Planning Beyong the Contingency: Supply Chain Expert Lisa Anderson Says One Backup Plan Is No Longer Enough

As supply chain volatility becomes an ongoing reality, manufacturers need the capacity, capabilities and alternatives to anticipate, adapt and respond



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CLAREMONT, CA, UNITED STATES, September 29, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Lisa Anderson, MBA, CSCP, CLTD, a leading expert in manufacturing strategy and supply chain transformation and president of LMA Consulting Group, Inc., is highlighting the need for manufacturers to move beyond traditional contingency planning as disruptions increasingly occur across interconnected global supply chains.

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>
> *Lisa Anderson, President LMA Consulting Group*

"Having a backup plan is important, but what happens when your backup is disrupted too?" said Anderson. "Companies need to plan beyond the contingency. That means developing the capacity, capabilities and alternatives to anticipate changing conditions, adapt quickly and respond when disruption occurs."

Recent challenges affecting major waterways illustrate the issue. Low water levels have reduced capacity through the Panama Canal, while similar conditions have affected the Mississippi and Rhine Rivers. A company might respond to one transportation constraint by shifting products to another route, port or mode of transportation. However, the alternate route can encounter its own disruption - from port congestion and bridge closures to labor issues, weather events or transportation bottlenecks.

"The mistake is thinking that identifying an alternate route, supplier or production location means the problem has been solved," Anderson explained. "A contingency plan can face the same types of risks as the original plan. You have to understand what happens next."

A Backup Plan Is Only the Beginning

According to Anderson, resilient supply chains require multiple executable alternatives rather than a single Plan B.

Manufacturers should evaluate their end-to-end supply chain networks to understand where critical dependencies exist and determine what alternatives are available across suppliers, production facilities, transportation modes, routes and logistics partners.

Just as importantly, those alternatives must be viable. "If your backup supplier cannot increase production when you need it, or your alternate manufacturing facility doesn't have the equipment, people or materials required to support additional volume, it isn't really a contingency plan," Anderson said. "Capacity and capabilities have to be developed before they are needed."



Photo of Lisa Anderson

This can include qualifying additional suppliers, reserving capacity, cross-training employees, developing strategic partnerships, identifying alternate transportation modes and routes and determining where production can be shifted or expanded.

Visibility Creates Time to Respond

Greater supply chain visibility can also provide companies with something particularly valuable during a disruption: time.

ERP systems, advanced planning technologies, artificial intelligence and supply chain visibility tools can help manufacturers identify changing conditions and potential constraints earlier. SIOP (Sales, Inventory & Operations Planning) provides the framework to connect that information with customer demand, capacity, inventory, suppliers, production and financial priorities.

"The earlier you see a problem developing, the more alternatives you have," Anderson said. "If you don't see the disruption until a shipment doesn't arrive or production stops, your choices become much more limited and much more expensive."

Scenario planning can help companies determine in advance how different disruptions could affect customers, production, inventory and profitability. Instead of developing a response in the middle of a crisis, leadership teams can evaluate alternatives and establish priorities before they are needed.

Anticipate, Adapt, Respond
Anderson believes manufacturers should ultimately measure resilience not by whether they have a contingency plan on paper, but by how effectively the organization can continue operating as conditions change.

"The objective isn't to predict every disruption. That's impossible," Anderson said. "It is to build an organization and supply chain with enough visibility, capacity and capability to respond to whatever comes next."

That requires moving beyond reactive problem-solving and incorporating resilience into supply chain strategy, planning and investment decisions.

"Supply chain volatility isn't going away," Anderson concluded. "Companies that build options before they need them will be in a far stronger position when conditions change. Anticipate. Adapt. Respond. That's what resilience looks like in today's supply chain."

To learn more about supply chain strategy, SIOP, advanced planning and building resilient supply chains, visit: LMA-ConsultingGroup.com.

About LMA Consulting Group
LMA Consulting Group works with manufacturers, distributors and supply chain-related organizations to achieve predictable growth, profitable performance and scalable supply chain success. Lisa Anderson is recognized as a top supply chain and ERP expert and is regularly featured in major media, including Bloomberg, IndustryWeek, The Wall Street Journal and Inc. Magazine. She is a noted authority on the SIOP (Sales, Inventory & Operations Planning) process and author of SIOP: Creating Predictable Revenue and EBITDA Growth. For more, visit LMA-ConsultingGroup.com.

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