

# Supply Chain Logistics: New Ways of Doing Old Things

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Ronald M. Leibman

A trained logistician, McCarter partner Ron Leibman has extensive experience in the supply chain management and logistics fields and predicts major growth in supply chain law with the industry's rush to emerging, data-driven technologies.

"The acceptance of cryptocurrency and Uber-type transportation by the public, the promise of real time data analysis, the perceived efficiencies of automation, and the effect of Amazon on customer delivery expectations all signal that industry is in a rush to technology," he said. "As this occurs, to be successful as attorneys and advisors, supply chain lawyers will need to be able to apply traditional legal constructs in a new and ever-changing environment."

Ron cautions clients to avoid supplier hype and focus on avoiding liability. "For example, a real-time transportation management system may allow for real-time shipment tracking and the ability to manage delays and to improve on time delivery. The question is, does this benefit outweigh any attendant risk?" he posed. "Supply chain attorneys must be cognizant of potential liabilities. That enables the attorney to bring potential liabilities to the client's attention so the client can do a proper risk/reward analysis, and also to develop strategies to minimize any risk for systems that go operational."

Ron also discussed how technologies like blockchain may impact the supply chain, stating, "The supply chain is a perfect environment for blockchain...If blockchain can fully systematize and largely automate the data input, transmission and output process in a secure transmission environment, it will certainly be a gateway to the future."

He also advised general counsel assisting internal clients not to take suppliers at face value. He said, "If they are a service provider, they need to meet the legalities that attach to their services, and if they are a software provider, this is not a get-out-of-jail-free card from all liabilities. This can be tough to do as supply chain and IT executives...are in a rush to technology out of fear of being left behind by the competition. While you don't want to be the office of 'no,' I suggest being the investigative office."

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