JOURNAL OF BUSINESS LOGISTICS
Call for Papers: Special Topic Forum

To the Point!
Supply Chain Management Design: Seeking Research that Resonates

In our fast-paced world, researchers must become better influencers. Influence is the goal of discovering and disseminating knowledge. What are the common characteristics of a successful influencer? They are …

- Germane, i.e., they share useful ideas that people care about. We might use the term "relevant."
- Current, i.e., they put ideas into the public domain in time to influence behaviors and drive decisions.
- Provocative, i.e., their ideas do more than inform; they open eyes, spur thought, and invite action.
- Great communicators, i.e., they ensure their ideas are accessible—easy to find and easy to grasp.

Influencers communicate with the power of TNT—today's news today! Now, a question, "Does this describe most research that is published in today's leading academic business journals?" Probably not. We invite research on "hot topics" in developing SC systems and capabilities. The research must be germane, current, provocative, and accessible. Simply put, we are looking for *original* research that helps decision-makers leverage SCM to create value at the pace the world is changing today. As this STF is as much about the process of research as on the topic of SCM, let us outline the process first:

1. Be empirical, based on data collected in 2026 or 2027 (if secondary data is used, it should be the latest available).
2. Be concise, i.e., 3,500 to 4,000 words in length including references. Abstract, figures and tables do not count against the limit. Authors are encouraged to use online appendices keeping conciseness in mind.
3. Be reader-friendly—for both scholars and practitioners. It should resonate to enable insight and impact.
4. Conduct high-quality, original research, i.e., explore "cool" topics, employing theory to make sense of chaos.
5. Align with *Journal of Business Logistics* standards.

This "To the Point!" STF for 2027, like the initial iteration, focuses on **a developmental process**:

First, the **abstract submission deadline is December 31, 2026** (500 words, feedback by Jan 15, 2027). The abstract should outline your story in brief: What are you going to do? Why should readers care? What is your theoretical lens, and your methodology? What data will you use? How will your findings influence theory and practice?

Second, selected abstracts will be **invited for full paper submission**. The submission window is **April 1 – 30, 2027**. All papers will undergo a focused—i.e., review, revision, review, revision, decision—double-blind review process. The goal is to make final decisions before the end of 2027.

Regarding topic, companies need to design more efficient and effective value-added systems and develop more distinctive capabilities to remain viable in today's dynamic marketplaces. Better SC design is the key to managing ever-present tradeoffs, coping with rapid change, and avoiding unintended consequences. Here are a few possibilities:

- Designing tomorrow's supply chain processes and systems for competitive success.
- Understanding connections and tradeoffs among sustainability, risk, and operational excellence.
- Redesigning global SC footprints to meet the needs of a world rife with geopolitical rivalry.
- Developing public policy to enable SC transformation, competitiveness, economic growth and social well-being.
- Managing value creation across organizational boundaries, i.e., building the truly collaborative SC team.
- Employing technology (especially AI) to create distinctive SC capabilities.
- Leveraging innovation to solve wicked problems.

The STF team will host a global **online feedback & developmental workshop end of January 2027**.

Guest Editorial Team: Matthias Klumpp, Medo Pournader, Carl Marcus Wallenburg, Stan Fawcett & Mike Knemeyer