

# The CEO Magazine™

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A Magazine for Business Leaders & Decision Makers

**25**  
MOST TRUSTED

**ERP & CRM  
SOLUTION**  
PROVIDERS IN INDIA

**25**

MOST REMARKABLE COMPANIES IN  
**SOFTWARE TESTING &  
QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**Amit Maheshwari**

Founder, CEO & MD, Softlink Global

# SOFTLINK GLOBAL

**GLOBAL LEADERS IN PROVIDING SOFTWARE  
SOLUTIONS IN THE LOGISTICS & FREIGHT  
FORWARDING REALM**



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LOGISTICS & FREIGHT FORWARDING REALM

"World is moving very fast, skills learned in the past no longer work anymore, nonstop evolution is the only solution" - Amit Maheshwari

Yashasvi Khushu • The CEO Magazine

Established in 1992, Softlink Global Pvt. Ltd, over the past two decades, has gained a high ground for its simplified user interface, consistent cutting-edge technology, impeccable implementation, and customer support. It holds its position strong as one of the leading Indian software solution providers for the logistics and freight forwarding companies globally.

Amit Maheshwari, CEO, with a spirit of innovation and passion extends support to the logistics industry creating greater business impact. Trust is reflected through thousands of logistics software deployments that the company has commenced over the years under his competent supervision. Today, they triumphantly sit at a global client portfolio of 4500+ companies spread across the wide spectrum of the industry including logistics, freight forwarding, warehouse, transportation, 3PL, custom brokers and shippers in more than 45 countries worldwide.





### MORE ABOUT THE FOUNDER

Amit Maheshwari - Founder, CEO-MD of Softlink Global is an Electronics Engineer by education. He is truly a technology evangelist and is great at finding technical solutions to various business challenges. He is also known for his thought leadership and revolutionary ideas across the logistics industry. His expertise spans strategic planning, information management, financial resource management, product development, and marketing. Amit is responsible for the company's overall global operations while bringing years of cumulative logistics industry knowledge, experience and technological expertise to the table.

The CEO Magazine, in an interactive conversation with Amit, got the opportunity to know more about the cloud-based ERP software 'Logi - Sys' that has helped their customers in increasing productivity, operational

efficiency, enhanced management control, accurate international trade documentation, and revenue growth. Keep reading to know more;

### Give us an idea of the various technological solutions your company is offering.

Softlink is the only company that provides complete web-based solutions that are prevailing in the logistics software industry. Our flagship product 'Logi-Sys' is developed with the thought "One Business - One Solution" to manage entire operations, financial accounting, sales and CRM for the logistics and freight forwarding industry in a single platform. The software caters to the Customs, Freight Forwarders, Warehouses, Transporters and 3PL/4PL logistics operators of every size from a single office in a single country to multiple offices in multiple countries. The system is integrated with the latest intelligent tools, mobile app and

customer portal that provide real-time alerts, notifications, and reports to take critical decisions timely.

Today we can proudly say that our customs compliance software Live Impex is responsible for more than 70% customs filing processes from India. Yes, we have come a long way when we started our journey with our DOS-based software to provide web-based software that can manage the end to end logistics operations in a single system.

### What challenges did you face in an ever-changing and dynamic work environment when it comes to persuading clients to adopt technological solutions?

Technology is transforming the logistics sector and how it is operating, but smart software investments can help companies to keep pace with the rapid change in the industry. Slowly the industry leaders are discovering that technology is changing the landscape

of logistics operations and investment in logistics software is critical for scaling up their business. Given the fact that the logistics sector is still considered an unorganized sector especially in India, there is a need to create awareness among the LSPs to consider adapting technology as an investment rather than an expense.

Slowly technological advancement like IOT Devices, Drones, Robots, 3D printing, Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality is becoming a reality and LSPs are struggling which technology to adapt and where to make the investment to drive maximum return on investment. We have always been with our clients to recommend and help them in their decision to select the right technology. Like in the last 2-3 years when the world of technology was discussing that Blockchain will bring a drastic chain in the logistics industry we advised our clients to wait and take their decision slowly in adapting technology and we proved ourselves to be correct.

I believe, our two decades of experience in sensing the changes in the upcoming technologies and understanding the dynamic customer demands have always helped us to guide our customers and bringing innovations in our products.

#### **How do you support your client during the digital transformation process?**

Implementing the ERP system is very crucial for the beneficial outcome of the investment. The success of ERP software implementation relies on the approach, methodology, and understanding of the requirements of the clients. Our team with over two decades of expertise adopts a unique method to integrate the ERP application and divide it into five stages.

At the preparation stage we assign an account manager, call for a core meeting, define the implementation priorities, understand the user concerns and prepare a detailed roadmap to work upon.

The second stage involves implementation mission which

includes critical processes like documentation, setting up masters & directories, configuring access control, creating invoices and debit/ credit notes, initiating eAWB, customs, online booking and so on. The third stage involves mapping work processes essential for streamlining & enhancing workflow. It includes quotations, configuring alerts and notifications, credit control, MIS and Track & Trace. The next stage includes implementing the processes that would enable the management and managers to monitor & analyze the business and work out strategic plans like sales processes, online tracking to customers, a mobile app for management and field staff, budget planning and defining targets. Finally, we help our customers to measure success by comparing the enhanced KPIs, streamlined processes, increased productivity, better employee engagement and increase customer satisfaction. Our team completes the implementation process within 15 days with proper guidance and with 5 to 10 days of training and post-training review





and update procedures, our clients go live with the ERP system. Besides our support team always ensures 24\*7 customer services for any query handling.

### **How can CRM drive Digital Transformation for growing businesses?**

Today's digital world has changed the dynamics of the customer interactions and every prospect wants to be treated uniquely with customization according to their needs and fulfilment by knowing their personal preference and past performances. The logistics and supply chain is no exception, and to manage the complex requirements of multiple stakeholders and interaction with existing customers and potential customers, it is important to adopt strong Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategy. We have observed in one of our studies that more than 79% of business inquiries are either get wasted or not converted to sales. We have integrated our software Logi-Sys with CRM features to track every activity of the customer right from inquiry received until the completion of sales. The intelligent reporting tool provides auto-generated reports for the management to help in real-time decisions making. Salespeople consider CRM as a powerful tool for better customer experience and in the current scenario; it is indispensable for all scale of businesses.

### **What are your predictions of ERP? What will change in the next 5 years?**

Over the past few years, we have realized that ERP solutions play a critical role to help our customers by providing accurate, up-to-date information for managing operational data and improving business efficiency. The ERP system was a game-changer when it was first



introduced in the market which enabled a single integrated application to manage and automate every aspect of business related to technology, services, and human resources. But it came with few limitations like lack of flexibility and accessibility, rigid mechanism, and costly to change which became a problem as the company grows and scale up its operations.

Now with the introduction of the cloud-based ERP one doesn't have to completely replace the existing ERP system rather supplement the existing ERPs with cloud-based software which gives more flexibility and control in automating your business processes from anywhere anytime.

Slowly the concept of a cloud ERP system is taking place by predictive ERP that can now ascertain, calculate and predict certain repetitive behaviours basis business processes and operations. As we know that ERP solutions have changed the way we are doing business but now the question is will the Predictive ERP is going to be accepted by the industry the same

way? Many other questions like how will support be handled, will ROI be measured much differently from today's technology investments, how long will this take to get there to this level, how will technology advance to support this new predictive architecture, how will implementation be differ from today, how fast are still to be answered and so on. So far we can say that even though ERP solutions, big data and BI have made incredible progress but still there is a long way to go when the system can configure on its own at the enterprise level. But predictive ERP System will ease the business operations.

### **How do you see advanced technology affecting you as a business? How do you intend to be ahead of the game?**

Globalization and advances in technology have changed the way we do business. Traditional logistics and supply chain models are changing their strategies and adopting technology to provide low-cost on-demand delivery service. To align with the ever-evolving customer expectations companies are shifting

their operating dynamics from traditional opaque activities to completely transparent operations. Shippers are no longer satisfied with just visibility they expect full transparency. This requires deep industry expertise, technologies, and vision along with experience to help logistics companies to digitalize entire internal operations while tightly integrating with Shipper's Supply Chains. Like always, at Softlink we will continue to find ways to simplify logistics operations with the latest technologies like AI & Robotics.

In the future, we are planning to integrate artificial intelligence with the business processes to enable our users to make better business decisions and management of the assets. Lately, we have integrated the entire application with the mobile app and bring in the customer portal to track real-time activities and transparency of every movement.

#### **What ethos is maintained for the employees in your company?**

Our employees are an integral part of our success that is highly motivated, creative and informed with the latest technological know-how that brings uniqueness to the product and understands every minuscule detail to bring efficiency in our customer's business processes. Their relentless efforts in research, development, implementation, and support to handhold our clients throughout have helped us to remain at the top for more than 25 years.

Softlink Global provides its employees the opportunity to grow within the organization where they gain rightful skills, training to always remain updated with the latest technologies. Above all, we believe in allowing their talents the freedom to explore and bring creativity, thus creates belongingness and passion for work. Softlink has always

endeavoured on high values and ethics with all its employees and we have laid a strong foundation for high retention of our employees across our branches.

#### **Could you talk about your company's business performance through 2019, key learning, and your expansion plan for 2020?**

Over the past few years given the drastic technological disruption, our effort has always been focused on understanding how technologies are going to revolutionize the logistics & freight forwarding business. Like always in the year 2019, we dedicated a substantial amount of effort in understanding the dynamic market scenario and implementing AI & robotics in our software so that we can provide more adaptability of enhanced technology to our existing customers. We have introduced a mobile app and customer portal which will further add more value to our customers in tracking real-time information and better decision making. As part of our expansion plan, we have added clients from a few more countries in the year 2019. In the year 2020, our strategy is to continue to add on to our customer's portfolio clients from other geography and customize our products to adapt to the local requirements of the region. Also, we will continue to further add on more & more modules and features to our products to facilitate our clients to meet the ever-evolving technological changes.

#### **What are the achievements and awards earned by your company?**

Our biggest achievement is the trust of our clients and dedicated & relentless efforts of our valued employees that have always helped

us to stay ahead in the industry and enabled us to win several awards. This year we won several prestigious awards like the award for Outstanding Contribution in Technology for Air Cargo and Logistics Industry by the Chamber of Commerce PHD, CII SCALE Special Awards for "Best Innovative Technology Solution", Digital Technology Solutions Provider at Conquest by EXIM, India, Best Technology solutions Provider Supply Chain Management at India Cargo Awards to name a few. Softlink Global has also been included in the "Hall of Fame" after winning the prestigious MALA Maritime and Logistics Awards, 2019 for best technology solutions provider in IT for the record sixth time.

#### **What would be your advice to aspirants who are planning to venture in the same domain?**

I believe in this era of disruptive technologies to sustain in competition understanding the market, the need and challenges of the customers are very important. My advice to the new players is to put maximum effort in understanding their customer's challenges and bring in the best sustainable technology currently available to help them to simplify their logistics operations.

Another big factor that plays a crucial role is customer support. At Softlink, we ensure that we resolve any issue within 24 hours. In case of any regulatory changes, our employees strive hard and stay days & night to implement the updated changes in the system so that our customers don't face any problem. My advice to the aspirants would be to improve customer retention, build brand trust and boost ROI by focusing on product quality.