

Supply Chain Forum: an International Journal

Call for Papers / Special Issue

Offshoring and Backshoring: a SCM Perspective

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While offshoring, re-shoring and more broadly manufacturing location decisions are key issues for managers and regulators (Berger 2013, Pisano and Shih 2012), existing research on these topics is surprisingly rare, in general and in supply chain management literature. A recent special issue in *Journal of Supply Chain Management* (vol 49(2), April 2013) offers new insights and analysis but mainly evidences research gaps and draws directions for future research on this topic. Indeed, included papers are interesting essays providing challenging discussions and food for thoughts but more empirical studies supporting those ideas are needed. In parallel, since 2010's, manufacturing location issues and specifically reshoring, have been central in political campaign and presented as a priority of elected governments, both in France and in the United States. The re-shoring trend however has not been confirmed by macroeconomic data and recent studies have evidenced that cases of back-shoring to United States are exceptional and have not been completed yet. Also, there is confusion in terms and concepts. First, while not synonymous, different terms are alternatively found in existing literature: reshoring, backshoring, offshoring, far-sourcing, relocation, nearshoring. Clarification is still needed to help understand nuances and differences between them. Specifically, some of these concepts include a dynamic view while others are more static. More broadly, it would be interesting to further investigate how different outsourcing and sourcing strategies affect supply chain management and performance.

Facing these apparently contradictory observations, lack of evidence and confusion, there is a need to conduct more research, including empirical analysis, to go beyond the buzz and understand better "how, why and where companies decide to locate their manufacturing operations" (Ellram 2013). We believe there is urgent need to bridge the gap between different theoretical backgrounds including global supply chains and global value chains; supply chain management and international business. Also, more research is needed to understand how different theoretical grids interact and specifically considering resource-based view and transaction cost economics. Among different ideas, contributions may answer the following questions:

- Are there specific patterns of offshoring and back-shoring in different areas around the globe? Are US and Europe following similar path, with or without lag? What offshoring and back shoring mean for emerging countries companies? Are these phenomena named or observed?
- Are there specific patterns by industry?

- What is the role of sustainable development on offshoring / backshoring decisions? What are the expected impacts of offshoring/backshoring/manufacturing decision on environmental and social performance of the supply chain?
- What are the most relevant theoretical backgrounds? Is there a need to renew them or better relate them?
- How will emerging trends in design and production (3D printing, open innovation, digital economy...) affect manufacturing location decisions?

References:

- Berger, S. (2013). *Making in America: From Innovation to Market*. MIT Press.
- Ellram, L. M. (2013). Offshoring, Reshoring and the Manufacturing Location Decision. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 49(2): 3-5.
- Fine, C. (2013), "Intelli-Sourcing To Replace Offshoring as Supply Chain Transparency Increases", *Journal of Supply Chain Management* 49(2): 6-7.
- Gray, J. V., Skowronski, K., Esenduran, G. k. e., & Johnny Rungtusanatham, M. (2013). The Reshoring Phenomenon: What Supply Chain Academics Ought to Know and Should Do. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 49(2): 27-33.
- Pisano, G. & Shih, W. (2012). *Producing prosperity: why America needs a manufacturing renaissance*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Submissions will be subject to a double blind peer review process. On line submissions to Supply Chain Forum: an International Journal <http://www.supplychain-forum.com> are made using ScholarOne Manuscripts, the online submission and peer review system.

Registration and access is available at <http://mc04.manuscriptcentral.com/scfij>

Publication schedule

The deadline for submissions is: **October 30, 2015**

Final version of papers due: April 15, 2016

Notification of Final Acceptance for Publication: May 15, 2016

The special issue is expected to appear in **June 2016** (SCFIJ Vol 17 2 2016)

A few best papers from the SCM track of the ATLAS-AFMI (<http://www.atlas-afmi.com/>) Conference 2016, which will be held in Nice, may also be included in the special issue.

Questions should be addressed to the guest editors:

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