

Changing Dynamics of Logistics in India: Softlink

Logistics supply chain is changing dynamics with ERP, robotics, Internet of Things and Artificial Intelligence. Amit Maheshwari, CEO & MD, Softlink, talks about how digitisation enables companies to address the new requirements of the customers and the challenges on the supply and demand side by providing more transparency.



Amit Maheshwari
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What role is being played by an Indian customs broker in facilitating the country's foreign trade?

The free trade agreements signed by India have enabled merchandise exports to register a 9.06 per cent growth, to hit a new high of US\$ 330 billion in 2018-19. The role played by intermediaries in the customs environment, has supported India's foreign trade by enabling a systematic channel to facilitate cross border trade. They have been successful in implementing the rules and regulations with every type of enforcement for ease-of-doing-business. Customs brokers act as the bridge to manage data, relationship and complexity on the ICEGATE government portal for custom compliances.

What are the regulatory and compliance needs of the customs broking in India? How can your software enhance the efficiency of the customs broking process?

Given the developing economic scenario and open market in India the logistics industry has adopted to dynamic market demand and is evolving over time. We have complex customs laws and navigating through them is not easy. Custom brokers, being the critical link to the global supply chain, find it challenging to implement the



ever-changing rules and regulations. We at Softlink engage in providing technology solutions to global logistics players. We conceptualise, design, create and market cloud-based ERP systems to cater to the demanding needs of the logistics industry. With our decade-old domain expertise and experience we have developed our products Logi-Sys and Live Impex to help customs brokers that not only cater to their customs compliance needs but also take care of their sales, marketing, finance and complex tax compliances in the regime of GST. We have been foresighted enough to develop products for the logistics industry to facilitate freight forwarders, transporters, warehouse, Container Freight Stations (CFs) and Inland Container Depots (ICDs). We will provide real-time systems to facilitate customs clearance in the future.

What kind of support does the industry need from the government?

The Government of India has granted infrastructure status to the logis-

tics industry and that is the major step by the government to make it an important economic contributor. Given the market demand, customs has become technology-oriented and the focus has shifted to bring in more comprehensive technologies to streamline the operations and increase efficiency in the logistics industry. I believe, the industry needs more acknowledgement from the government as a facilitator to smoothen the customs compliances globally.

Given the significant demand related to India's own exports and imports, India should develop a port that has the capability to challenge established regional hubs such as Dubai and Colombo. Also, there should be an internal hub and spoke model that will allow smaller ports to feed cargo to the hubs. The industry also expects improved road transport infrastructure, since its direct and indirect effect has a bearing on sustainable growth and overall development of a country. 🇮🇳