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Reverse Logistics Optimization --- A Research to the Uncertainties in the Third Party Reverse Logistics

Case of New Zealand Couriers Ltd

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Logistics and Supply Chain Management

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ABSTRACT

During the past decade, there has been an increasing emphasis on supply chain management as a vehicle through which firms can achieve competitiveness in markets (Porter, 1998). A large number of example in the 1990s show how companies have made large investments to streamline their supply chains in order to improve customer satisfaction and increase their internal productivity (Christopher, 1998). The core of this research is to explore the uncertainties in 3PLs reverse logistics. The uncertainty is one of the significant factors, which directly influence the performance of supply chain system (Chopra & Meindl, 2004). There are many researches and theories about the uncertainties in traditional forward logistics; however, there has been limited attention to theory-based research in the returns management arena (Jahre, 1995a; Carter and Ellram, 1998; Daugherty et al., 2001). Managing these returns is known as reverse logistics (Louise, 2010). With the development of economics, the 3PLs reverse logistics will play an increasingly important role in the supply chain system; therefore it is necessary to consider how to improve the 3PLs reverse logistics. This research focuses on the case of New Zealand Couriers, which is Freightways' flagship brand, is positioned as the premier provider of network courier services to New Zealand businesses. Since 1964 New Zealand Couriers Limited has been the leading Courier Company. Case study is one of the significant qualitative research methods, tending to provide in depth information and intimate details about the particular case being studied. This research concerns the reverse logistics in third party logistics companies. Outsourcing already became one of the significant trends in today’s logistics and supply chain industry, and the third party logistics company (3PLs) is originally the outcome of the outsourcing logistics function in businesses. Therefore the findings of researching the third party logistics company could have high level of external validity (Cameron & Price, 2009) and the results can be widely applied in many other companies.

Keywords: uncertainty, reverse logistics, supply chain optimization, supply chain management, third-party logistics provider, New Zealand Couriers.
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LIST OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Background 2

1.3 Aims and Objectives 3

1.4 Format of Thesis 4

CHAPTER 2 BACKGROUND 6

2.1 Introduction 6

2.2 Definitions 6

2.3 Logistics in the Contemporary World 8
  2.3.1 North America 8
  2.3.2 Western Europe 9
  2.3.3 Japan 11
  2.3.4 China Mainland 12
  2.3.5 Commonwealth of Independent States and Eastern Europe 13
  2.3.6 Some Significant Factors in Logistics Industry 13

2.4 Third Party Logistics and Outsourcing in Logistics and Supply Chain Industry 14
  2.4.1 What Is The 3rd Party Logistics? 14
  2.4.2 The Different Types of 3PL Providers 15
  2.4.3 Benefits of Implementing of Third Part Logistics 16
  2.4.4 Risks of Implementing Outsourcing in Logistics 19

2.5 Courier Company- One Essential 3PL model 20
  2.5.1 History of Couriers Company 21
  2.5.2 The Primary Activities of Companies in Courier Industry 22
  2.5.3 The Characteristics of Courier’s Services 24
  2.5.4 Technological Innovation in Modern Couriers 26
  2.5.5 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system 29

CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW 35

3.1 Introduction 35

3.2 Logistics and Supply Chain Management 36
  3.2.1 Supply Chain Management 38
### Chapter 3: Logistics and Supply Chain Management

3.2.2 Logistics Management 39
3.2.3 Differences Between Supply Chain and Logistics 41

3.3 Reverse Logistics 42
3.3.1 What is reverse logistics? 42
3.3.2 Return Percentages in Reverse Logistics 47
3.3.3 Reverse Logistics Activities 48

3.4 Traditional Supply Chain Strategies 52
3.4.1 The Uncertainties in Traditional Supply Chain 52
3.4.2 Four Types of Supply Chain 52
3.4.3 Push Strategy 56
3.4.4 Pull Strategy 57
3.4.5 The Key Characteristics and Differences Between “Push” and “Pull” 58
3.4.6 Hybrid Push-Pull Approach 59

3.5 Return/Reverse Logistics Optimization Methods 62
3.5.1 Theory of constraints (TOC) 62
3.5.2 Goldratt’s Approach and TOC Financial Measurements 65
3.5.3 The Process of On-Going Improvement 69
3.5.4 Procedure and Lead Time Optimization 71
3.5.5 Implementing Appropriate ERP System 73
3.5.6 Return/Reverse Logistic and Forward Logistics Optimization 76

### Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction 77
4.2 Objectives 78
4.3 Research Strategy 79
4.4 Research Approaches 81
4.5 Research Process 88

### Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Introduction 92
5.2 Supply chain optimization 93
5.2.1 Why does A Company Need to Optimize the Logistics and Supply Chain System? 94
5.3 Case of New Zealand Couriers 101
5.3.1 Introduction of Freightways Group 101
5.3.2 History of New Zealand Couriers 106
5.3.3 Operations in New Zealand Couriers 108
5.3.4 Services in New Zealand Couriers 112
5.3.5 Extension of New Zealand Couriers’ Networks 115
5.3.6 Couriers in NZC 115

5.4 Analysis Return/Reverse Logistics Services in New Zealand Couriers Ltd 119
5.4.1 New Zealand Couriers’ Ticketing 119
5.4.2 Seven Types of Return Models in New Zealand Couriers 130

5.5 Uncertainties in the Return/Reverse Logistics 153
5.5.1 Five Types of Uncertainties in the 3PLs Return/Reverse Logistics 153

5.6 Key Reverse Logistics Management Elements Have Been Found in 3PLs New Zealand Couriers 173
5.6.1 Gate Keeping 173
5.6.2 Compacting Cycle Time 174
5.6.3 Reverse Logistics Information Systems 174
5.6.4 Central Return Centers 175

5.7 Return/Reverse Logistic Strategy 178
5.7.1 Two Critical Dimensions 178
5.7.2 Four Types of the Return/Reverse Logistics 179

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION 184
6.1 Research Conclusion 184

6.2 Objectives 185
6.2.1 Research Questions 185
6.2.2 Key Findings in Research 187

6.3 Future Research 191

REFERENCES 193

APPENDIX 196
List of Tables

Table 3.1 Differences between Supply Chain Management and Logistics Management (Simchi-Levi, et al., 2008) ............................................................................................................................................. 41
Table 3.2 Sample Return Percentages (Lembke, 1998). ............................................................... 47
Table 3.3 Common Reverse Logistics Activities (Lembke, 1998) .................................................. 49
Table 3.4 Characterization of Items in Reverse Flow (Blumberg, 2005) ......................................... 51
Table 3.5 The Uncertainty in Forward Logistics Framework (Lee, 2002) ......................................... 53
Table 3.6 The Key Characteristics and Differences between “Push” and “Pull” (Lambert, et al., 1998b). ............................................................................................................................................. 58
Table 3.7 The Formulation In the Throughput World (Goldratt, 1997) ........................................... 67
Table 4.1 Fundamental Differences between Quantitative and Qualitative Research Strategy (Bryman, 2007). ............................................................................................................................................. 80
Table 5.1 NZC (NZC, 2011) ........................................................................................................... 108
Table 5.2 Hub and Satellite Depots in Auckland Regional Area (NZC, 2011)............................... 113
List of Figures

Figure 3.1 A comprehensive supply chain system (Blumberg, 2005) ........................................... 36
Figure 3.2 A typical supply chain which includes three stages (Christopher, 1998) .................. 37
Figure 3.3 Comprehensive logistic channel (Simchi-Levi, Kaminsky, & Simchi-Levi, 2008) .... 39
Figure 3.4 Supply chain-aftermarket supply chain product life cycle (Blumberg, 2005) .......... 39
Figure 3.5 Economies of scale (Lean Enterprise Institute., Shimokawa, & Fujimoto, 2009) .... 56
Figure 3.6 Push-pull boundary (Chopra & Meindl, 2004) .......................................................... 59
Figure 3.7 TOC financial measurements (Goldratt & Cox, 2004) .............................................. 68
Figure 4.1 An outline of the qualitative research in this thesis (Bryman, 2007) ....................... 89
Figure 5.1 Freightways Financial Summary (NZC, 2011) ......................................................... 103
Figure 5.2 Freightways Operating Revenue (NZC, 2011) ............................................................. 103
Figure 5.3 Hub and Spoke system (NZC, 2011) ........................................................................ 110
Figure 5.4 An example of prepaid ticket (NZC, 2011) ............................................................... 120
Figure 5.5 An example of a charge label (NZC, 2011) ............................................................... 122
Figure 5.6 An example of Porpharma delivery ticket (NZC, 2011) ........................................... 125
Figure 5.7 An example of customer printed ticket (NZC, 2011) ............................................ 125
Figure 5.8 An example of dedicated return label (NZC, 2011) ................................................... 127
Figure 5.9 An example of return label in transit (NZC, 2011) .................................................... 129
Figure 5.10 An example of John Sands (NZC, 2011) ................................................................. 131
Figure 5.11 An example of John Sands return tickets (NZC, 2011) ........................................... 132
Figure 5.12 An example of CMW ticket (NZC, 2011) ................................................................. 134
Figure 5.13 CENZ pick up form (NZC, 2011) ............................................................................. 138
Figure 5.14 An example of ProPharma ticket (NZC, 2011) .......................................................... 141
Figure 5.15 ProPharma Return Cage (NZC, 2011) ................................................................. 143
Figure 5.16 TNT international return ticket (NZC, 2011) .......................................................... 150
Figure 5.17 Uncertainties among three parties ........................................................................ 154
Figure 5.18 New relationship among three parties after eliminating uncertainties between return customer and 3PLs ................................................................. 161
Figure 5.19 Four types of the return/ reverse logistics .............................................................. 180
Figure 6.1 New relationship among three parties in 3PLs ............................................................ 188