

# What is supply chain management

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Many experts in the logistics field have differing opinions on what is a supply chain. The most accurate definition that can be found is stated here, ' A supply chain consists of all parties involved, directly or indirectly, in fulfilling a customer request. The supply chain not only includes the manufacturer and suppliers, but also transporters, warehouses, retailers, and customers themselves. Within each organization, such as manufacturer, the supply chain includes all functions involved in receiving and filling a customer request. These functions include, but are not limited to, new product development, marketing, operations, distribution, finance, and customer service.' (Chopra, 2004)

What is a Supply Chain? This paper will cover the author's opinion of what is supply chain. Before enrolling in this class, I understood a supply chain to be the process of taking an order and then the final delivery of the item. After reading and doing research, I understand that a supply chain has many moving links. It is very complex and constantly changing.

In my country, Guyana, South America, we are often approached by consignees who want updates on their shipments such as estimated time of arrival. My understanding of a supply chain in my local market would reveal the following example. A local customer who we shall call a pharmacist contacts his supplier in India for a large quantity of pharmaceuticals. The supplier begins to get his order in place, by doing several things, contacting his materials department, making sure that the order can be fulfilled, packaging the order, shipping it off to the next point using the most cost effective means possible.

Once the order is completed, the supplier contacts the shipper with the necessary invoices and paperwork. The shipper then notifies the relevant parties that he is expecting a shipment of goods. The cargo is delivered to the first point of entry, it is offloaded and then palletized to be shipped to the destination country. Once it arrives in the destination country, arrangements are made by the consignee to clear the goods via the appropriate customs process. Freight and taxes are paid and then the goods are released to the consignee. This example is my understanding of a supply chain. It covers the initial phase of ordering to the final phase of delivery.