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**The paradox of the digital supply chain**

It is striking that it is not seen as a particularly strong engine of innovation.

[Page 3](#)

**Global State of the Consumer Tracker**

Consumers face new challenges in the form of inflation and geopolitical uncertainty.

[Page 5](#)



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# Content



Page 3

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Page 5

## 03

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## 05

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# The paradox of the digital supply chain

Most senior executives consider digital supply chain transformation efforts important, but it is striking that it is not seen as a particularly strong engine of innovation.

The importance of the supply chain in contemporary industrial organization is indisputable. In recent decades, this sequence of links has become increasingly complex thanks to advanced digital technologies, which have made it less linear and evolve into an interconnected, proactive and flexible process.

As a result, a new chain known as the “Digital Supply Chain” (DSN) has been created, which has reconfigured the way in which stakeholders communicate and transact with each other. It also facilitates the availability of relevant and timely information that improves decision-making, making it a strategically essential component of organizations.

However, despite the potential to drive innovation in this area, the reality is that organizations are still reluctant to play a new strategic role in the supply chain. This finding is further explored in our study The Innovation Paradox, which in 2018 saw the opinion of 361 top executives in

eleven countries in the Americas, Asia and Europe.

## The supply chain is important, but how much?

On the one hand, the study highlights the strategic importance of investment in the digital supply chain; on the other hand, the analysis also reveals that investment is not considered a particularly strong engine of innovation.

Of the total number of respondents, 62% consider it a priority to invest in their digitization in the future, even ahead of product planning and design. Similarly, 63% said they are already doing digital deployments, suggesting progress in recognizing the virtues of disruptive technologies.

In contrast, only 34% of executives consulted said they considered the potential of a digital supply chain as a source of innovation, far behind information technology, operations and



production. This response is especially surprising given the close functional relationship between the supply chain and operations and production within the overall manufacturing value chain.

In addition, the role of the Chief Supply Chain Officer (CSCO) is not considered important in making decisions for the investment of digital technologies. Only 22% of respondents said the CSCO was heavily involved in the key decision-making process.

## Reduce the paradox and promote the supply chain

Therefore, our survey results suggest that there is a striking contradiction: Organizations may regard the supply chain as relatively important in digital transformation efforts, while not fully appreciating its potential as a driver of digital innovation, nor engaging their leaders in strategic decisions.

Similarly, in doing so, organizations must empower the supply chain manager by delegating oversight of the implementation and operation of digital technologies, that is, giving him a seat at the decision-making table. Moving forward in these steps will help organizations lessen the existing paradox and further exploit their investment in supply chain connectivity.

## Consequently...

This is a wasted opportunity, since integrating the DSN confers innovative opportunities in a wide range of areas. Moreover, in an era like ours, in which transparency, intelligent optimization, increased flexibility, and improved decision-making based on timely and reliable data, they are an imperative of business strategy that helps to successfully circumvent the challenging circumstances experienced by the industry.

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# Global State of the Consumer Tracker

As pandemic concerns gradually begin to ease, consumers confront new challenges in the form of inflation and geopolitical uncertainty.

The Deloitte Consumer Industry center continues to collect data to better understand the shifts in the current consumer mindset and explore the potential implications for an ever-evolving post-pandemic world.

For more than two years, we've been exploring shifting priorities, financial well-being, share-of-wallet spending intentions, climate change attitudes and more. This exploration continues to prompt new questions, new data, and new insights.

## Tracking the consumer recovery

**51%** optimistic financial situation will improve within 3 years

**55%** plan to spend on leisure travel in the next 4 weeks

**73%** concerned prices for everyday purchases are going up

**30%** plan to buy a vehicle in the next 6 months

## Safety and financial sentiment

Global safety perceptions have recovered to their highest point since the onset of the pandemic. But waning pandemic concerns are giving way to financial ones. As inflation continues to put new pressures on households, concern around savings and credit card debt have started to flash some warning signals. The percent concerned



about making upcoming payments has remained stable globally. In some countries such as the United States, however, the metric has been climbing steadily among lower earners.

**Our collective global experience**  
**How are the challenges of an enduring pandemic journey shifting our priorities?**

Since September 2021, consumers have been unwavering in how they feel their priorities have shifted coming out of the pandemic. Consumers still feel introspective, and more focused on personal change, well-being, and purpose. Even as pandemic concerns ease, many continue to feel they're striking a better work-life balance and centering more of their daily life around the home.

But sentiment around some spend-related priorities are shifting. Fewer feel they're spending more to enjoy today. And fewer feel they're spending more on both experiences and goods. Consumers who have had a bit of time to release some built-up pandemic demand are now confronting a rising cost-of-living. Signs suggest some are thinking about the need to tighten their purse strings.

**Share of wallet**

Even as inflation pressures mount, steady spending intentions around more discretionary categories such as recreation & entertainment, restaurants, and leisure travel continue to signal healthy demand. Similar to the pandemic, inflation is likely to disproportionately impact lower income

households. Discretionary spending intentions among lower earners, however, have generally remained stable since September 2021.

**Intended purchase channel**

As safety concerns ease, online purchase intentions have largely come down from their pandemic peaks. The pandemic's lasting impact on online shopping behavior remains a local story. For example, in countries such as Italy and Germany, consumers estimate buying 10% of their groceries online.

**Perception of travel safety**

- 54%** feel safe flying
- 68%** feel safe staying in a hotel

**Leisure travel plans**

Consumers have an exceptionally strong desire to travel. As soon as safety concerns began showing significant improvement, leisure travel intentions started to spike. As of March 2022, the number of consumers planning to stay in a hotel within the next three months hit a two-year high.

**Business travel plans**

- 74%** will likely travel for business within the next 3 months
- 26%** feel technology has replaced the travel that they might normally do

**Reasons for business travel**

Optimism continues on the business travel side. Globally, roughly six in 10 consumers whose job normally requires business travel plan to take a business trip within the next three months-signs that temper early predictions that the pandemic would significantly lower business demand.

**Sentiment on vehicle purchasing**

- 30%** Planning to buy a vehicle in next 6 months
- 69%** Of those purchasing, plan on buying a new vehicle

**Shared transportations**

**What is shared transportation?**

Public transportation such as buses and subways, commuter trains, as well as ride-hailing and ride-sharing, and e-bikes/scooter sharing. ●

**Methodology**

Deloitte's Global State of the Consumer Tracker is an online panel survey fielded monthly across 23 countries. Monthly waves target approximately 1,000 adults (18 years and older) in each country. The country level approximate margin of error is +/-3%. Responses are weighted at the country level to mirror publicly available sources of age, gender and income distribution. India and South Africa are only weighted by age and gender. Response data from India and South Africa are likely to be over representative or urban, higher income populations.

Despite a rising cost-of-living, discretionary spending intentions are generally holding steady. Consistent with previous months, consumers plan to allocate roughly one third of their budgets to more discretionary purchases.

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The world's major economies agreed to take some actions to reduce environmental impact.

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