

This IDC Event Proceedings report captures the key insights and discussions from the AI in Supply Chain Strategy Roundtable hosted by IDC and InterSystems. The session highlighted how unified, trusted data serves as the foundation for AI-driven supply chain transformation, enabling real-time visibility, predictive orchestration, and resilience.

# Unifying Data to Power AI-Driven Supply Chain Transformation

November 2025

**Written by:** Stephanie Krishnan, Associate Vice President, IDC Insights Asia/Pacific

## Introduction

The AI in Supply Chain Strategy Roundtable, jointly hosted by IDC and InterSystems at the Shangri-La Singapore, convened senior leaders from logistics, healthcare, life sciences, and technology to explore how unified, trusted data underpins AI-driven transformation in modern supply chains. Led by Stephanie Krishnan, Associate Vice President at IDC Insights, and Mark Holmes, Head of Global Supply Chain Market Strategy at InterSystems, the half-day event combined thought-leadership presentations with peer-to-peer discussion on real-world implementation challenges and use cases.

Participants represented a cross-section of stakeholders including public-health providers, med-tech manufacturers, logistics providers, and technology partners, each navigating similar pressures: global trade volatility, regulatory tightening, and the need to modernize legacy infrastructure without jeopardizing business continuity.

## Key Themes & Insights

### 1. The Role of Data and AI in Supply Chain Transformation

Unified, real-time data is essential for leveraging AI in supply-chain operations. According to IDC's 2025 Global Supply Chain Survey, 57% of Asia/Pacific life-sciences firms struggle with poor visibility and agility due to fragmented systems and siloed analytics, risking ineffectiveness in volatile markets. Krishnan shifted the focus from cost efficiency to the importance of data-driven agility, emphasizing the ability to analyze and act on real-time signals. While AI enhances predictive analytics and demand sensing, its value depends on data quality and integration. The smart data fabric is a governed and unified data layer that harmonizes and normalizes data across various systems. It ensures that the data is current and accessible for real-time queries, allowing advanced analytics and AI to support prescriptive decision-making. This fabric acts as a single source of truth, connecting ERP systems, WMS/TMS, IoT devices, sustainability metrics, and external suppliers. It facilitates interactive exploration and AI-driven orchestration throughout the entire supply chain.

## AT A GLANCE

### EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE

November 13, 2025

Discussion Theme: **Unified, Trusted Data as the Foundation for AI-Driven Supply Chain Transformation**

### SPEAKERS

- **Stephanie Krishnan**, Associate Vice President at IDC Insights Asia/Pacific
- **Mark Holmes**, Head of Global Supply Chain Market Strategy, InterSystems

### KEY STATS

- 57% of Asia/Pacific life-sciences firms struggle with poor visibility and agility due to fragmented systems and siloed analytics (IDC 2025 Global Supply Chain Survey).
- InterSystems achieved 99.999% on-time-in-full performance for PALTAC.
- Partner onboarding reduced from 6 months to 2 days for CFAO using InterSystems solutions.

## 2. Data Governance and Ownership

Data governance is a significant challenge for many enterprises, particularly in Asia, where clear data ownership models are often lacking. Legacy systems operate in silos, complicating data integrity efforts. Discussions highlighted initiatives like data councils and stewardship protocols necessary for successful AI deployment. Regulatory frameworks, including GDPR and China's Personal Information Protection Law, are driving firms to mature their governance. There was strong consensus in the room that defining and enforcing data ownership outside of IT was an inflection point that transforms governance from a compliance exercise into an operational enabler, producing cleaner data, faster integrations, and ultimately, more explainable and reliable AI outcomes. Centralized data platforms, such as InterSystems' Data Studio were highlighted as supporting "AI-ready data" across networks. Holmes stressed the importance of processing data where it resides to enhance governance and reduce latency.

## 3. Barriers to AI Adoption

IDC identified three key barriers to AI adoption:

- » Integration complexity with existing systems.  
Participants noted that uncertainty around ROI is mainly a data issue. Poor interoperability can extend project timelines, while untrusted outputs can hinder adoption. Therefore, it is crucial to focus on enhancing data maturity rather than just advancing model sophistication.
- » High costs and uncertain ROI due to immature data architectures.  
Participants agreed that the main challenge is integrating AI with diverse systems. They noted that high costs and uncertain ROI relate to data maturity, as projects often exceed timelines due to necessary data preparation and cleansing. Improving governance, accuracy, and interoperability speeds up onboarding and reduces manual work.
- » Talent and trust gaps, where there is a lack of internal expertise, lead to gaps in both talent and trust regarding AI initiatives.  
The sentiment in the room was that a large proportion of data goes unused due to a lack of confidence in its reliability. However, designating business ownership and stewardship over data can help increase trust and promote AI adoption.

## 4. Use Cases and Operational Challenges

The following were among some of the use cases and case studies highlighted by Holmes.

- » **Healthcare and Life Sciences:** Integrating electronic medical records and various systems remains a challenge, with fragmented national programs causing inefficiencies. InterSystems aims to address this through standardized data models and FHIR-based exchanges.
- » **Logistics and Supply Chain:** Leaders are focused on achieving end-to-end visibility. Notable case studies include InterSystems achieving 99.999% on-time-in-full performance for PALTAC and cutting partner onboarding from six months to two days for CFAO. Attendees noted that partner data heterogeneity and reliance on outdated methods hinder progress in Asia's fragmented ecosystem.

## Table Discussion Highlights

### 1. Building Trust in Data

Discussions revealed that data ownership remains the "missing middle" between IT and business. Several organizations are now designating business data owners rather than delegating everything to IT. This fosters accountability and increases trust in analytics outputs.

Common initiatives include:

- » Establishing Master Data Management (MDM) programs to standardize customer, supplier, and product identifiers.
- » Creating data inventories to track lineage and eliminate duplication.
- » Embedding data-quality metrics (accuracy, timeliness, completeness) into performance dashboards.

However, cultural resistance persists. Some managers still guard "their" data or redefine KPIs to fit departmental narratives. Participants recognized the need for executive-level mandates to enforce shared standards and prevent "multiple versions of the truth."

### 2. Enabling End-to-End Visibility

Healthcare participants stated that true visibility goes beyond technical connectivity and requires policy-enabled data sharing. Without top-down mandates to share patient or logistics data across institutions, even advanced AI cannot compensate for missing inputs.

In logistics, visibility is undermined by manual processes (phone calls, WhatsApp updates) and volatile data. AI can assist, but only if data streams are automated and refreshed in near real time.

The group concluded that AI should make outcomes faster and better: faster emergency response, better allocation of scarce resources, and scalable operations under labor constraints. However, there must be a willingness to integrate across the data fabric of the organization.

### 3. Defining Meaningful AI Success

Consensus formed that "success with AI" equals trusted, actionable, and explainable insights that demonstrably improve operational KPIs, be it reduced lead time, lower inventory days, or improved patient outcomes.

Several delegates insisted that humans must remain "in the loop," validating AI decisions within established policy and ethical boundaries.

## Closing Remarks and Consensus

In closing, Krishnan summarized the collective insight: unified, trusted data is the foundation for AI-driven supply-chain transformation.

Participants agreed that successful transformation requires:

- » Clear data governance and ownership structures.
- » Investment in interoperability and smart data fabrics.
- » Collaborative partner ecosystems grounded in shared trust and aligned KPIs.

- » A balance between efficiency and resilience to weather disruption.

Holmes concluded that AI's true value lies in decision intelligence, empowering organizations to see, understand, optimize, and act in real time.

## Conclusion

The roundtable underscored a pivotal industry transition. As healthcare, life sciences, and logistics converge around data-centric models, AI is becoming strategic. Yet the maturity gap persists: organizations that treat data as a governed, living asset will be positioned to move from reactive firefighting to predictive orchestration.

For Asia-Pacific companies, where regulatory diversity and partner fragmentation complicate modernization, unified data platforms offer a pathway to integrate data, build trust, and unlock scalable decision intelligence.

The dialogue ended with a shared conviction that AI success will not be measured by algorithms deployed but by decisions improved that are grounded in data that is unified, reliable, and universally trusted.

## About the Analyst



### *Stephanie Krishnan, Associate Vice President, IDC Insights Asia/Pacific*

Stephanie Krishnan is an associate VP responsible for producing, developing, and growing the IDC Manufacturing and Energy Insights programs in Asia/Pacific. Within Manufacturing Insights, Stephanie conducts supply chain and Industry 4.0 research that supports clients with global sourcing (profitable proximity and sustainable outcomes), transportation, logistics, warehousing, and more.



#### IDC Asia/Pacific

168 Robinson Road,  
Capital Tower, Level 20  
Singapore 068912  
T 65.6226.0330

Twitter @IDC

idc-insights-community.com

www.idc.com

**This publication was produced by IDC Custom Solutions.** The opinion, analysis, and research results presented herein are drawn from more detailed research and analysis independently conducted and published by IDC, unless specific vendor sponsorship is noted. IDC Custom Solutions makes IDC content available in a wide range of formats for distribution by various companies. A license to distribute IDC content does not imply endorsement of or opinion about the licensee.

External Publication of IDC Information and Data — Any IDC information that is to be used in advertising, press releases, or promotional materials requires prior written approval from the appropriate IDC Vice President or Country Manager. A draft of the proposed document should accompany any such request. IDC reserves the right to deny approval of external usage for any reason.

Copyright 2025 IDC. Reproduction without written permission is completely forbidden.