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TECH-ENABLED LOGISTICS SOLUTIONS AIM TO IMPROVE SUPPLY CHAIN VISIBILITY AND EFFICIENCY

[ST. LOUIS/May 13, 2024] Efforts by a St. Louis-based company to improve supply chain visibility and efficiency for clients around the world were highlighted during opening day of FreightWeekSTL 2024. Hosted by the St. Louis Regional Freightway, the week-long conference kicked off May 13 with Innovation Day, which included a virtual session with Rob Cook, Chief Technology Officer at [Sheer Logistics](#). He shared details about the company's recent growth and award-winning tech-enabled logistics solutions. He also talked about how the company is helping clients measure and analyze CO2e emissions, manage freight costs and track freight all in one place, allowing them to generate meaningful and actionable business reporting and intelligence.

Sheer Logistics offers 4PL/Managed Transportation Services, logistics technology solutions, and 3PL/freight brokerage services to shippers. It was founded in Chesterfield, Missouri in 2009 with the goal of offering tech-enabled supply chain solutions to mid-market companies that have traditionally been underserved by 4PL/Managed Transportation Services providers. Since then, the company has grown exponentially, managing the movement of freight throughout the world and opening offices in six U.S. states, as well as in Mexico. In early April, the company expanded again, this time by acquiring CargoBarn, a tech-enabled, third-party logistics provider based in Atlanta. The move, which will augment Sheer's truckload brokerage offering, effectively doubled the size of the company.

The acquisition comes as demand for Sheer Logistics' solutions is growing. On the managed transportation front, Cook said the company has never been busier. In December 2023, Sheer Logistics was recognized by *Supply & Demand Chain Executive Magazine* with a Top Software & Tech Award for its innovative Scope 3 CO2e Emissions Dashboards powered by SheerExchange. SheerExchange is the company's proprietary Integration Platform as a Service (IPaaS) that connects disparate systems, captures and analyzes all transportation and shipment data, and empowers supply chain leaders with actionable business intelligence. The groundbreaking technology facilitates the capture and calculation of Scope 3 CO2e emissions generated indirectly up and down the supply chain. It has always been a challenge to calculate this data as products move through the supply chain via multiple parties, but Sheer Logistics is able to capture the emissions data in real time across all modes of transportation in a company's supply chain and integrate this data seamlessly into a shipper's Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP) and Transportation Management System (TMS). SheerExchange can also integrate thousands of other different carrier and logistics platforms, allowing companies to access all the data they need in one place. The technology is timely as mandates in California and across Europe are beginning to require a specific level of Scope 3 CO2e emissions reporting.

"In California, you're starting to see where they will require any company with \$1 billion or more in revenue to report Scope 3 emissions," Cook said. "And, like it or not, the U.S. is part of the Paris Climate Accord, and there will be reporting standards that will need to be met as we start the journey down into these net zero requirements."

The Scope 3 CO2 Emissions Reporting and Dashboards are a key part of Sheer Logistics' goal of providing visibility across the supply chain for its customers. That visibility covers purchase order and freight tracking and also financials as the company is able to calculate transportation costs down to SKU level and offer advanced

accrual reporting. Being able to integrate Sheer Logistics' technology into customer platforms and allow them to view all this data in one place has been key to the company's growth, according to Cook.

"We made a conscientious decision about five or six years ago to custom build our software inhouse and deploy it as a service and a solution, and some of these pieces have paid dividends," Cook said.

He also cited the company's location in St. Louis as another driver of growth due to its access to talent, local universities and waterways. "When you look at logistics, then it makes sense to have a centralized operation especially when looking at the breadth and size of the country. We have a worldwide footprint, but the heart and soul of our company is definitely in St. Louis."

Cook also talked about the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the supply chain industry. He pointed to the projected Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the United States over the next few years and how employment growth – specifically in transportation, logistics and supply chain – is expected to exceed the labor participation rate. He said automation will be needed to fill some of the available positions. He also discussed ideal uses cases for AI technology in logistics, including predictive alerts that let customers know when there might be an outage or delay and prescriptive alerts that let customers know how they can recover from those delays. As an example, he mentioned how Red Sea attacks caused ocean transit times to increase by 14 days and how the Baltimore Bridge disaster impacted freight movement as well. He said some people equate prescriptive alerts with exception management, but they are not really one and the same. "I think prescriptive alerts with AI is that you avoid the exception to begin with, because you've already recovered from it before it becomes an exception," Cook said.

Cook addressed the need for skilled employees across the supply chain industry. He suggested those looking to work at a company like Sheer Logistics pursue an undergraduate degree in a supply chain, logistics or procurement program and encouraged college seniors and juniors to pursue internships that will allow them to gain real-world experience.

The virtual panel session featuring Cook was hosted by Mary Lamie, Executive Vice President of Multimodal Enterprises for Bi-State Development. Bi-State Development operates the St. Louis Regional Freightway as one of its enterprises.

"Today's conversation gives us a deeper understanding of the importance of greater supply chain visibility, and the role technology can play in helping to provide that clearer picture of where freight is in transit, greater ability to track and reduce emissions and superior insight on freight costs," said Lamie. "That type of visibility can be a real game changer, and Sheer Logistics is delivering it from right here in the St. Louis region."

FreightWeekSTL 2024 continues through May 17 and offers several other virtual panel sessions with industry experts and leaders in freight, logistics, transportation and more. To learn more or to register for the remaining panel sessions or view today's sessions for FreightWeekSTL 2024, visit [FreightWeekSTL.com](https://www.freightweekstl.com).

About St. Louis Regional Freightway

A Bi-State Development enterprise, the St. Louis Regional Freightway is a regional freight district and comprehensive authority for freight operations and opportunities within eight counties in southwestern Illinois and eastern Missouri, which comprise the St. Louis metropolitan area. Public sector and private industry businesses are partnering with the St. Louis Regional Freightway to establish the bi-state region as one of the premier multimodal freight hubs and distribution centers in the United States through marketing and advocacy for infrastructure development that supports the movement of freight. To learn more, visit thefreightway.com.