Vast improvements in supply planning and inventory management have paved the way for the sort of true collaborative planning that once seemed impossible. Businesses that can take full advantage of the tools now at their disposal stand to reap enormous benefits.

How do you deliver the right product to the right place, at the right time and at the right price? It's an ever more pressing concern, given the complex challenges posed by globalization, technological advances, legislative changes, infrastructure changes, labor mobility, and more sophisticated and demanding customers.

IBM can help you manage costs, improve performance and integrate your processes with your suppliers to increase collaboration. We have services to assist with resolving all of your supply chain challenges:

**Integrated supply chain planning**
In today's economy, transforming your supply chain processes is more important than ever. We'll help you use the power of the Internet to reduce costs, inventory and shortages; and improve responsiveness and delivery.

**Supply chain ERP**
By extending enterprise resource planning (ERP) to collaborate with outside suppliers, distributors and customers, you can build an e-business supply chain. This allows you to reduce excess inventory, fixed assets and working capital, while improving just-in-time delivery.

**Enterprise asset management**
Are you looking for a way to more efficiently manage your equipment, staff and facilities? We can assess your current processes, evaluate your needs and recommend the right integrated solutions for your business.

**Logistics and distribution**
How can you increase efficiency, reduce your inventory and streamline operations? From product warehouses to data storehouses, our experts can address all issues regarding logistics and distribution.
Supply Chain Management

Product lifecycle management services
We've done a lot of thinking about the lives of products. Product lifecycle management (PLM) is a suite of applications and services that enables companies to design, build and maintain products while reducing cost, increasing quality and shortening development cycles.

Procurement services
Does your organization have disparate applications, systems and procedures for sourcing, negotiation, procurement, fulfillment and payment? Our procurement services result in a streamlined process — from automated purchasing to a seamless tracking system.

Additional resources

Collaborative value chain solutions set
Virtually unlimited, continuous collaboration is expected to become the norm in many industries. We can help you implement this revolution in your organization.

Say good-bye to the old buyer/seller relationship. Today there's an environment of shared information and cooperation on capacity and meeting demand. This change has shortened product lifecycles, enhanced competition and increased shareholder value.

Consequently, companies are reaching out to their suppliers to create collaborative value chains -- relationships that can help reduce value chain inefficiencies, improve cycle times, enhance customer service and increase profitability. We offer internet-based solutions designed to implement this revolution in your operations.

Back to business: collaboration as a way of life
Learn why the potential of electronic marketplaces will only be fully exploited when they are viewed as a collaborative extension, rather than a replacement of current business models.

At the turn of the century, the business buzzword was e-markets. To many analysts, e-markets were ends in themselves. Electronic entities linking lots of companies would save money and create efficiencies. There were private e-markets, public e-markets, open e-markets, e-market consortia and dozens of other variants.
Supply Chain Management

The analysts were right, though in the enthusiasm to create these new centralized markets, some key business principles were forgotten. E-markets focused on increasing the efficiency of processes, above increasing the quality of collaboration. Whilst the former is beneficial, it is from the latter that true value is generated.

The potential of electronic marketplaces and other new, mainly web-based technologies, will only be fully exploited when they are viewed as a collaborative extension -- rather than a replacement -- of current business models. The new B2B for e-market enthusiasts represents the principle of going Back to Business. Extending existing value chains to build co-operation, trust, openness and dialogue between partners means an e-market is not only a trading platform but is also part of a larger collaborative value chain.

Collaboration is the key to success in an increasingly integrated business world. In determining how collaboration can best occur, genuine value chain analysis and evaluation is experiencing a renaissance. Principles of advanced planning and scheduling, logistics and e procurement will combine to build inter-company collaborative value chains. Furthermore, individual collaborative value chains will only emerge where a compelling case for measurable value.