems often fail to evolve as each organization pursues its own IT goals. While some organizations may develop IT interfaces with a few close partners, accommodating dozens of sub-tier partners is a managerial nightmare.

**⚠️ New (and old!) data silos and manual processes.**

Whether trapped in legacy ERPs, spread across paper trails, or isolated in Excel, data silos run amok across the supply chain. Every day, supply chains add more solutions, tools, and devices to solve problems in a very narrow scope—creating new silos and requiring new integrations to move and analyze data.

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