



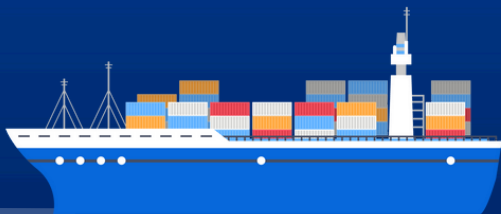
Moving Supply Chain & Logistics Leadership Forward

Research Conducted by Adelante SCM



# THE STATE OF **DIGITIZATION** in **FREIGHT FORWARDING** 2025

Delivering on Technology  
in a World of Rising Expectations



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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For over 25 years, trusted supply chain and logistics analyst, Adrian Gonzalez, has served as a strategic advisor to top executives across manufacturing, retail, third-party logistics, and technology sectors.

Adrian is the founder and host of Talking Logistics ([www.talkinglogistics.com](http://www.talkinglogistics.com)), a video talk show where industry thought leaders and newsmakers share insights and discuss critical topics shaping the supply chain and logistics landscape.

As the founder of Indago ([www.joinindago.com](http://www.joinindago.com)), he leads a market research community of supply chain practitioners dedicated to exchanging practical knowledge and advice in a confidential, trusted space while supporting charitable causes that make a difference.

Through Adelante SCM, Adrian empowers young supply chain professionals to connect, share expertise, and grow within a private, solicitation-free environment.

A former adjunct instructor of Supply Chain Management at Northeastern University's Executive MBA program, he is also an accomplished public speaker and writer with a knack for sparking meaningful conversations and delivering actionable insights.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2025, a disconnect exists between shippers' expectations for advanced technology and what the vast majority of forwarders currently deliver. A mere 23% of the freight forwarders surveyed have digitized 75%+ of their overall business processes/transactions, so it's not surprising that 38% of the shippers surveyed said they are only "Slightly satisfied" or "Not satisfied at all" with the technological capabilities of their freight forwarders.

## INTRODUCTION

"The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order."

That quote by the English mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead encapsulates nicely the difficult balance freight forwarders and other logistics service providers (LSPs) must achieve to remain relevant and successful in today's dynamic and unpredictable business environment.

On the one hand, they have to maintain operational excellence in executing the fundamentals of their business regardless of the change happening around them, but on the other hand, they also have to keep innovating and transforming their ways of working. If they focus too much on one and not the other, they either risk getting left behind by the competition or they risk going out of business by investing too much time, money, and resources on things that don't deliver meaningful business benefits.

Achieving the right balance between operational excellence and continuous innovation is also at the heart of digital transformation, which ChatGPT defines as follows:

■ "Digital transformation is the process of using digital technologies to fundamentally change how a business operates, delivers value to its customers, and competes in the market. It goes beyond just adopting new tools—it involves rethinking processes, culture, and customer experiences to drive innovation and efficiency."

Unfortunately, many freight forwarders and LSPs remain laggards when it comes to digital transformation. "Characterized by low-margin business models, Freight & Logistics (F&L) companies have had very limited scope to invest in the digital initiatives advancing other industries," states a [2023 report published by Accenture](#) based on a survey of more than 600 C-suite executives, vice presidents and directors from leading F&L companies in 10 countries. The report highlights that 72% of the survey respondents agreed with the following statement:

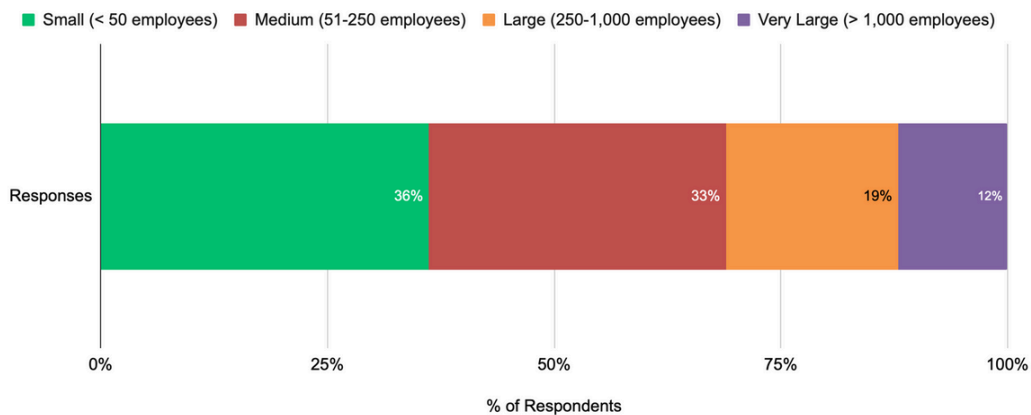
■ "Overall, at an industry level, there is not only an ignorance of digitalization, but also a lack of a roadmap in terms of what needs to be done."

Research conducted by Magaya in 2023 provides a similar perspective of the industry. As highlighted in the report “[The State of Digitization in Freight Forwarding 2023](#),” 24% of the 70 freight forwarders, 3PLs, and NVOCCs surveyed at the time “still had completely manual processes, as in no ERP or specialized freight forwarding software.”

Over the past 18-24 months, have freight forwarders and LSPs made progress moving up the digitization maturity curve? What factors are driving their digitization efforts? Which areas of their business are they prioritizing for technology-enabled improvements? What are the biggest challenges or obstacles they continue to face?

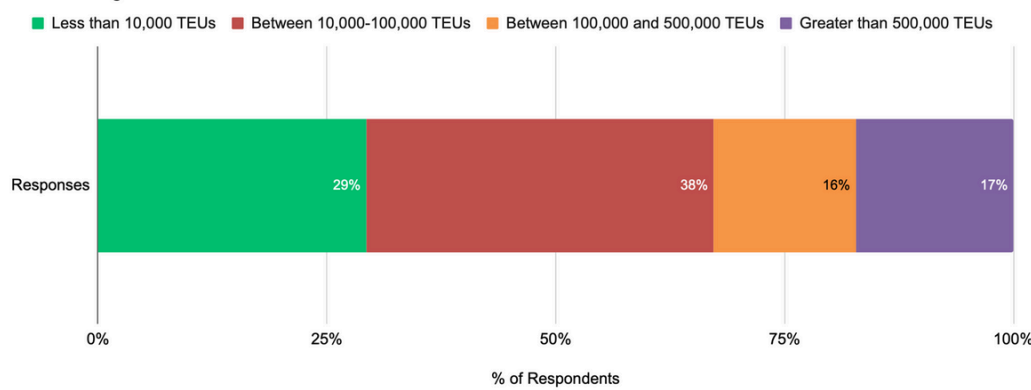
Those are the main questions we explore in this report. The data and insights are from a survey conducted in November 2024 with 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and logistics service providers (see profile of respondents below). We also surveyed members of the [Indago supply chain research community](#) -- who are all supply chain and logistics executives from manufacturing, retail, and distribution companies -- to get their perspective on the technological capabilities of their freight forwarding and LSP partners.

#### Company Size



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and logistics service providers.

#### Annual Freight Volume



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and logistics service providers.

Before analyzing the research results, we will address a basic (yet important) question: Why is digitization important?

# WHY IS DIGITIZATION IMPERATIVE FOR FREIGHT FORWARDERS AND LOGISTICS SERVICE PROVIDERS?

There are many reasons why digitization is imperative for freight forwarders and logistics service providers, too many to discuss here. But the following three factors rise to the top today and should serve as a catalyst for digitization in 2025 and beyond.

## Shifting Trade Policies and Regulations

The re-election of Donald Trump as U.S. president has increased the risk of a tariff war in 2025. While it remains to be seen whether Trump and Congress will follow through on his campaign promise of imposing a blanket 10% to 20% tariff on all U.S. imports (and 60% to 100% tariff on Chinese imports), the threat alone is already influencing supply chain decisions.

For example, almost a third of the Indago supply chain executives [surveyed in November 2024](#) said that they were either “Very concerned” or “Extremely concerned” about a potential tariff war affecting their supply chain operations in 2025. As one supply chain executive commented:

“We have been hit with 25% tariffs several times. [We’ve had to work with Customs and Border Protection to get an exemption and refunds]. Our exemption expires in May 2025 with no guarantee of renewal...A tariff war could really harm us since 87% of the feathers and down come from China as duck meat is one of their main protein sources. We’re doing what we can to source out of the EU but there are limited options. We will continue to look for options like Vietnam and Thailand as other sources.”

Another executive added, “For more than two years, at the corporate level, we have been moving from Asia to more local vendors. At the same time, we are looking to save [costs] elsewhere with the idea of passing as low as possible this burden to end customers. The market moves slowly to absorb price increases, and we cannot afford to lose customers.”

What impact will these proposed tariffs have on supply chains and freight volumes? As highlighted in a [report published in December 2024 by Magaya](#), “The announcement of these proposed tariffs has already led to a surge in preemptive imports as businesses race to bring goods into the U.S. before any changes take effect. This rush is likely to be followed by a slowdown in freight volumes, as higher costs discourage certain imports. Such volatility presents challenges for LSPs tasked with maintaining smooth operations during uncertain times.”

The report adds that “with tariffs likely to drive up costs on imports from key trading partners like China, Mexico, and Canada, freight rates are sure to fluctuate. An initial spike in demand to beat tariff deadlines could give way to a slowdown in shipments as higher costs take effect. LSPs will likely need to adjust pricing models to reflect these shifts while maintaining competitive margins.”

In addition, as tariffs are introduced or adjusted, “customs clearance processes will evolve, yet again, and are likely to become more complex. LSPs will need to navigate more detailed reporting and documentation requirements; heightened scrutiny during customs inspections; and potential penalties for non-compliance with updated regulations.”

Another change impacting the industry is the proposed changes to de minimis shipments. In September 2024, the Biden-Harris Administration announced that it planned to “issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that would exclude from the de minimis exemption all shipments containing products covered by tariffs imposed under Sections 201 or 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, or Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962.”

As highlighted in the press release, “a shipment is eligible for the de minimis exemption if the aggregate fair retail value of the articles imported is \$800 or less. De minimis shipments enter the United States with less information than other imports and are not subject to duties and taxes.”

Among several proposed changes, “this regulatory action will propose to require specific, additional data for de minimis shipments – including the 10-digit tariff classification number and the person claiming the de minimis exemption – which will improve targeting of de minimis shipments and facilitate expedited clearance of lawful de minimis shipments.”

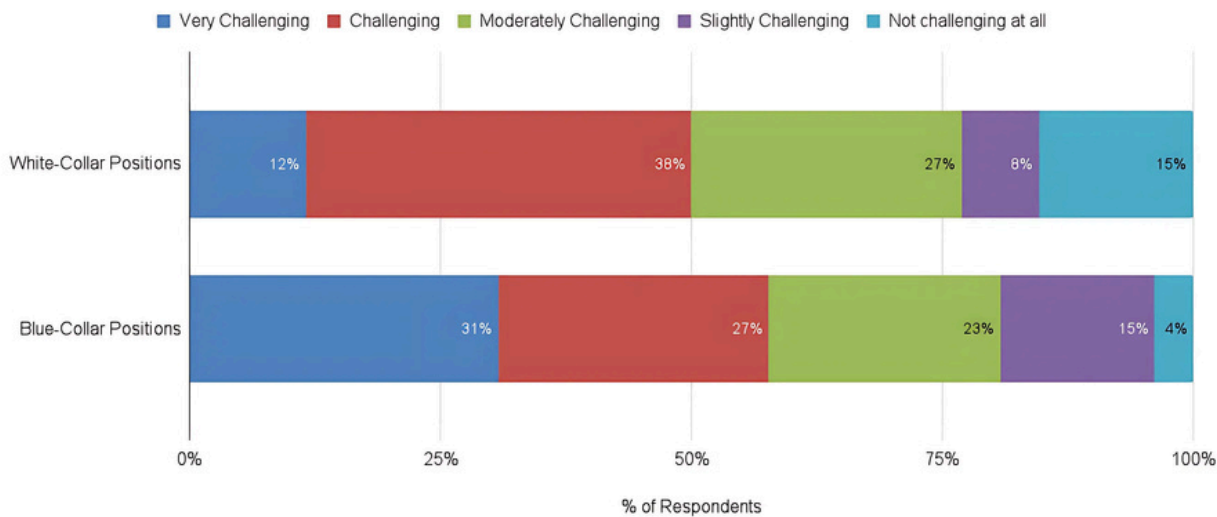
Simply put, these changes will require logistics service providers to gather and verify more detailed information for each shipment. They will probably also need to adjust their pricing structures because shipments previously exempt from duties may now incur tariffs.

# Growing Labor Constraints

How challenging is it at the moment to find and hire qualified people to fill your open supply chain and logistics positions?

Indago members were asked that question in a December 2024 survey. 58% said that finding and hiring qualified blue-collar workers (e.g., drivers, warehouse associates) was either “Very Challenging” (31%) or “Challenging” (27%). Finding white-collar workers (e.g., analysts, planners) was not any easier, with 50% of the respondents saying it was either “Very Challenging” (12%) or “Challenging” (38%).

How challenging is it at the moment to find and hire qualified people to fill your open supply chain and logistics positions?



Source: December 2024 Indago survey of 26 qualified and verified supply chain and logistics executives from manufacturing, retail, and distribution companies.

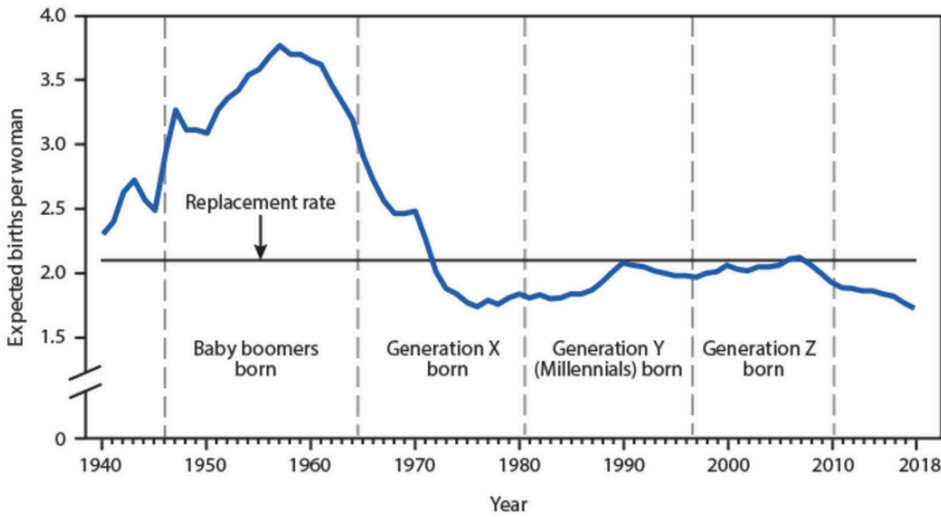
“We often struggle to fill both blue and white-collar roles,” said one logistics executive. “Location is one issue, but the overall competition for good employees appears to be the greatest challenge.”

While Indago members are all shippers, logistics service providers face similar challenges in finding, hiring, and retaining talent. According to the “[2023 Third-party Logistics Study](#)” conducted by C. John Langley Jr., Ph.D. at Penn State University, “56% of the 3PLs [surveyed] said labor shortages impacted their supply chain operations. Many see the ‘talent crisis’ as a long-term issue, with 29% of 3PLs saying they believe there has been a permanent shift.”

In a September 2023 Wall Street Journal article titled, “[Why America Has a Long-Term Labor Crisis, in Six Charts](#),” Lauren Weber and Alana Pipe write:

“Work experts have warned for years that the combination of baby boomer retirements, low birth rates, shifting immigration policies and changing worker preferences is leaving U.S. employers with too few workers to fill job openings. While the labor market is softening, none of those factors are expected to change dramatically in the coming years.”

Since the 1970s, the world's fertility rates have been declining. Almost two-thirds of the world's countries are below the 2.1 replacement fertility level – that is, the level of fertility at which a population exactly replaces itself from one generation to the next. In the United States, for example, the fertility level was 1.7 in 2022 according to The World Bank, and it has been below the 2.1 level for more than 50 years! Simply put, every generation is smaller than the one before it.



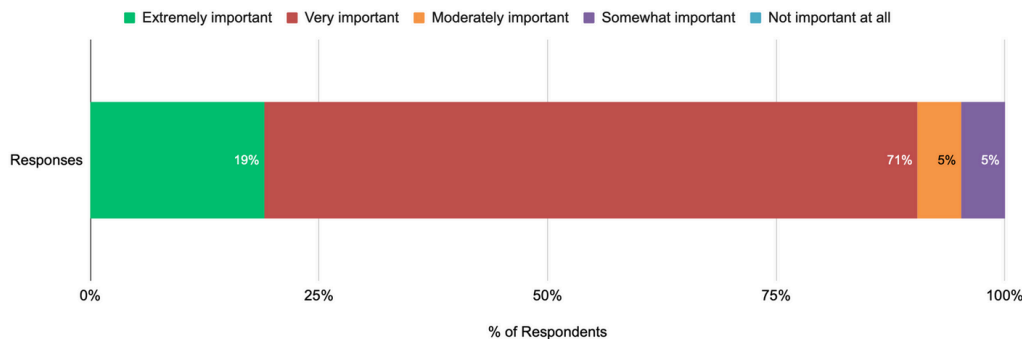
Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6901a5.htm>

The bottom line is that the labor shortage problem is not a temporary issue; this problem has been decades in the making and it's here to stay.

## Technology Is a Competitive Differentiator for LSPs

90% of the Indago members surveyed in November 2024 said that technological capabilities are either “Extremely important” (19%) or “Very important” (71%) when evaluating and selecting 3PLs/freight forwarders.

When selecting a freight forwarder or 3PL partner, how important is their technological capabilities in your evaluation and selection process?



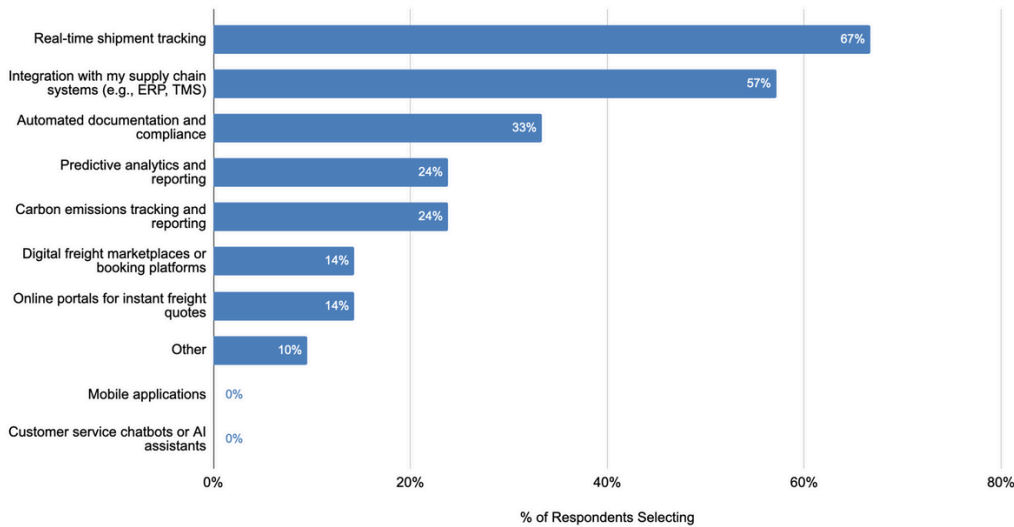
Source: November 2024 Indago survey of 24 qualified and verified supply chain and logistics executives from manufacturing, retail, and distribution companies.



“As the pace of business continues to increase, so does the need for direct, near real time digital connections into our 3PLs,” said one supply chain executive. “It is no longer acceptable to live in a ‘black box’ environment where 3PLs only feed limited information to my organization. We need transparency to collaborate and improve processes together. If we do not have this, the benefits of utilizing 3PLs diminishes and I have a much stronger case to bring warehousing [back in house] where I can fully control improvements.”

Which technological capabilities offered by freight forwarders and LSPs do shippers find most valuable? “Real-time shipment tracking” topped the list, with 67% of the respondents selecting it. This was followed by “Integration with my supply chain systems” (57%) and “Automated documentation and compliance” (33%).

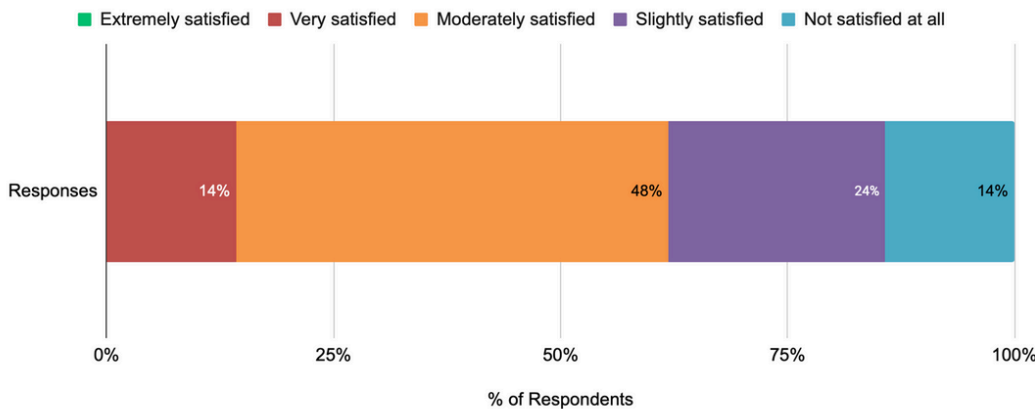
Which technological capabilities offered by your freight forwarders/3PLs do you find most valuable? Select up to 3 responses.



Source: November 2024 Indago survey of 24 qualified and verified supply chain and logistics executives from manufacturing, retail, and distribution companies.

Unfortunately, more than a third of the respondents (38%) said they are only “Slightly satisfied” (24%) or “Not satisfied at all” (14%) with the technological capabilities of their 3PLs or freight forwarders; none are “Extremely satisfied” and only 14% are “Very satisfied.”

How satisfied are you with the technological capabilities of your current freight forwarders/3PLs?



Source: November 2024 Indago survey of 24 qualified and verified supply chain and logistics executives from manufacturing, retail, and distribution companies.

As one executive put it, “We have some logistics partners who have best-in-class technology, while others lag behind with limited visibility and delays in messaging. We're actively working to rid ourselves of the latter.”

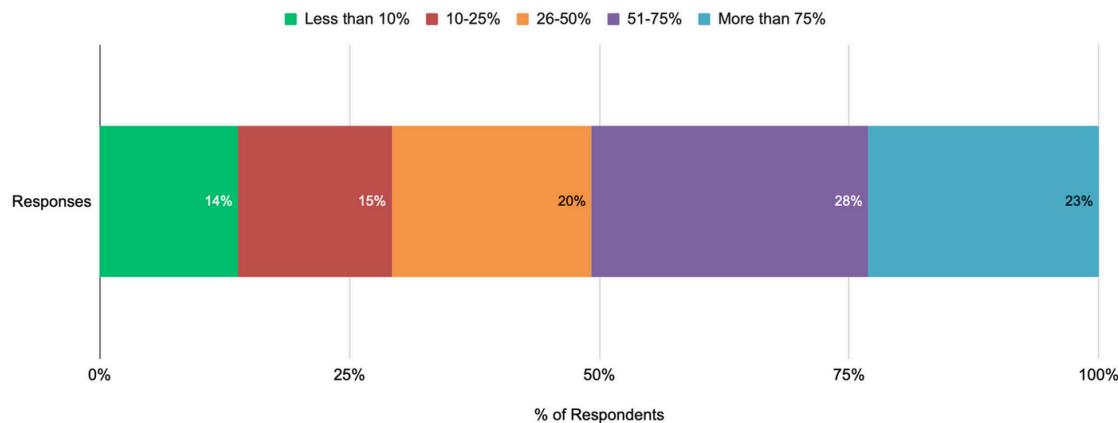
The implication is clear: freight forwarders and logistics service providers that fail to meet the technology expectations of their customers risk losing business, while those that meet or exceed customer expectations are better positioned to gain market share.

## THE STATE OF DIGITIZATION IN FREIGHT FORWARDING: SURVEY RESULTS

Here are the key findings from the November 2024 survey conducted with 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and logistics service providers.

**Only 23% of the freight forwarders surveyed have digitized more than 75% of their overall business processes/transactions.**

What percent of your overall business processes/transactions are currently digitized -- that is, are performed using software vs. being performed manually or with emails/spreadsheets?

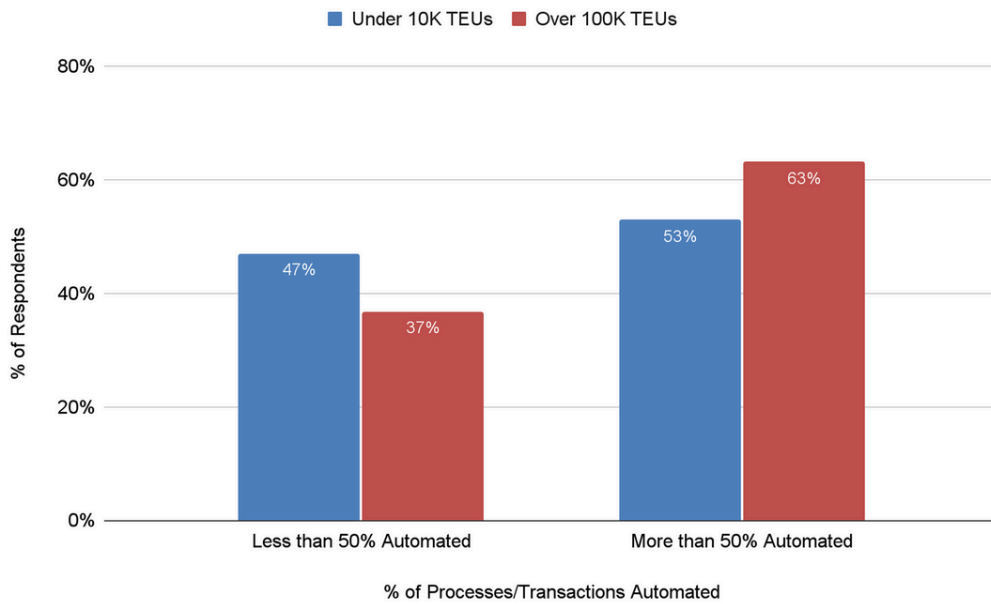


Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers.

Almost half the respondents (49%) have digitized 50% or fewer of their overall business processes/transactions.

Simply put, many freight forwarders are still laggards when it comes to digitization. This is particularly true for smaller logistics service providers. As the chart below shows, larger freight forwarders (those processing 100K TEUs or more per year) are more automated/digitized than smaller ones (those processing less than 10K TEUs per year).

What percent of your overall business processes/transactions are currently digitized -- that is, are performed using software vs. being performed manually or with emails/spreadsheets?

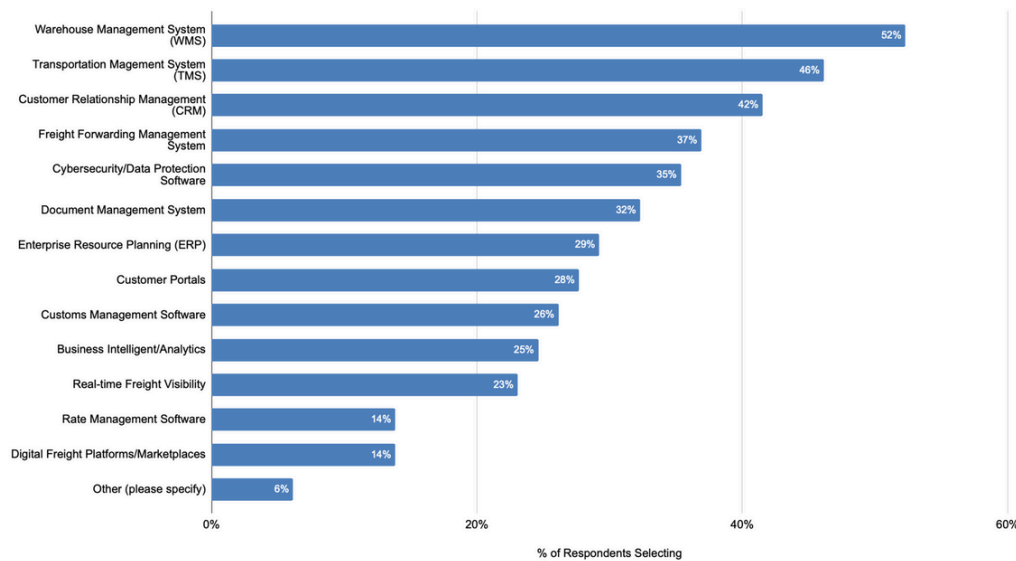


Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=17 for Under 10K TEUs, n=19 for Over 100K TEUs)

## Less than 40% of freight forwarders are using a freight forwarding management system.

It ranked fourth behind Warehouse Management System (52%), Transportation Management System (46%), and Customer Relationship Management (42%).

Which types of software applications do you currently use? Check all that apply.



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=65 for this question)

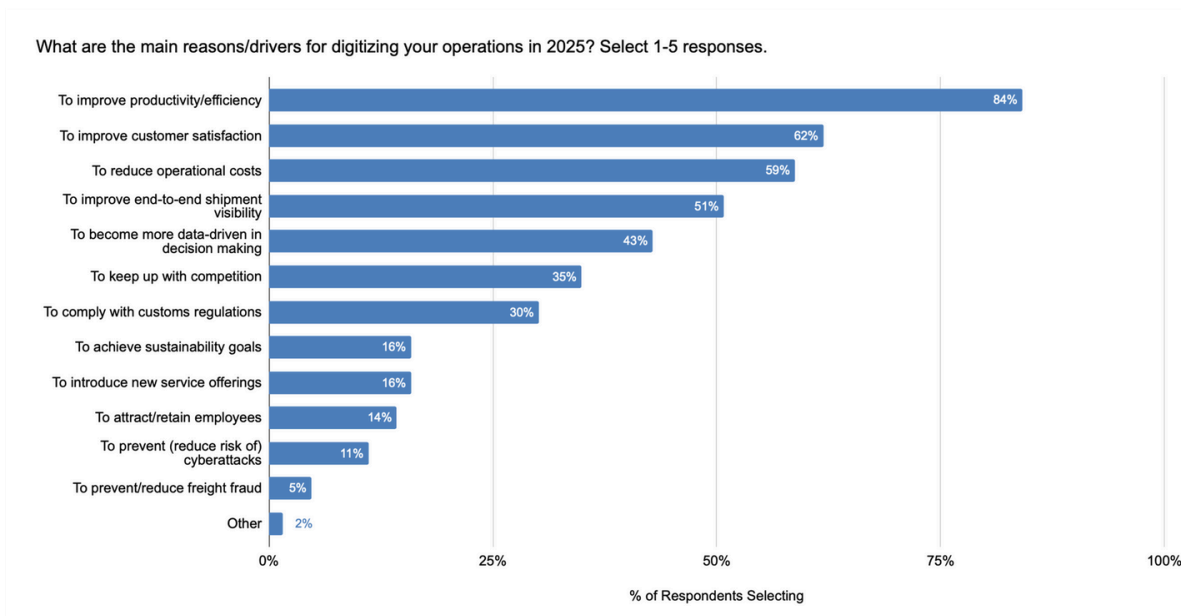
The results suggest that many freight forwarders are relying on spreadsheets or other low-tech/no-tech tools for shipment management, rate management, quoting and booking, compliance, and other important business functions typically enabled by a Freight Forwarding Management System.

## Only 23% of freight forwarders are using a real-time freight visibility solution.

As highlighted earlier, “Real-time shipment tracking” topped the list of technological capabilities shippers value the most from their freight forwarding and LSP partners. Yet, as the chart above shows, Real-time Freight Visibility solutions ranked near the bottom of the list of the software applications freight forwarders currently use. Therefore, there is a big gap between what shippers value the most and what freight forwarders are offering today. That said, as discussed below, larger freight forwarders are focused more on closing that gap than smaller ones.

## “To improve productivity/efficiency” is the main driver for digitization.

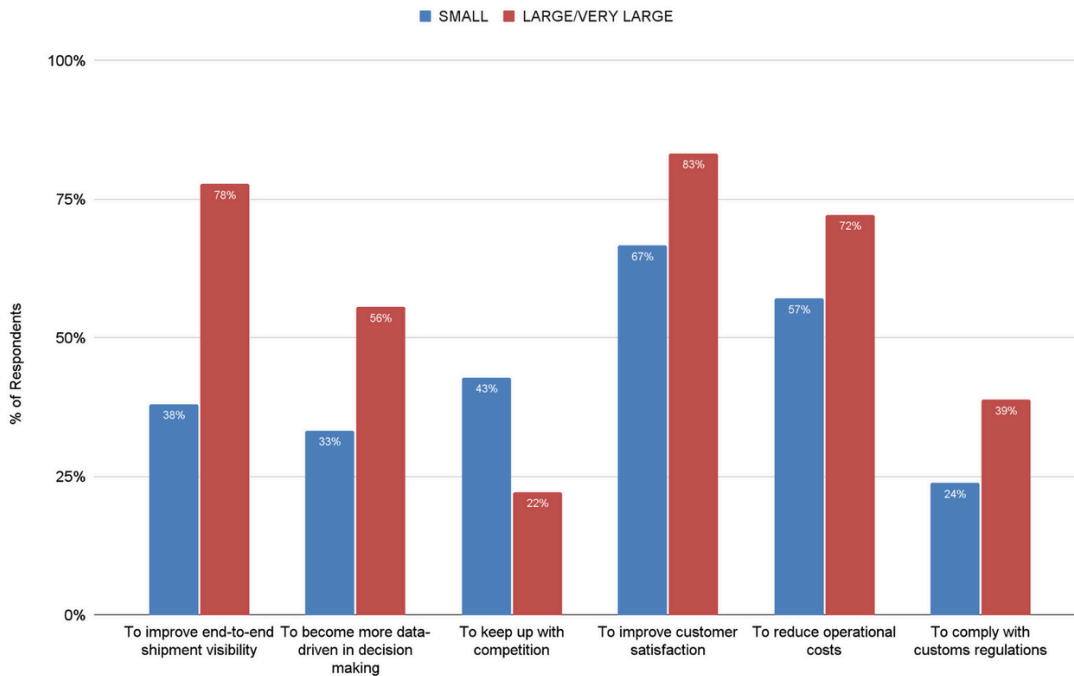
It was selected by 84% of the respondents, followed by “To improve customer satisfaction” (62%), “To reduce operational costs” (59%), and “To improve end-to-end shipment visibility” (51%).



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=63 for this question)

There are some notable differences, however, between larger freight forwarders (those with more than 250 employees) and smaller ones (those with fewer than 50 employees).

What are the main reasons/drivers for digitizing your operations in 2025? Select 1-5 responses.



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=21 for Small, n=18 for Large/Very Large)

For example, “To improve end-to-end shipment visibility” is a bigger driver for digitization for larger freight forwarders than smaller ones. “To become more data-driven in decision making” is also a bigger driver for larger freight forwarders than smaller ones.

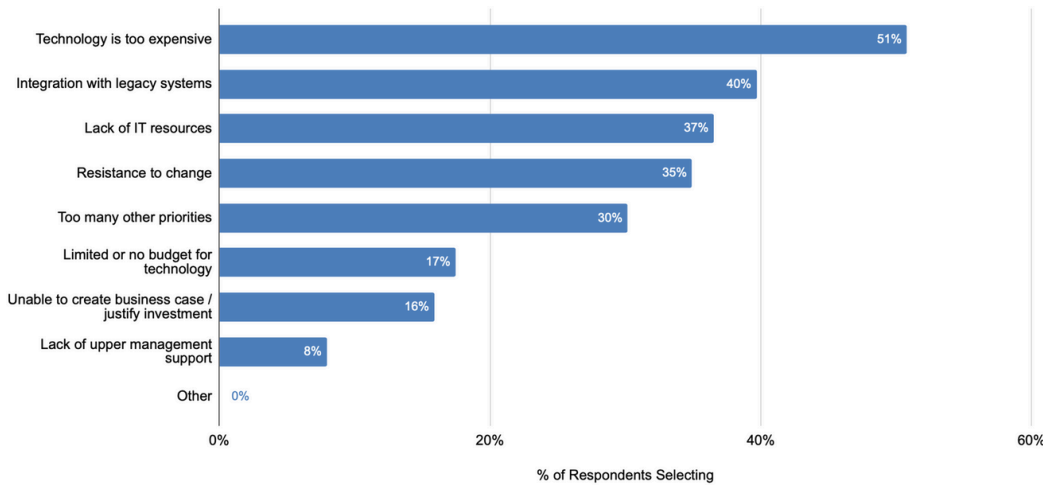
“To keep up with the competition,” however, is a bigger driver for digitization for smaller freight forwarders than for larger ones.

Finally, it’s interesting to note that two topics that receive a lot of press attention -- Sustainability and Freight Fraud -- ranked low on the list (16% and 5%, respectively).

## “Technology is too expensive” is the biggest obstacle to digitizing operations.

It was selected by 51% of the respondents, followed by “Integration with legacy systems” (40%), “Lack of IT resources” (37%), and “Resistance to change” (35%).

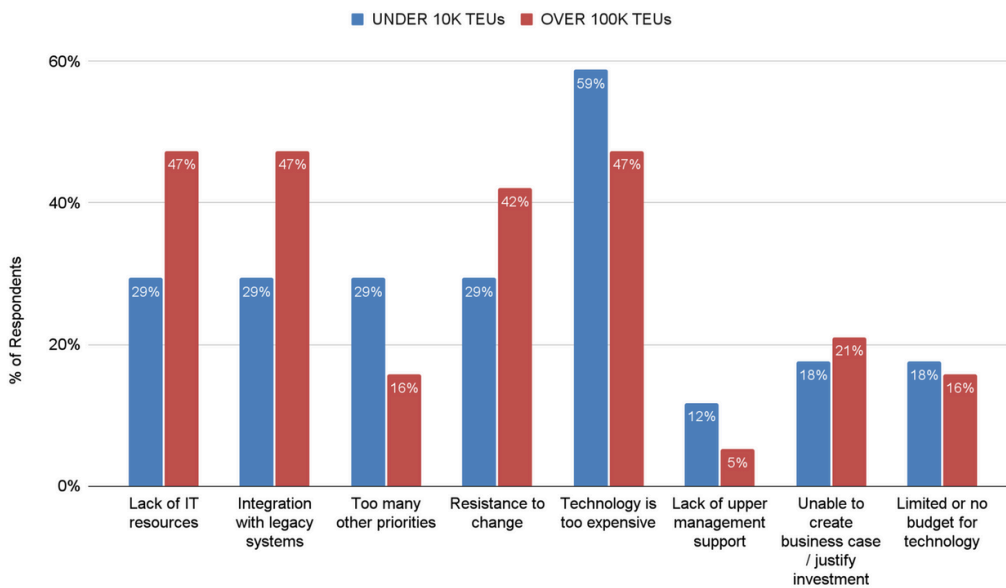
What are the biggest challenges or obstacles to digitizing your operations in 2025? Select 1-3 responses.



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=63 for this question)

Again, there are some notable differences between larger freight forwarders (>100K TEUs annually) and smaller ones (<10K TEUs annually).

What are the biggest challenges or obstacles to digitizing your operations in 2025? Select 1-3 responses.



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=17 for Under 10K TEUs, n=19 for Over 100K TEUs)

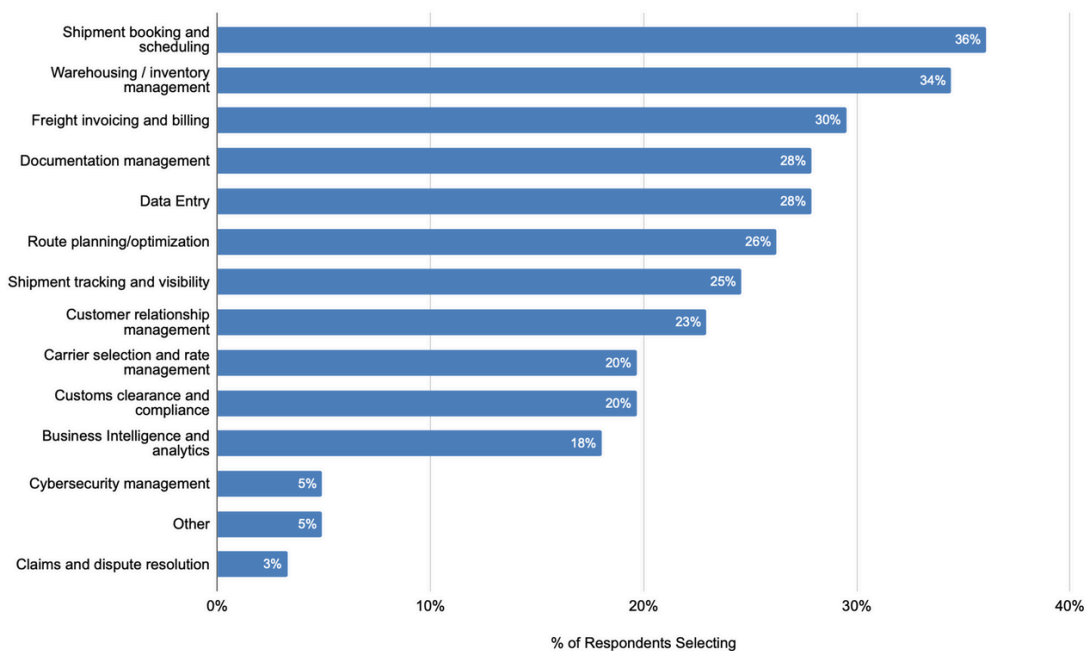
“Lack of IT resources” and “Integration with legacy systems” are bigger obstacles for larger freight forwarders than smaller ones. These two factors are likely linked -- that is, larger freight forwarders presumably have more legacy systems in place that need to be integrated and maintained, and this creates a need for more IT resources.

In contrast, “Too many other priorities” and “Lack of upper management support” are bigger obstacles for smaller freight forwarders than larger ones. This suggests that smaller freight forwarders have limited time and resources to focus on things beyond meeting their day-to-day priorities, and without upper management support, investing in digital transformation will likely not move up the priority list.

## “Shipment booking and scheduling” tops list of digitization priorities.

It was selected by 36% of the respondents, followed by “Warehousing/inventory management” (34%), “Freight invoicing and billing” (30%), and “Documentation management” and “Data entry” (both with 28%).

Which areas of your business operations are the highest priority for technology-driven improvements in 2025? Select 3 responses.



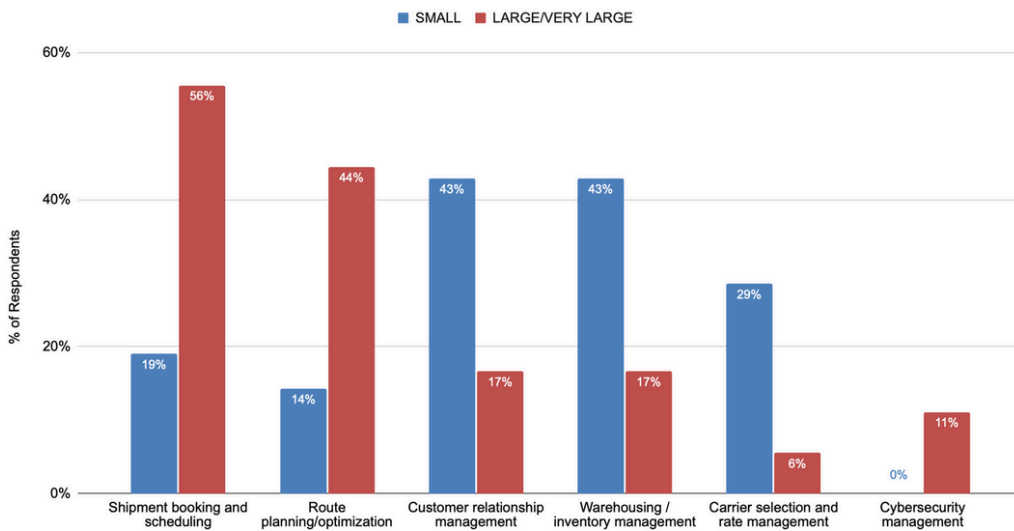
Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=61 for this question)

“Shipment tracking and visibility” ranked 7th overall. Again, this should be ranked higher considering this is what customers value the most from their freight forwarding partners. As highlighted earlier, the relatively low ranking is driven primarily by small and mid-sized freight forwarders.

It’s also surprising to see cybersecurity so low on the list considering the growing incidents of cyberattacks in the industry.

“Shipment booking and scheduling,” “Route planning/optimization,” and “Cybersecurity management” are much higher on the priority list for larger freight forwarders (>250 employees) than smaller ones (<50 employees).

Which areas of your business operations are the highest priority for technology-driven improvements in 2025? Select 3 responses.

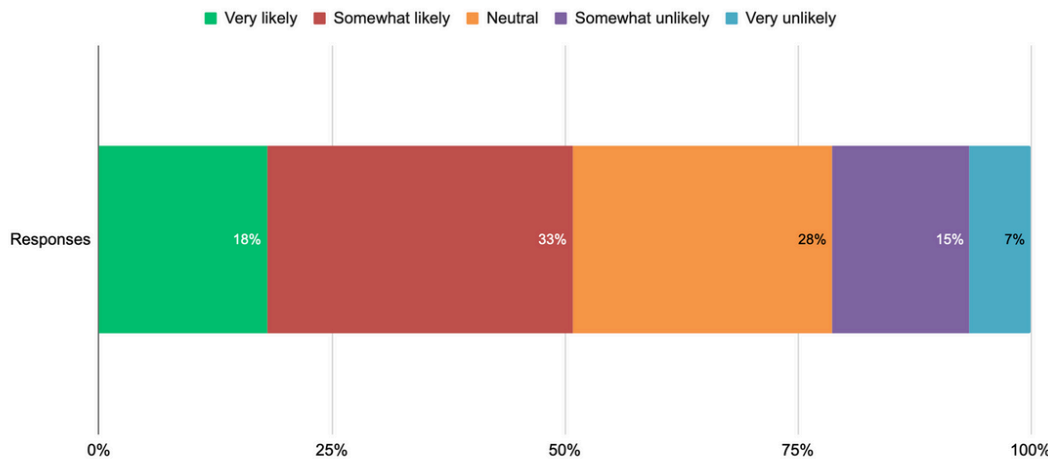


Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=21 for Small, n=18 for Large/Very Large)

## Larger freight forwarders are much more likely to invest in AI in 2025 than SMBs.

Overall, 18% of the respondents are “Very likely” to invest in AI in 2025 and 33% are “Somewhat likely.” Only 7% said that they are “Very unlikely” to do so.

How likely is your organization to invest in artificial intelligence (AI) or machine learning (ML) to enhance operational capabilities in 2025?

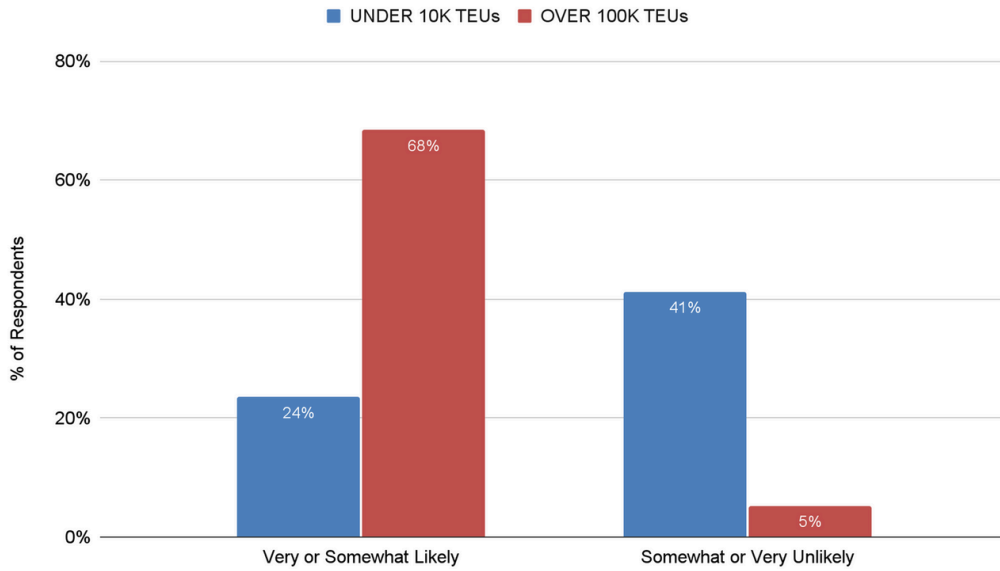


Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=61 for this question)

“68% of larger freight forwarders (>100K TEUs) said they are “Very” or “Somewhat” likely to invest in AI while only 24% of smaller freight forwarders (<10K TEUs) said the same.



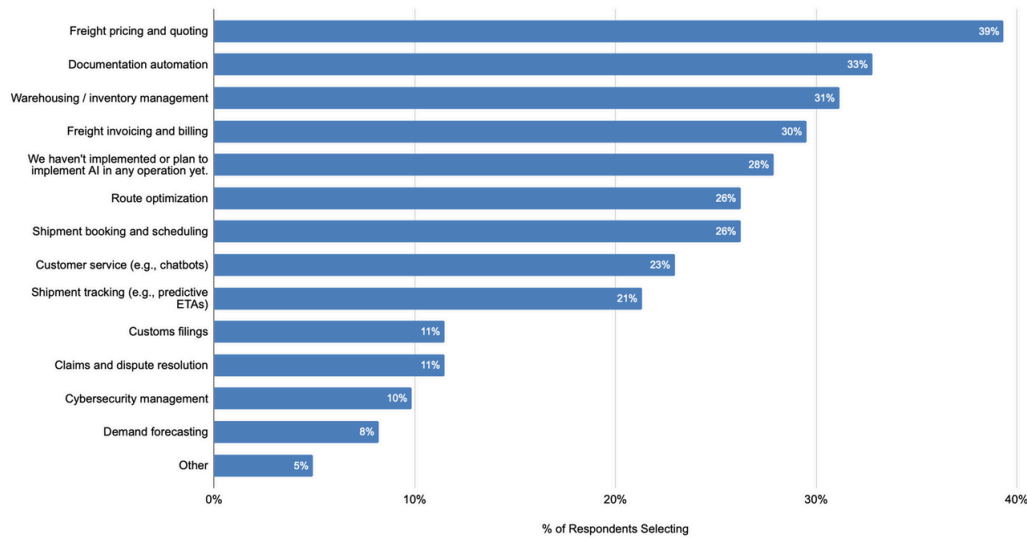
How likely is your organization to invest in artificial intelligence (AI) or machine learning (ML) to enhance operational capabilities in 2025?



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=17 for Under 10K TEUs, n=19 for Over 100K TEUs)

“Freight pricing and quoting” topped the list of operations freight forwarders have implemented (or plan to implement) AI solutions, with 39% of the respondents selecting it. This was followed by “Documentation automation” (33%), “Warehousing/inventory management” (31%), and “Freight invoicing and billing” (30%).

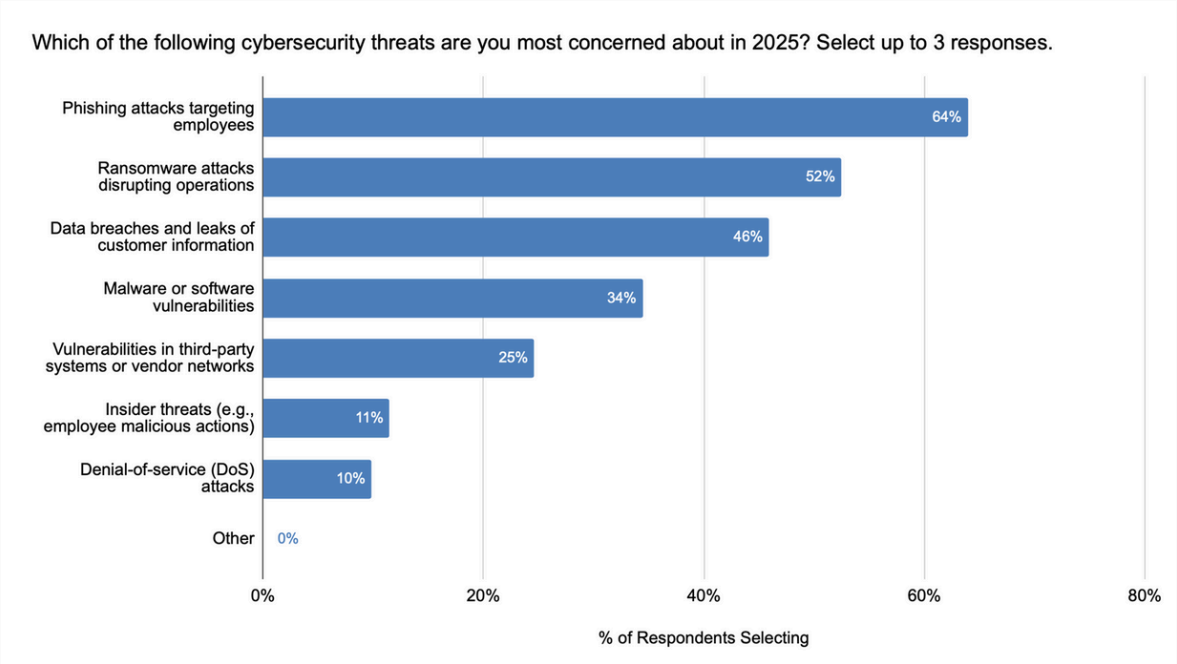
In which areas of your freight forwarding operations have you implemented (or you plan to implement in the coming year) AI solutions? Check all that apply.



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=61 for this question)

# “Phishing attacks targeting employees” is the cybersecurity threat freight forwarders are most concerned about.

It was selected by 64% of the respondents, followed by “Ransomware attacks disrupting operations” (52%) and “Data breaches and leaks of customer information” (46%).



Source: November 2024 Adelante SCM survey of 71 qualified and verified freight forwarders and third-party logistics providers (n=61 for this question)

# VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

As part of the November 2024 survey, we asked Indago members (who are all shippers), “What advice would you give freight forwarders/3PLs to improve their technological capabilities and better meet your needs in the future? What emerging technologies do you expect freight forwarders/3PLs to adopt in the next 3-5 years?” Here are some notable responses:

“I think many [logistics service providers] haven't been moving in the direction of digital freight forwarders like Flexport, Haven, etc. They are not developing the technology that companies are looking for in their freight forwarders. You need strong digital platforms with robust reporting and communication tools, integration with ERPs and other supply chain solutions, and be nimble enough to work with many different technologies. In the next 3 - 5 years, I see AI and better predictive analytics being overlaid on these technologies to provide a much better picture / control tower of operations and logistics through these freight forwarder solutions.”

“We work with two different forwarders for ocean freight; neither of them offers all the technology offered by other companies. One struggles to give regular updates, the other has a new system that will trigger them to send occasional reports. I had to find a resource that I can enter in all the data, and it sends me regular automated reports on the status of shipments. **Every freight forwarder/3PL should have a system that provides GPS tracking and sends regular reports. We shouldn't have to beg for real-time data. If it's automatic, then I don't have to do the work for them and I have a better use of my time doing my job, not theirs.** I would like to see them all provide online quote services, predictive analytics, and automatic invoicing.”

“**Real time quotes are the biggest headache for us. We have a great tariff with one of our forwarders, but since they do not offer real-time online quotes, some of my 75 sites utilize a different carrier that provides real-time online quotes because they do not have time to wait for the 3PL's customer service to respond. The more they can [automate] these processes, the better it will be.**”

“3PLs should have minimum track and trace capabilities, but I find this is not consistent across the logistics landscape. We expect their technology to go beyond this, but I believe we'll still be requesting track and trace capabilities in the next 3 to 5 years. I would ideally like to see dynamic planning, real life Uber style optimization of logistics where you can allocate drivers/trucks without the need for pre-planning to reduce freight cost and inefficiency/idleness.”

“**Freight forwarders [believe that] investing in technology will justify cost increases to clients. Most of them should focus on implementing technologies that provide clients with visibility as well as reduce their operational costs. As they focus on efficiency and reduce their costs, the value goes up, which will bring additional business to them and increase their revenue and overall profit.**”

# INSIGHTS FROM FREIGHT FORWARDING EXECUTIVES

As part of our survey, we asked freight forwarding and LSP executives, “What technologies do you believe will be the most transformative for freight forwarders in the next 5 years? How do you see the role of people (employees) changing as your operations become more digitized and AI becomes more ubiquitous?”

Here are some notable responses:

“Digitization is transforming freight forwarding, with AI set to streamline cumbersome, manual tasks like quote generation. Automating real-time quotes improves transparency, saves time, and boosts efficiency. Employees can shift their focus to strategic, customer-facing roles, leveraging AI insights to drive smarter decisions and enhance service delivery.”

“The freight forwarding industry is undergoing a significant transformation due to digitization. From my experience, digitization has streamlined processes, reduced manual errors, and enhanced decision-making with real-time data insights.

“Over the next five years, I believe AI-powered predictive analytics, blockchain for secure and transparent documentation, IoT for live shipment tracking, and RPA for automating repetitive tasks will be the most transformative technologies. As AI and automation become more prevalent, the role of employees will evolve. Operational roles will shift towards strategic, analytical, and exception-management tasks. Employees will need to adapt by upskilling in areas like data analysis, AI integration, and customer relationship management.

**“While technology will handle routine tasks, human expertise will remain essential for creative problem-solving, handling unique cases, and providing personalized customer service. This synergy between technology and human capabilities will define the future of the freight forwarding industry.”**

**“Digitization in the freight forwarding industry has been a game-changer, streamlining processes, enhancing transparency, and improving efficiency.** The adoption of technologies like cloud-based systems, real-time tracking, and blockchain has already reshaped how freight forwarders operate by reducing paperwork, increasing data accuracy, and improving collaboration across the supply chain.

“In the next five years, I believe artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) will be the most transformative technologies for freight forwarders. AI-powered platforms can optimize routing, predict delays, and improve cost estimations, while ML algorithms will enhance demand forecasting and dynamic pricing strategies. Additionally, Internet of Things (IoT) devices will further revolutionize cargo tracking, providing granular visibility and real-time alerts about the condition of goods. The role of employees will evolve significantly as operations become more digitized.

“Routine tasks like data entry, scheduling, and documentation will be increasingly automated, allowing employees to focus on strategic and value-added activities, such as customer relationship management and problem-solving. Training and upskilling will be crucial to enable the workforce to leverage digital tools effectively and adapt to new roles, such as managing AI systems or interpreting complex data insights. Ultimately, digitization is not about replacing people but empowering them to make smarter, faster decisions and drive greater value for customers in an increasingly competitive industry.”

“The digitization of the freight forwarding industry has been both transformational and challenging. Over the past few years, we’ve seen technology streamline processes such as documentation, tracking, and customer communication. Tools like transportation management systems (TMS), blockchain for secure documentation, and real-time tracking solutions have greatly improved operational efficiency and transparency. However, the integration of these technologies requires both robust systems and skilled personnel to manage and optimize them effectively.

“Looking ahead, I believe the most transformative technologies will include AI-powered analytics for demand forecasting, predictive maintenance, and route optimization; autonomous vehicles and drones for last-mile delivery; and blockchain for enhanced supply chain security and efficiency. Additionally, IoT-enabled devices will provide real-time visibility into cargo conditions, which is critical for time-sensitive or temperature-controlled shipments.

“As operations become more digitized and AI becomes ubiquitous, the role of employees will shift from routine tasks to more strategic and decision-making roles. Employees will need to adapt by developing digital literacy and analytical skills to interpret data insights, oversee automated processes, and provide value-added services to clients. While automation will handle many repetitive tasks, the human touch will remain indispensable in building relationships, managing exceptions, and ensuring customer satisfaction.

**Ultimately, a successful transition to a digitized operation will depend on upskilling employees and fostering a culture that embraces innovation while maintaining the industry's core value of customer service.”**

## SUMMARY

There is a gap between what shippers expect from their freight forwarders with regards to technological capabilities, especially when it comes to providing real-time freight visibility, and what many freight forwarders are able to provide today.

When you consider that only 23% of the Freight Forwarders surveyed have digitized 75%+ of their overall business processes/transactions, it’s not surprising that 38% of the shippers surveyed said they are only “Slightly satisfied” or “Not satisfied at all” with the technological capabilities of their freight forwarders, and none reported being “Extremely satisfied.”

The main takeaway for Freight Forwarders and Logistics Service Providers is simple: those that fail to meet the technology expectations of their customers will likely lose business moving forward, while those that meet or exceed customer expectations will grow and gain market share.

## ABOUT ADELANTE SCM

Adelante means “forward” or “move ahead” in Spanish. We chose this as our name because we are moving supply chain and logistics leadership forward by making it easier for industry professionals to share ideas, knowledge, and advice with each other. Our services include Talking Logistics, an online video talk show and blog featuring thought leaders and newsmakers in the supply chain and logistics industry. And Indago, a community of supply chain and logistics practitioners who are committed to sharing practical knowledge and advice with each other in a trusted and confidential manner — while giving back to charitable causes that make an extraordinary difference in lives every day. Visit [adelantescm.com](http://adelantescm.com) to learn more.

## ABOUT MAGAYA

Magaya, the number one freight management platform for logistics service providers, is Moving Freight Forward with a Digital Freight Platform that optimizes the entire origin-to-destination supply chain through flexible, interoperable, and modular cloud-based software. Whether used together as an integrated suite or independently, Magaya solutions enable businesses of all sizes to simplify complex logistics processes, enhance the customer experience, and grow revenues alongside profits. At Magaya, we are passionately devoted to our customers’ success and don’t hesitate to go the extra mile. There are no limits to your growth with Magaya. Visit [magaya.com](http://magaya.com) to learn more.

**Magaya**

