Why the Top Five Forms of Supply Chain Collaboration May Be Slowing You Down



Key Takeaways

- Email and phone calls top the list of supply chain collaboration methods, but they also impede efforts to reduce disruptions.
- Collaborative, multienterprise applications help organizations rapidly digitalize supply chain issue management processes, improve visibility, and kick off Industry 4.0 transformation efforts.

Email, phone calls, and a combination of in-person and virtual meetings are the top forms of supply chain collaboration, according to a recent survey of executives at manufacturing organizations.

The Gatepoint Research survey of 105 company leaders—including managers, directors, vice presidents, and C-level executives—also revealed that spreadsheets and file management systems round out the top five forms of supply chain collaboration.

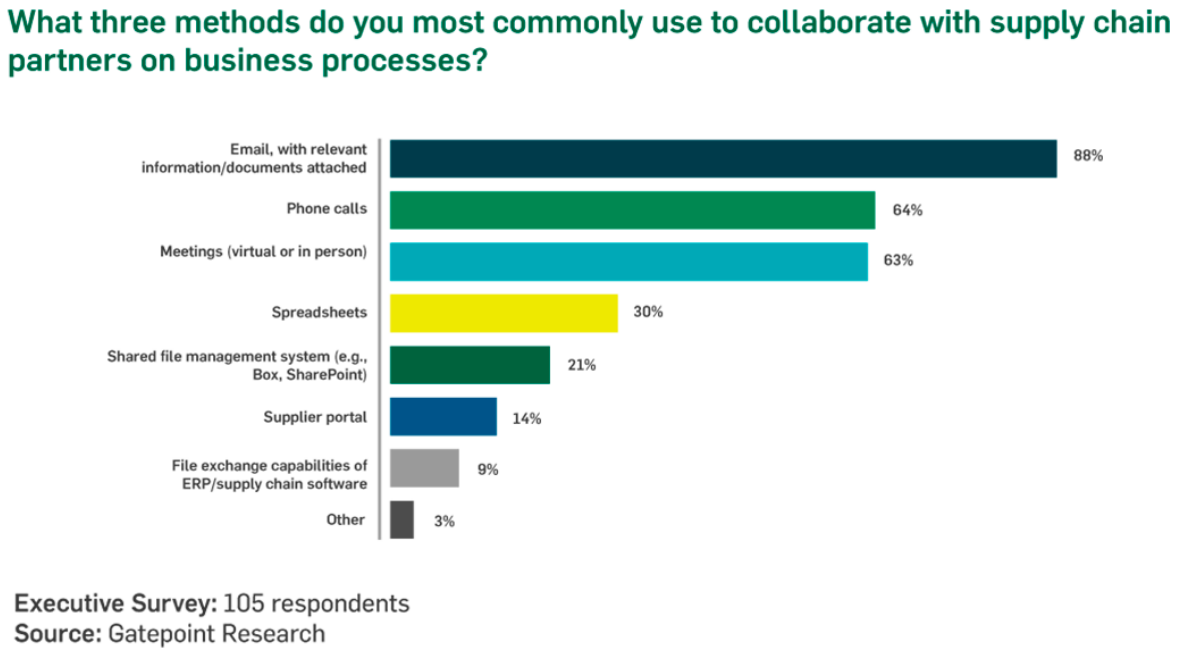
Companies that have yet to adopt digital technology in their supply chain or are just beginning their supply chain transformation efforts must take action now.

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved

But supply chain professionals and experts warn that these traditional communication tools may also impede efforts to improve on-time, in-full (OTIF) delivery performance and reduce supply chain disruptions. A new breed of collaborative, multienterprise applications offer significant benefits over traditional communication tools. These include:

- Complete visibility into issue management processes with real-time dashboards
- Faster supply chain issue resolution times
- A single, centralized source of data—and truth—for all supply chain partners
- Structured, workflow-driven, and configurable supply chain issue resolution processes

Collaborative, multienterprise work management solutions also offer improved root cause analysis capabilities and support for continuous business process improvement methodologies like Six Sigma.



A smarter form of supply chain collaboration

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved

Unstructured and decentralized manual communication methods like phone calls, emails, and spreadsheets can prevent manufacturing organizations from achieving full visibility into supply chain issues that can lead to disruptions, according to supply chain professionals and industry analysts.

At the same time, collaborative multienterprise applications can help organizations rapidly digitalize supply chain issue management processes, improve visibility, and kick off Industry 4.0 transformation efforts.

“Adopting a multienterprise work management platform has dramatically improved the overall performance of our value chain," said Steve Hydzik, the retired Vice President and Global Head of Manufacturing and Supply Chain, EA, and New Technologies at The Merck Group KGaA. "Everyone is on the same page and working from the same digital source of truth to provide transparency. We don’t need to search through emails and spreadsheets to see what is going on, what needs to happen next, and why something happened. We’ve cut our incident resolution times by 5x, and the visibility has helped us prevent issues from recurring.”

Simon Ellis, an IDC Program Vice President and leader of the Supply Chain Strategies Practices at IDC Manufacturing Insights, warns that companies that haven't launched Industry 4.0 supply chain transformation efforts risk falling behind.

"Companies that have yet to adopt digital technology in their supply chain or are just beginning their supply chain transformation efforts must take action now. These companies can start by exploring ways to deploy enabling technology with agile processes,” Ellis wrote in an IDC report. “These processes should support end-to-end collaboration, provide actionable visibility, and enable data sharing between partners both inside and outside the organization and across all stakeholder functions.

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved

Download our new handbook to learn how multienterprise applications can deliver operational excellence across your supply chain.



BlogSupply Chain Collaboration, Supply Chain DigitalizationSupply Chain

Subscribe to Agile Supply Chain Insights

Stay informed with the latest patient-centric agile supply chain thought leadership content.

Thank you for contacting us; we'll be in touch shortly.

Learn more about the power of digital supply networks:

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved



Survey: Late Shipments Top List of Biggest Sources of Supply Chain Risk

Manufacturing executives reveal the top sources of supply chain risk—and what you can do about them. Get the survey results.

View More

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved

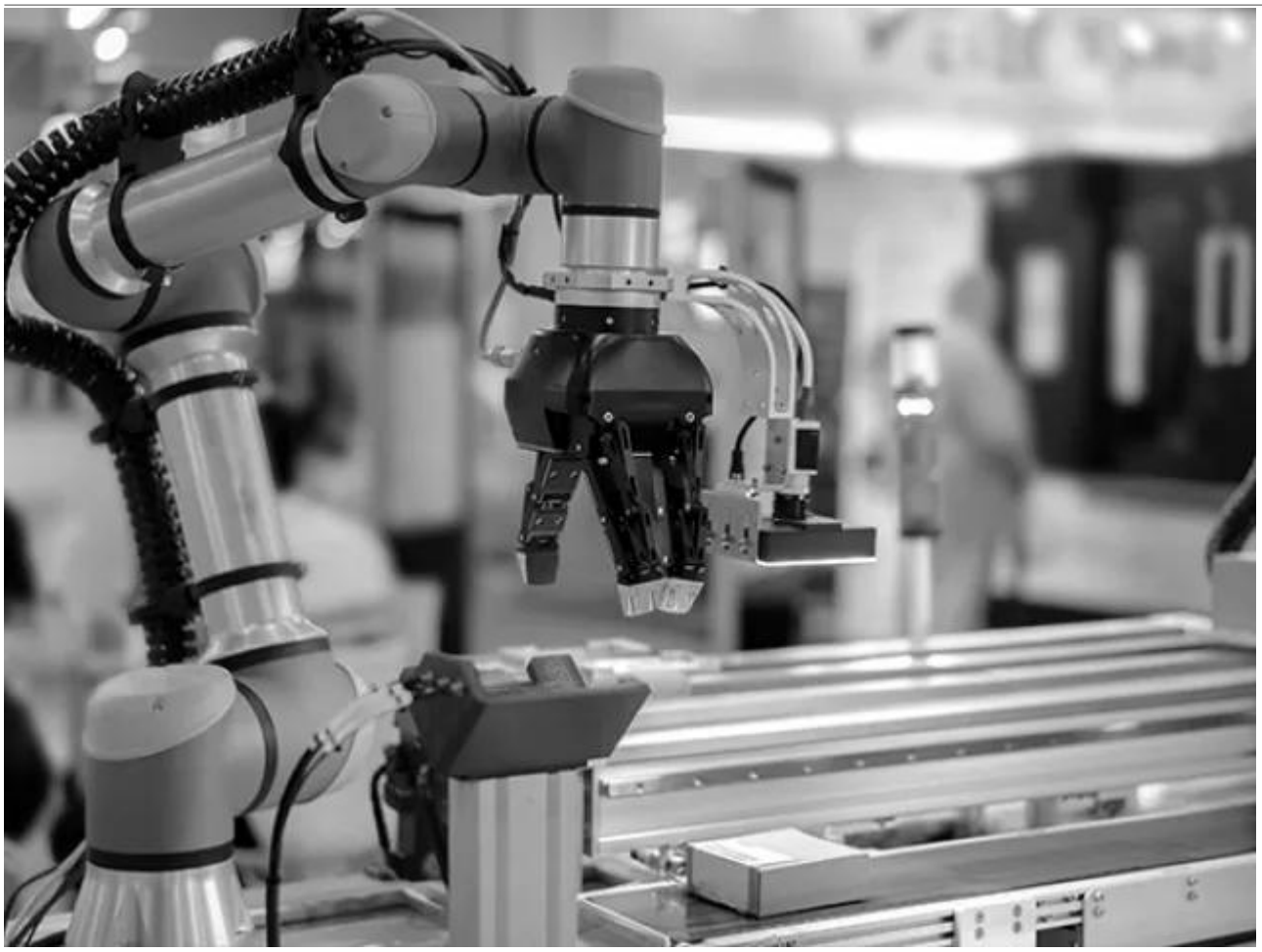


The Supplier Quality Challenge: Improving Products and Business Processes with Multienterprise Work Management

Ensuring supplier quality is a major challenge for supplier relationship management teams. Learn how multienterprise work management can help.

View More

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved



The Top Six Supply Chain Issue Management Challenges—and How to Overcome Them

Lengthy issue resolution times top the list of the six biggest challenges to successful supply chain issue management. Get the survey results.
View More

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved



Inside the Rise of the Digital Supply Network: What Does the Future Hold for Supply Chains?

Explore the evolution of supply chain technology—and see where supplier relationship management is heading in the future.

View More

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved



Poor Visibility Tops IDC’s List of 6 Obstacles to Pharma Supply Chain Resilience

More than half of companies across the end-to-end pharma supply chain lack the upstream and downstream visibility needed to respond effectively to sudden marketplace disruptions, according to new research from market intelligence firm IDC into the impact of COVID-19 on the global pharmaceutical industry.

View More

© TraceLink Inc. 2009 - 2025 All Rights Reserved