

Chapter 1 : IMPORT EXPORT PROCUREMENT LOGISTICS MIAMI FL ()

Shows how export, import and logistics management are closely interlinked. Divided into eight parts, this book discusses the export-import environment, the procedures for obtaining finance by the exporter, convertibility of rupee, liberalization and its impact, the foreign exchange market, export-import procedures and documentation.

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Technology and third-party providers can help streamline the importing process and speed cycle time while complying with increased regulatory requirements. Companies that manage imports well can compress cycle times and squeeze costs out of their supply chains. They can also suffer bottlenecks, or even complete disruption of their supply chains. Managing imports is not a simple task. Importing a single shipment involves dozens of parties and complying with numerous requirements. The complex importing process is complicated further by the evolving requirements of the U. Bureau of Customs and Border Protection. Take the Hour Rule, which requires advance manifesting of a U. As a result, the total picture tends to get lost, so companies may not have a true idea of what it really costs to move product across multiple borders through their supply chain. Effectively managing imports, Gould says, requires understanding the three flows that are involved in the process: Managing imports depends on effectively managing information. Information flow also involves understanding taxes, tariffs, and other elements of trade compliance, as well as security regulations. Or you could have supply chain interruptions leading to use of premium freight services or, worse, loss of customer relationships," Gould warns. In addition, make sure you know what condition your goods will be in from source to ultimate consumer such as sitting on a dock awaiting inspection , so that you can ensure appropriate packaging. Understanding the physical flow also means having a true picture of timing. Customs, renamed the U. The foundation for CBP programs such as the Hour Rule "is what Customs perceives as the threat that terrorists will infiltrate a legitimate cargo container and place in it a weapon of mass destruction," he says. The threat is real; the means and methods of infiltrating containers exist today. As a result, Weise notes, "Customs is trying to push the perimeters of defense outward" to increase the likelihood that potential threats will be identified before they reach ports of entry. Members of C-TPAT can expect fewer inspections and what Customs calls "an emphasis on self-policing," rather than on customs verifications. While becoming C-TPAT certified may take weeks or months, depending on the size and complexity of a company and its imports, investing in certification is well worthwhile. Failure to become certified can result in missed delivery dates, use of costly premium transportation, and increased cycle times. This process requires having advance information on material that is being sent, as dictated by the Hour Advance Notification Rule. In order to prepare the required documentation, carriers mandate that shippers provide them with documentation 24 to 72 hours beforehand. While the requirement currently covers ocean freight only, depending on what happens in the rulemaking that is currently in the works, advance notification may be required for shipments traveling via other modes in the near future. As a result, Gould recommends re-evaluating your international transit times to ensure you have built in sufficient time. Visibility is Key To manage imports effectively, "the business community needs to have a better mechanism for managing information flow," Weise says. Even today, a significant amount of information flows via faxes and telephone. Tying all the information together to present a unified view can improve security and customs compliance while optimizing operations. Improved processes and technological tools can "create efficiencies that allow for greater security and enhance the facilitation of legitimate trade. Getting things right at the beginning of the supply chain can head off problems and eliminate delays. Other companies tap third parties with local representation to work with suppliers. Picking the Right Partner Many importers look to third parties to help them facilitate the import process. The company uses a third party to help make sure that merchandise is ready on time. This includes optimizing transportation. Counting on a Miracle Third parties may be called upon to work miracles for their customers. There, the packages were sorted and relabeled, then shipped direct to 25 stores, just one day late. While selecting the right third party to provide logistics-related services is important in any situation, it is especially critical when the provider will handle elements of the import process. Then measure their performance, such as evaluating

how long it takes the freight forwarder to turn documents over to the customs broker, and how fast the broker clears shipments. Saying that it is the responsibility of your trade compliance people or customs broker is walking away from part of your job responsibility. He urges logisticians to get smart about imports. Customs and Border Protection web site," which is full of resources on importing and customs regulations. In addition, trade service providers may offer online and in-person training. CBP considers the establishment of import-related training programs to be a best practice of compliant companies. But the benefits are far greater than improved compliance. Honeywell takes a two-pronged approach to ensuring its staff has the necessary importing skills and knowledge. First is an online training program that includes modules on compliance topics such as recordkeeping, classification, and valuation. Each module is offered live every quarter using a web-based presentation program, with new modules developed and presented as necessary. For example, a cross-functional team with representatives from import, export, contracts, and logistics are developing a module on Incoterms. Rockwell Automation also takes a proactive approach to training. The company started using a supply chain training team about one year ago. The team, which includes representatives from logistics, procurement, and business units, develops and presents modules on topics such as procurement, compliance, and inventory management. Training Boosts Awareness Participants in the training range from individuals in procurement and manufacturing to engineers who are moving operations offshore. Even individuals who work domestically can benefit from the training, as it can help them understand the international trade implications for suppliers that are manufacturing offshore, Reuter says. Since the training began, Reuter has seen an increased awareness of the various aspects of importing. Business people consult with her unit and ask questions regarding duty rates, warehousing, and other components that go into strategic sourcing decisions. Technology such as global trade tools can also provide the information needed to improve decision-making. Especially valuable are landed cost modules that help calculate total landed cost. When evaluating such tools, look for those that include factors such as time, inventory, transportation rates, duty, and accessorial charges. But duty and freight rates, economic conditions, and the values of currency change. The logistics team works closely with their counterparts in the traffic department who specialize in imports and exports. We want to know what happened and why," he says. On the spare parts side, for example, "we ensure that all regions that ship spares into the United States have the appropriate documentation and that everything is pre-alerted, so that our group can work to get the shipment of spares through customs," he says. Do you always feel confident that your broker has supplied you with enough information so you cover every cost associated with receiving items from overseas? You have a right to be concerned. First, there are two distinct ways to quote an ocean shipment: An All Water Service quote is from the origin port to a port closest to the final destination. The primary benefit of AWS is that it tends to produce the lowest total transportation cost. A Mini Land Bridge quote is from the origin port to the closest destination port. MLB offers the shortest total transit time because ocean transit time is minimized. The disadvantage is that total transportation cost is typically the higher of the two services. Obviously, the method that best fits your needs will depend on the demand and price you and your customers are willing to pay. The responsibility for the costs associated with importing goods will shift between buyer and seller depending on the Incoterms agreed upon for the transaction. An apparent "all-inclusive price" may not be all-inclusive at all. For instance, brokerage fees, merchandise processing fees, and harbor maintenance fees are likely not to be included in the quoted price. Be sure to ask whether or not these costs are included in the transportation quote. It is very easy to get overwhelmed by different fees that may apply to your import. Being well informed and asking your broker the right questions can prevent costly surprises. Gary LaPoint is assistant professor of supply chain management at the Martin J.

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