

**Press Release**

**AEB releases GTM Agenda 2016 study results: benefits of collaboration outweigh concerns**

- Participants cite lower transport costs and accelerated supply chains as main benefits
- Real-life collaboration is based primarily on IT platforms and adoption of industry standards



*Leamington Spa, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015* - Cooperating closely with supply chain partners and working together to optimise workflows results in critical competitive advantages. This is the view of four out of five global trade and logistics experts (82.6%), according to latest research by software provider AEB and the University DHBW in Stuttgart (Germany). Their annual research series “GTM Agenda” sheds light on upcoming global trade management priorities with an additional focus topic each year. This year’s study highlighted “supply chain collaboration” and reflects responses from over 300 participants across various industry sectors. It is available free of charge at [www.aeb.com/gtm-study](http://www.aeb.com/gtm-study).

**Expectations and benefits**

The main result logistics experts hope to achieve through collaboration is “optimised processes”, which was cited by 87.3% of respondents. This result is closely followed by “knowledge gains” (83.7%) and “accelerated workflows along the supply chain” (81.3%). When it comes to actual benefits of supply chain collaboration, saving both time and money is crucial according to survey participants, who cited “lower transport costs” as the main benefit (31.7%), followed by “shorter lead times” (27.9%) and “fewer delays in customer shipments” (24.5%).

“The results show clear differences between expected and actual benefits of collaboration. A good example for this is the speed factor,” notes Professor Dirk Hartel, Head of the Department of Business Administration Service Management at DHBW Stuttgart and co-author of the study. “It’s clear that businesses recognise the benefits of collaboration in the supply chain, but many still do not exploit its full potential.”

**Collaboration partners and focus areas**

For over half of the study’s participants, collaboration with customers (57%) and suppliers (55.4%) is already a reality. This type of collaboration also frequently extends to carriers and logistics service

providers. Transportation is the most important field of collaboration, with 45% of respondents already working closely with partners and 26% planning to do so. Some 30% to 40% of respondents also work with other companies in the areas of inventory, forecasting, and order and capacity management.

### **Collaboration methods and risks**

Companies facilitate collaboration most frequently through IT platforms (58.5%) or by agreeing on industry standards (56.9%). The most commonly cited risks are “loss of control over data (71.1%) and “unclear responsibilities” (70.6%). Another frequent objection to collaboration is concern over potential cultural differences that might lead to problems between collaborative partners (58.9%). About half of respondents (53.9%) also fear that close collaboration would not benefit both sides equally. However, those already collaborating with supply chain partners see it as a competitive advantage at an above average rate (87.2%).

### **About the collaboration study**

The study “Global Trade Management Agenda 2016 – Collaboration in the Supply Chain” is based on a cross-industry survey of 319 experts from the fields of logistics, global trade, and supply chain management. The participants work at companies of various sizes in different countries, with three-quarters of respondents (77.5%) holding decision-making positions as the head of a company, department, team, or project.

The large majority of respondents (90.5%) see supply chain collaboration as much more than just working together with other companies. “By our definition, collaboration encompasses the shared, cross-enterprise optimisation of processes,” explains Professor Hartel. “Real-world experience with supply chain collaboration seems to be largely positive,” adds Dr. Ulrich Lison, member of the Executive Board of AEB and the study’s other co-author. “But at the same time, businesses see risks in opening themselves up to others through this type of collaboration.”

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### **Contact**

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### **Notes to Editors**



**About AEB ([www.aeb.com/uk](http://www.aeb.com/uk))**

AEB is one of Europe's leading providers of supply chain logistics software and has been delivering solutions to customers for over thirty years. The company has over 5,000 customers worldwide, supported by offices in the UK, Germany, Singapore, Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Czech Republic, France, and the US. AEB's core product - ASSIST4 - is the comprehensive solution suite for all logistics processes in global business. ASSIST4 offers a complete set of business services for end-to-end logistics, including international goods movements, making it possible to standardise and automate business processes in supply chain execution. ASSIST4 also creates transparency and provides a reliable basis for making the right decisions about the planning, monitoring, control and continual optimisation of supply networks, even beyond the boundaries of the business. The ASSIST4 suite offers full functionality via a wide range of modules including Visibility & Collaboration Platform, Order Management, Warehouse Management, Transport & Freight Management, Customs Management and Compliance & Risk Management.

**About DHBW Stuttgart ([www.dhbw-stuttgart.de](http://www.dhbw-stuttgart.de))**

With some 8,000 students, the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University (DHBW) is among the largest universities in the Stuttgart and Upper Neckar regions of Germany: The Schools of Business, Engineering, and Social Work collaborate with about 2,500 carefully selected companies and social institutions – dual partners – to offer more than 40 nationally and internationally approved Bachelor courses. Their most important feature is that students regularly switch between theoretical phases at the university and practical phases at the dual training partner. In the autumn of 2011, DHBW Stuttgart also began offering advanced work-study graduate programmes in the form of dual Master programmes at all its schools. The dual studies are designed to meet the actual requirements of the job market and of businesses and social institutions, guaranteeing a unique fusion of theory and practice. DHBW is a nationally and internationally approved and accredited university with an exceptionally high level of quality that is reflected in the 80% average placement rate of its graduates.