

Series Preface

The trend towards globalization and the increasing division of labor as well as the rapid development of information and communication technology have led to worldwide value networks associated by material flows, information flows, and cash flows. These global supply chains pose major challenges for the stakeholders involved because of their complexity and cross-national major structure.

Therefore, supply chain management deals with the task of planning and directing efficient value creation networks taking economic, environmental and social aspects into account.

A professional advanced purchasing comprises the integrated management of all processes to supply a company with the required goods from sources outside the company. Thereby, the foremost target is to contribute to the achievement of competitive advantages of one's own company. By linking the procurement with the supply chain management, company-wide improvements may be achieved and strengthened in a sustainable matter.

Nowadays, procurement and supply chain management are part of the key management disciplines and in many companies they are already anchored at the top management level. Procurement and supply chain managers are not longer focused solely on reducing costs, because of this relevance, but contribute to the differentiation of companies and value networks. The confrontation with issues such as risk management, financing, sustainability in the supply chain, and product innovation will increase in the following years due to changing political conditions, oligopolies in supplier markets and further shrinking resources.

Despite the great practical relevance of procurement issues, the future challenges mentioned appear not to be adequately addressed from a scientific point of view so far. Furthermore, the connection between procurement and supply chain management has not been explored extensively. The series "Advanced Purchasing & Supply Chain Management" aims to contribute to closing these gaps. The intention is to generate benefits both in respect of sciences and practical matters.

The realization of this objective is supported by the "Kerkhoff Competence Center of Supply Chain Management" (KCC) – a jointly initiated platform of excellence by Kerkhoff Consulting and the University of St. Gallen. The goal of the KCC is to create an interface between science and practice. Therefore, trends and challenges in purchasing, procurement and supply chain management are to be analyzed