

Creativity and Agility the Key to Supply Chain Efficiency

— An Interview with

Mr William Ma

Group Managing Director

Kerry Logistics Network Limited



創意和靈活性

是供應鏈效率的關鍵

— 專訪嘉里物流聯網有限公司集團總裁

馬榮楷先生

The COVID-19 pandemic has created levels of uncertainty never before seen in maintaining supply chains and has highlighted how creativity and flexibility are integral to moving goods through international logistics networks.

With business-as-usual logistics operations severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, William Ma, Group Managing Director of Hong Kong-headquartered Kerry Logistics Network (KLN) explains how the company drew on its ingenuity and agility to navigate constrained cargo capacity, fractured supply chain links and delays. In addition to providing regular logistics solutions to its customers, KLN also provided a vital lifeline to support the response to the pandemic. As one of the leading Asia-based third-party logistics (3PL) service provider with a global presence, during the early stages of the pandemic, KLN leveraged its unique market position to locate and transport facemasks to Hong Kong when they were in short supply.

At the same time, as the COVID-19 crisis quickly translated from a health crisis into one of the worst economic crises in recent history, across every part of the logistics landscape, Mr Ma says KLN moved swiftly to optimise its operations. For example, with items for shipping waiting to undergo customs inspection at Shanghai International Airport resulting in truck queues stretching up to seven kilometres, to help its customers to avoid delays, KLN liaised with Chinese customs officials and mobilised its own team of quality control professionals to inspect items. For more than a month KLN had over 200 staff stationed at the Shanghai Airport working around the clock to inspect, coordinate and transport shipments, including vital personal protection equipment (PPE) and other essential medical supplies such as respirators to where they were needed. "We were able to offer our customers a full warranty service," says Mr Ma adding it required a committed "team effort" by colleagues and business partners.

Mr Ma points out while the pandemic has forced millions of employees around the world to work from home, many KLN staff continue to work on the frontline to maintain 24/7 services across more than 150 international hubs to support multiple customers and industries. In response to reduced capacity in air and ocean freight, KLN utilised its unique Eurasian road and rail freight network to devise alternative solutions for customers to cope with the new situation. The success of the firm's logistics response to the global pandemic was reflected in its annual earnings. Posting revenues of HK\$53.36 billion, a 30% increase in 2020 from the previous year, according to firm's annual report, Mr Ma says KLN's performance stands as testament to the company's capability in devising creative and efficient logistics solutions for customers.

Lessons Learned

According to Mr Ma a tough lesson that all stakeholders have learned from the pandemic is that global supply chains can have multiple "pain-points" and a small margin of error for mitigating delays and disruptions. Before the pandemic he says the hallmark of every industry was the concept of just-in-time (JIT), as a way of optimising end-to-end inventory on an as-needed basis. However, in the face of lockdowns, quarantines and social distancing, the JIT system was no longer tenable. "Just-in-time quickly became just-in-case," says Mr Ma referring to the inventory management philosophy where companies keep inventories on hand to mitigate risk.

新型冠狀病毒疫情對供應鏈運作造成了前所未有的不確定性，並凸顯要在國際物流網絡中做到貨如輪轉，創意和靈活性是不可或缺的。

新型冠狀病毒疫情嚴重擾亂正常物流運作，總部設於香港的嘉里物流聯網有限公司（嘉里物流）集團總裁馬榮楷指出，面對貨運容量短缺、供應鏈斷裂及延誤，公司運用獨到智慧和靈活變通來應付各項挑戰。除了為客戶提供常規的物流解決方案外，嘉里物流為支援各地應對疫情，在運送醫療物資方面扮演關鍵角色。作為以亞洲為基地並擁有環球網絡的領先第三方物流（3PL）服務供應商之一，嘉里物流在疫情初期利用其獨特的市場地位，在口罩供不應求之時追蹤口罩生產商，並將口罩運到香港。

同時，隨著新型冠狀病毒疫情由公共健康危機迅速演變成近代最嚴重的經濟危機之一，物流領域的每一個環節都深受打擊，馬先生指嘉里物流迅即採取行動，優化營運。例如，由於在上海浦東機場等待清關的貨物積壓，貨車車龍延綿長達7公里。為了幫助客戶避免延誤，嘉里物流與內地海關官員協調，並調動自己的質量控制專業團隊來檢查物品。在一個多月內，嘉里物流有200多名員工長駐上海機場，不分晝夜地檢查、協調和運輸貨物，包括將重要的個人防護設備（PPE）及其他必需的醫療用品（如呼吸器）運往有需要的地方。馬先生補充說：「我們能夠為客戶提供全面的保證服務，這需要同事和業務夥伴投入『團隊努力』。」

馬先生指出，雖然疫情迫使世界各地數以百萬計的員工在家工作，但嘉里物流許多員工繼續在前線堅守崗位，在150多個國際樞紐維持全天候24/7服務，支援眾多客戶和行業。為了應對空運和海運容量減少，嘉里物流利用其獨特的歐亞陸路及鐵路貨運網絡，為客戶訂制出替代的解決方案，應對新形勢。疫情肆虐全球之際，該公司應對疫情的成功，亦反映在其年度收益中。根據該公司的年報，2020年的列帳收入為533.6億港元，比上一年增加30%。馬先生表示，嘉里物流的表現證明了該公司有為客戶訂制出具有創意及效率的物流解決方案。

寶貴一課

馬先生認為，所有持份者從疫情中上到的寶貴一課，就是環球供應鏈可存在多個「痛點」，緩解延誤及中斷風險的空間非常有限。他表示，在疫情之前，每個行業都奉行及時化生產（just-in-time，簡稱JIT）觀念，按需求以優化端到端庫存。然而，面對封城、隔離檢疫和維持社交距離的措施，JIT制度已不再站得住腳。馬先生說：「及時生產很快變成以防萬一。」他所說的「以防萬一」庫存管理哲學，是指很多公司傾向保持備用庫存以緩解風險。

重新調整環球供應鏈

新型冠狀病毒疫情在全球公共衛生以至民生方面帶來前所未有的挑戰，同時也重塑物流行業格局。馬先生說，在疫情之前有一個趨勢已日漸普及：亞洲公司（主要由中國內地公司帶頭）已經愈來愈多地掌控其端對端的商業活動，包括其物流需求。馬先生指出：「他們正在

Rejigging Global Supply Chains

While the COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to everything from global public health to people's livelihoods, it is also responsible for reshaping the logistics landscape. Already becoming a growing trend before the COVID-pandemic struck, Mr Ma says Asian companies, predominately led by mainland Chinese companies, have been increasingly taking control of their end-to-end business activities, including their logistics requirements. "They are directing their own destinies," notes Mr Ma. He adds the trend is significant because it means as Asian companies enlarge their global presence, they have a tendency to work with Asian-based 3PL firms such as KLN who understand their business needs. "As more mainland Chinese and Korean companies expand their footprint internationally, the demand for logistics services provided by KLN can also be expected to increase," says Mr Ma.

Meanwhile, as part of the fallout from the pandemic on supply chains, Mr Ma has noted the return of significant numbers of companies that relocated from mainland China to Asian countries during 2018 and 2019, to avoid tariffs imposed as a result of bilateral trade tensions between China and the US. To Mr Ma the resumption of manufacturing and supply chain activities does not come as a surprise. While many countries in Asia are still experiencing slowdowns or shutdowns to contain the spread of the virus, China's manufacturing and supply chain capacities are generally fully operational. "China is one of the few places with the ability to maintain an intact supply chain covering a wide range of products," says Mr Ma. However, as economies recover from the pandemic, he expects semiconductor, electronic components and chip manufacturers to continue to relocate their manufacturing capacity from mainland China to Taiwan. "There are hundreds of semiconductor factories under construction in Taiwan, and this will continue to substantially change the logistics supply chain," notes Mr Ma, who expects post-COVID supply chain logistics to continue to evolve.

Collaborative Technology and Human Intelligence

As a company fully committed to technological innovation, Mr Ma explains that, while technology plays an integral role in helping to keep supply chains operating, it is only one part of the equation; there is also the human dimension. "Technology provides the solutions when all the segments can be seamlessly linked," he says. A crisis like the global pandemic, however, created challenges beyond the scope of many technology capabilities. "At KLN we are fortunate to have the right balance of the latest technology that connects us with our customers and the people with the skills and abilities to respond to a crisis in ways that provide our customers with customised solutions."



全盤把握自身命運。」他補充這個趨勢之所以有重要意義，是因為這意味著隨著亞洲公司擴大其環球業務，他們傾向於與理解其業務需求的亞洲第三方物流公司（如嘉里物流）合作。馬先生認為：「隨著愈來愈多的中國內地和韓國公司在國際上拓展業務，對嘉里物流提供的物流服務需求也可望增加。」

同時，疫情對供應鏈造成的衝擊也造就另一現象。馬先生注意到，在2018至2019年期間，曾經有大量公司從中國內地遷往其他亞洲國家，以免因中美雙邊貿易緊張局勢而被徵收關稅，在這一年的它們都紛紛回歸中國。對馬先生來說，恢復中國的製造和供應鏈運作並不令人驚訝。當許多亞洲國家仍在以減少或停止經濟活動的方式來控制病毒傳播，中國的製造業和供應鏈能力總體來說仍在全面運作。馬先生說：「中國是為數不多有能力保持完整供應鏈的地方之一，涵蓋很多種類的產品。」然而，隨著經濟從疫情中復甦，他預計半導體、電子零件和晶片製造商將繼續把他們的生產線從中國內地遷往台灣。馬先生指出，台灣有數以百計正在興建的半導體工廠，它們將繼續大幅改變物流供應鏈，預計經疫情重塑的供應鏈物流模式，此後仍將會繼續發展。

協作科技結合人類智慧

作為一間完全投入於科技創新的公司，馬先生解釋，雖然科技在幫助保持供應鏈運作方面發揮著不可或缺的作用，但人才也是方程式一部分。他說：「要當所有的環節都能無縫連接時，科技才能提供解決辦法。」然而，像全球疫情這樣的危機所帶來的挑戰，往往超出了許多科技的能力所及。他補充說：「在嘉里物流，我們很幸運地既具備最新科技連繫我們和客戶，公司的人才同時也擁有應對危機的技能和實力，為客戶提供量身訂製的解決方案，兩者之間取得很好的平衡。」

增長動力

嘉里物流由1981年建成第一個倉庫，到2013年在香港交易所（HKEX）上市，多年來從地產發展商嘉里建設一個經營倉庫、只有一輛貨車用作跨境運輸的子公司，發展成一家車隊規模達到10,000輛、僱用逾42,000名員

Growth Momentum

With its first warehouse built in 1981 and listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange (HKEX) in 2013, KLN has grown from a warehousing subsidiary of property developer Kerry Properties that operated one truck used for cross-border shipments to an organisation that operates about 10,000 vehicles, employs 42,000 staff and has a global presence across 59 countries and regions. KLN offers integrated logistics, international freight forwarding covering air, ocean, road, rail and multimodal freight, as well as industrial project logistics, express, cross-border e-commerce and last-mile fulfilment. Clients include fashion and lifestyle brands, electronics and technology manufacturers, food and beverage distributors, pharmaceutical and healthcare companies, fast moving consumer goods brands, and a diverse range of other companies.

Mr Ma says the company is always keen to explore business expansion opportunities, for example, KLN was the first Asia-based global 3PL to move eastbound freight from Europe along the Belt and Road — the overland Silk Road Economic Belt initiative championed by China's president Xi Jinping. "We are proud to be the first 3PL firm to turn part of the Belt and Road initiative into reality," says Mr Ma. Commenting on mainland China courier SF Holding's recent investment of a 51% stake in KLN, Mr Ma explains the investment is a strategic collaboration. "SF will control the board but not the company," he says. KLN will help SF Holding's to expand its global footprint, while the collaboration will help to strengthen KLN's presence in the mainland China market, where the company is viewed as a "foreign entity". "We expect to tap into the logistics needs of Chinese companies that have the potential to generate larger logistics growth volumes in the coming years," notes Mr Ma.



工及業務遍佈 59 個國家及地區的物流企業。嘉里物流提供綜合物流、涵蓋海陸空、鐵路和多式聯運的國際貨運方案，以及工業項目物流、快遞、跨境電子商務和最後一里派送。公司客戶包括時尚服飾及精品品牌、電子科技產品製造商、食品及飲料分銷商、醫藥公司、快消品品牌，以及其他種類多元化的公司。

馬先生說，公司一直熱衷於探索業務發展的機會，例如嘉里物流是第一間從歐洲沿著「一帶一路」（由國家主席習近平倡導的陸上絲綢之路經濟帶）向東面運輸貨物的亞洲環球3PL公司。馬先生說：「我們很自豪能成為第一家實現『一帶一路』倡議其中一部分的3PL公司。」在談到中國內地速遞公司順豐控股最近投資嘉里物流51%的股份時，馬先生解釋這項投資是一項策略合作。他說：「順豐將會主導董事會，但並非控制公司。」嘉里物流將會幫助順豐控股擴大其全球版圖，而考慮到嘉里物流在中國內地被視為「外國實體」，合作也將有助於加強嘉里物流在中國內地業務。馬先生說：「中國企業有潛力在未來幾年帶來相對可觀的物流業務增長，我們希望可以分一杯羹，滿足它們的物流需求。」

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Green Credentials

As environmental, social and governance (commonly known as ESG) issues take on growing importance for customers and investors alike, Mr Ma says ESG concepts play a key role in KLN's business operations and growth strategies. The recipient of multiple environmental and social awards, KLN strives to make its operations greener through optimising the use of resources and protecting the natural environment and ecosystems. The company uses environmentally friendly packing materials, highly durable pallets and co-sponsors the use of recyclable materials with customers. "Without a strong commitment to ESG issues, we would not meet the pre-qualifying requirements as a service provider to multinational companies," Mr Ma says. As ESG plays a bigger part of the intersection between business operations, in the next two to three years KLN expects to be using electrically-powered trucks for in-city logistics shipments as load carrying capabilities improve. With about 74 million square feet of land and logistics facilities under its management, Mr Ma says steps are taken to incorporate environmental efficiencies. KLN's Product Customisation and Consolidation Centre (PC³) in Tai Po, was built to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) specifications, the most widely used green building rating system in the world. The purpose-built facility received LEED (Gold) certification as well as becoming the first industrial building in Hong Kong to receive HK-BEAM (Gold) accreditation for environmental quality. "With environmental management an essential and pressing issue, we are eager to fulfil our role as a socially and environmentally responsible corporate citizen," says Mr Ma. **M**

— Chris Davis
Editor

環保認證

隨著環境、社會和管治（通常稱為ESG）事務對客戶和投資者愈來愈重要，馬先生說 ESG 概念在嘉里物流的業務營運及發展策略中扮演關鍵角色。作為多個環境和社會相關獎項的得獎者，嘉里物流透過優化資源使用及保護自然環境和生態系統，努力使其營運變得更加環保。該公司使用環保包裝材料、高耐用性卡板，並與客戶共同贊助使用可回收材料。馬先生補充指：「如果沒有對 ESG 議題的堅定承諾，我們將無法通過跨國企業為服務供應商所訂下的資格預審要求。」隨著 ESG 在業務營運交集之間的發揮更大的作用，當電動貨車在未來兩三年運載能力提高，嘉里物流預計將會使用電動貨車支援城市內的物流運輸。馬先生說，該公司在其管理的約7400萬平方呎土地和物流設施中，採取了一些措施來提升環保效益。嘉里物流位於大埔的產品組裝及整合中心（PC³）是按照 LEED（領先能源與環境設計）的規格來建造的，而 LEED 是世界上最為廣泛採用的綠色建築評分認證系統。該專門建造的設施不但獲得 LEED 金級認證，更憑著卓越的環境品質，成為香港第一座工業建築獲發香港綠建築評金級認證。馬先生說：「環境管理課題重要且具迫切性，我們作為對社會和環境負責的企業公民，殷切期望可積極履行責任。」**M**

— Chris Davis
主編

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