

A Virtual Panel Discussion

# Modernising Supply Chains for 2025: Technology, strategy & real business impact

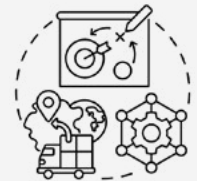
March, 2025

Insights from our latest a roundtable discussion, Modernising Supply Chains for 2025: Technology, strategy & real business impact, with industry experts:

- NF** Neil Fulkes, Digital Supply Chain Transformation Leader, mile20 Consulting
- MH** Michael Hegarty, Transformation & Change Leader, mile20 Consulting
- MD** Mike Dewey, Global Supply Chain Executive, mile20 Consulting

## The discussion highlighted:

- Supply Chain Volatility as a Catalyst for Tech Adoption
- Customer-Centric Approach to Tech Implementation
- Structured Approach to AI & Technology Adoption
- Transformation Beyond Technology
- The Evolving Role of AI & Automation



### Q. How can companies harness digital and see value through transformation for supply chain?

**NF** Supply chain disruption remains a constant, with inflation, material shortages, tariffs, and ESG pressures pushing digital transformation to the top of the agenda. Historically, Private Equity (PE) and corporate leaders viewed the supply chain as a cost center—focused on cost reduction, low inventory, and basic service levels.

That's changing. Supply chain is now seen as a lever for value creation. With agile, technology-enabled models, businesses can now accelerate maturity, from levels 1–2 to 3–4 in just 12–24 months, where it used to take 3–5 years. This has a direct impact on operational performance, scalability, and enterprise value, particularly within PE investment cycles.

### Q. When running a business you focus on various opportunities. How do you go about defining the areas to look at first and foremost?

**MD** It is easy to get lost in the sea of digital tools. The starting point should always be your biggest pain points or opportunities -

from there, you can identify the right technology to support those outcomes. Leading with customer value often provides the best direction. Amazon's returns process is a good example—they didn't start with tech; they started with a vision to simplify the customer experience and then found the right tech to deliver it.

This is why, we at mile20, typically begin with a maturity assessment and roadmap: to ensure transformation is grounded in real business need.

### Q. How do business stakeholders select the right technology and vendor in this area?

**NF** The tech ecosystem, APS, AI, risk, and decision intelligence platforms, is broad and fast-moving. To make the right choice, you need a clear RFI/RFP process that defines your functional requirements, business case, and future needs.

Key considerations should include scalability, total cost, and cultural fit, both with the vendor and the implementation partner. Poorly scoped projects can lead to inflated costs, with some businesses paying double what's needed for the same outcome.

### Q. How do you specifically, or Mile20 more broadly, support a business or a stakeholder through this?

**NF** What sets Mile20 apart is that we have lived both sides of the transformation challenged, driving change as business leaders, and delivering it as consultants/interims.

We created Mile20 to bring that dual perspective together. We know what works in theory, but more importantly, what works in practice! Our approach is pragmatic, tailored, and focused on long-term impact - not just short-term implementation.

We support clients from the very beginning: starting with assessment and roadmap design, through vendor selection, delivery governance, capability building, and performance tracking. Our focus is always on designing fit-for-purpose solutions that scale with your business.

### Q. How do you balance the technology, the people, and the process in terms of the whole transformation piece that you are going to be leading?

**NF** The best transformations recognise that



technology is an enabler, not the goal.

**MH** Yes, tech helps eliminate inefficiencies and automate tribal knowledge. But, the process needs to be reimagined and people must be brought along. Success relies on clear roles, effective change management, and strong leadership alignment between legacy knowledge and future vision. Transformation must work for the people expected to live with it, not just those who design it.

**Q. What else is important when delivering a successful transformation of this nature, beyond the technology?**

Frameworks are critical. Technology alone does not deliver value. We use our Vision–Mission–Outcomes (VMO) framework to define transformation from the outset. From there, we cascade OKRs and work packages to ensure accountability and measurable results.

It is about more than just systems; it is about change readiness, capability building, governance, and cultural alignment. Without those elements, even the best technology risks being underutilised. Our focus is to ensure transformation is sustainable, not just implementable.

**Q. On the subject of increasing AI integration, regarding people, are you seeing job losses or replacements? What is the current impact on employment?**

**NF** AI is reshaping roles - particularly in planning and logistics. It is automating routine tasks and enabling planners to focus on strategic and scenario-based decisions. The benefits are tangible; we've seen businesses achieve 10x returns in under a year.

**MH** There is a common misconception that AI replaces jobs. The reality is that it redefines them. The challenge is upskilling people to work with AI. The real value comes from integration, not replacement.

**MD** We see AI as an enhancer of human capability. The shift is not about job elimination, it's about empowering teams to work smarter and focus on high-value activities.

**Q. What are some key enablers for successful digital transformation?**

**MD** At Mile20, our four-pillar framework reflects what is required for transformation to succeed:

- 1. Technology Enablement** – Tech must serve the business problem, not distract from it.
- 2. Digital Masterplan** – Systems must align with wider business strategy to avoid conflict and duplication.
- 3. Technology Foundations** – Focus early on data quality, capabilities, and integration.
- 4. Change Management** – Transformation fails without adoption. Build confidence and support from day one.

This framework ensures that transformation is scalable, strategic, and results driven.

**Q. What role does leadership play in driving successful transformation within this space?**

**MH** Transformation leadership is more than governance, it is about clarity, trust, and credibility.

The best leaders define the 'What' and the 'How'. They translate big ambitions into clear steps. They understand that AI, no matter how powerful, won't drive value if the organisation isn't aligned.

Effective transformation leaders orchestrate internal strategic alignment, people, process, and technology, ensuring every part of the business are moving in the same direction. That is where mile20 excels. Our leadership team has delivered transformations at scale—and we bring that accountability mindset into every engagement.

**Q. And finally, any key takeaways?**

**MD** Don't just digitise your current way of working. Use technology to rethink how you work. Transformation is a chance to redesign—not replicate.

**MH** Technology is a powerful enabler, but true transformation comes from within your business. Successful change happens when it's driven by people who understand both strategic vision and practical execution. That's why mile20 exists—to connect these worlds with an accessible and effective methodology, designed to support small and midcap organisations in achieving meaningful, sustainable and affordable transformation.

**NF** Don't let the complexity hold you back. Start small, deliver value fast, and scale from there. Focus on the metrics that matter, and transformation will follow.

And so... mile20 doesn't just provide solutions—they craft tailored strategies that drive tangible outcomes. Their unique approach combines innovative models, a deep understanding of the market, and an unwavering focus on unlocking value while reducing cost to serve. With deep expertise in the evolving landscape of AI, ML, and digital transformation, mile20 helps businesses navigate emerging technologies—ensuring the right tools, providers, and direction for sustainable success. Supported by The Barton Partnership and its exceptional talent pool, mile20 helps you accelerate growth and operational efficiency.

Reach out today to explore how mile20 can empower your business to navigate change, harness untapped potential, and achieve results that truly matter. Let's build the future of your business, together.

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