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Editorial Objectives

Supply Chain Management

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It is tempting to say that, for a very long time, supply chain management has been a central topic in the field of management science and operations management. In fact, however, it has evolved from the seminal work done in the 1960s on multiechelon inventory models to recent studies of various mechanisms for coordinating supply chain decisions. In this evolution, one sees a clear shift from studying centralized planning models, in which a central planner makes all the decisions to optimize a systemwide objective, to focusing on decentralized systems with independent decision makers. This is no trivial change, for it is one step closer to many real life situations, it has brought about another layer of complexity, and it often requires the use of new analytical tools. The department of supply chain management was created to recognize, emphasize, and encourage this change, and it will continue to do so.

Organizing supply chain activities is about determining who does what (in the case of managers, who decides what), who knows what, and the economic incentives motivating supply chain members. This suggests that the management of supply chains can be addressed along three dimensions: allocation of decision rights, information elicitation and sharing, and incentive alignment. This framework matches what we observe in practice: vendor-managed inventory is a supply chain partnership to reallocate stocking decision rights; the creation of corporate communication networks is an example of information sharing; and the myriad of contracts signed among supply chain

partners are attempts to align incentives. Moreover, the above three dimensions are likely to characterize the research frontier in supply chain management for the years to come.

The Department of Supply Chain Management welcomes papers that are motivated by real-world operations problems and contribute to the understanding of supply chain management issues. The contributions can be methodological, conceptual, empirical, application-oriented, etc. The department especially welcomes papers that present novel models that may open up new directions of research. Needless to say, all submitted manuscripts must follow the guidelines of *Management Science*, and they will be rigorously refereed according to the normal standards of the journal. Please send four copies of the paper to the departmental editor of supply chain management at the address printed above.

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