

REGLOBALIZATION – REDEFINING GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS: NEARSHORING, RESHORING AND FRIENDSHORING IN A DISRUPTED GLOBAL LANDSCAPE



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Executive Summary: ReGlobalization in a Disruptive World

In December 2021 I began looking into the logistics capacity for the East Coast of the United States. By March 2022 I found myself in discussions about the availability of land, labor and port capacity in the Dominican Republic. After several trips to the Dominican Republic and a lot of work, I published a white paper in June 2023 with the title: “The Dominican Republic – The Singapore of the Western Hemisphere.” By September 2023 my thinking had advanced to the point that instead of looking at the solution, I became focused on the problem. Therefore, I wrote a white paper, “[The World Is Flat, Except When It Isn’t: The Yin and Yang of Globalization and Deglobalization.](#)”¹

Although I did not use the word ReGlobalization until May 2024, in the fall of 2023 I had the “ah-ha” moment that supply chains of the future were not going to be like supply chains of the past. At least in my mind, the era of ReGlobalization began in October 2023.

ReGlobalization refers to shifting patterns of global economic integration and rebalancing work around the world to diversify the manufacturing base, ensuring supply chain resilience. Instead of a broad, worldwide approach, countries and companies must focus more on regional connections, even forming economic blocks. Instead of single-source supply chains originating in China, executive teams must choose among options that include nearshoring, friendshoring and reshoring – let’s call it Xshoring.

Resilient supply chains will require multiple alternatives for sourcing, production and delivery – optionality. Since the 2020 pandemic, Chief Supply Chain Officers have learned crucial lessons to mitigate risks and sustain operations while navigating a series of disruptions that continually transform the global supply chain landscape.

Trade wars, tariffs, shooting wars and economic insecurity have created a world where disruption is the new normal. Although political and economic issues trigger ReGlobalization, the trend mandates redesigned global supply chains.

In fact, according to an Accenture survey, 85% of companies want to sell most of their products in the same region by 2026. And 65% want to buy most key items from regional suppliers.²

Such redesigns must account for two critical factors: your entire end-to-end supply chain and the five Ls. Your end-to-end (E2E) supply chain includes every enterprise that touches your raw materials all the way to your final product reaching your end user, even including returns. The five Ls of location, land, labor, leadership and lighthouse digital technology will help determine where those partner enterprises are, who they will be, how you connect to them to receive inputs and how you deliver outputs.

To discover the right ReGlobalization strategy, your operations team must model scenarios of interest with data that deliver real-time insights, giving you the ability to compare solutions instantly. Your organization's leadership team must agree on your enterprise's path forward, analyze costs and impacts and refine your plans. These steps will help your executive team devise your detailed implementation plans; plans that include scenarios unique to your situation.

You must continually adapt as political tides ebb and flow, as raw material availability increases or decreases, as manufacturing capacity comes online or goes offline, when consumer preferences or demand skyrockets or plunges, etc.

Tompkins Ventures has already seen many examples of countries moving manufacturing out of China. For example:

For the U.S. market, companies moved manufacturing to Brazil or Mexico. Those companies then:

- Created logistics hubs for Brazilian manufacturing in Sao Paulo, Brazil, for the eastern U.S. and Chancy, Peru, for the western U.S.
- Created logistics hubs for Mexican manufacturing in Mexico, shipping by truck to clients in the United States.

For the European market, companies moved manufacturing to Poland or Turkey. Those companies then:

- Created logistics hubs for Polish manufacturing near the Polish plant and in Lyon, France, with all transport by truck.
- Created logistics centers for Turkish manufacturing in Reims, France, and Budapest, Hungary, with all transport by truck.

For the Asian market, companies moved manufacturing to Vietnam or India. Those companies then:

- Created logistics hubs for Vietnamese manufacturing in the Port of Ho Chi Minh for Asia and the Port Chennai, India, for the Indian Subcontinent and the Middle East.
- Created logistics hubs for India's manufacturing in the Port of Singapore for Asia and the Mundra Port in India for the Indian Subcontinent and the Middle East.

So, in summer 2024 I was secure in my thinking about the critical importance of ReGlobalization. Then, much to my surprise, the U.S. presidential campaign accelerated the timing and expanded the magnitude of ReGlobalization. Past President Trump

announced that his “favorite word” was “tariff,” and he made it clear that if elected he would use the power of tariffs to “make America great again.”

Well, as this white paper is being published in December 2024, now President-elect Trump is making plans, via the use of tariffs, to put ReGlobalization on steroids. Therefore, even as I thought just three months ago that ReGlobalization was really, really important for the future of supply chains, I now believe I was woefully underestimating the importance of ReGlobalization. To be clear, if you are a leader of a company that has a physical supply chain you have no choice. You must quickly embrace and pursue ReGlobalization.

As I have been known to say: “It is now time to Go! Go! Go!”

This paper develops these points further by discussing the rationale, challenges and preferred course of action for all companies thinking about relocating some or all of their operations to the right locations and suppliers closer to their major markets. It provides significant insights about balancing geopolitical concerns with supply chain operations strategies and performance objectives.

Introduction: Understanding ReGlobalization in a Disrupted World

ReGlobalization is the new reality of globalization in the face of perpetual disruption. ReGlobalization involves balancing geopolitical competition with cooperation, especially in strategically important sectors.

Several factors have contributed to this shift. Growing geopolitical concerns about China, potential conflict in the South China Sea and China's propensity to enact trade barriers have led to a re-evaluation of traditional globalization.

The United States has responded with tariffs and economic nationalism. Europe has followed suit.

Perhaps most notably, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in global supply chains, prompting a widespread rethink of globalization strategies.

In this context, ReGlobalization means creating more resilient supply chains, often closer to your customers. Essentially, countries and companies must adapt to a more fragmented global landscape, while still maintaining some level of international integration.

In many ways, ReGlobalization will combine nearshoring, friendshoring and reshoring – Xshoring. [Timothy Hagler defines Xshoring](#) as the key to a resilient and sustainable supply chain.³ But his analysis neglects friendshoring, which likely will be part of your company's strategy.

Still, trade patterns will shift toward more regional routes. New production locations will significantly alter labor markets. Companies will need to invest in digital technologies that facilitate remote collaboration and trade. Logistics hubs will pop up in different locations.

Note that ReGlobalization signifies an evolution of globalization, not its reversal. ReGlobalization represents a more nuanced approach to global integration, incorporating lessons learned from past experiences and adapting to new global realities.

Other thought leaders are using the term [regionalization](#)⁴ or [deglobalization](#).⁵ Others are also talking about optimization instead of optionality.

But, as I explained in my September 2023 white paper "[The World Is Flat, Except When It Isn't](#)," companies that deglobalize from one region simply globalize elsewhere⁶ – ReGlobalization, although that term was not in vogue then.

True regionalization would cut off supply chains in one region as you reorient them to other places. But, as I also noted, China is not going anywhere. The East Asian giant will remain a major player in global trade. It took decades to build supply chains to Asia, and it will take time to reorient them.

Absent a shooting war, American, European and Asian countries and companies will trade with China for the foreseeable future – perhaps forever.

So, ReGlobalization likely will include some mix of Xshoring and trade with current partners, including China. In fact, Tompkins Ventures is hearing from Chinese firms who have now realized that China often is no longer the best place to source products to sell in the Western Hemisphere. They want to 1) avoid tariffs, and 2) produce closer to their North American and South American customers.

But they are not calling this ReGlobalization, regionalization or deglobalization. Instead, they are using the term “decoupling from China.” That could become problematic, as U.S. legislators are targeting [such use of third countries](#).⁷

Other regions, particularly Europe, could pick up any reduction in trade between, say, China and the U.S.

However, even Europe is reconsidering future investments in China because of market access and regulatory concerns.⁸ The European Union is even moving ahead with heavy tariffs on [Chinese-made electronic vehicles](#).⁹

To navigate such disruption, your company will need multiple options for procurement, production and supply chain – optionality, not a single-source solution. Relying on one node is a recipe for the supply chain disasters we’ve seen over the last several years.

Perhaps you will add new locations with current partners. Or find new partners. Maybe instead of contracting, your company will move into factory ownership, combined with a slight increase in buffer inventory.

The clear implication is that cost, while still important, cannot be the only factor you consider. In a world of perpetual disruption, you must add resiliency, agility and flexibility to the equation.

Whatever your choices, ReGlobalization done right will enable your enterprise to deliver to customers when the inevitable disruptions occur. Therefore, ReGlobalization done right will deliver resilience, competitive advantage and profitable growth.

But ReGlobalization is not steady state. Remember, disruption is continual. Once you think your organization has found the “next normal,” disruption will force another ReGlobalization, or perhaps, more appropriately, ReReGlobalization.

Next disruption? You're on to ReReReGlobalization. In other words, you never will have a static, steady-state supply chain. What your organization needs, in operational terms, is Dynamic Supply Chain Optionality (DSCO).

Nearshoring: Bringing Manufacturing, Logistics Closer to Home

Nearshoring brings manufacturing operations closer to a company's customer base. Supplier proximity mitigates risk. Transportation becomes faster and easier, trimming shipping costs and lead times. Quicker lead times also require less inventory in stock.

Therefore, for North American companies, ReGlobalization requires nearshoring production closer to the United States. Viable alternatives include Mexico, Canada and many countries in South America, Central America and the Caribbean.

Nearshoring requires this strategic approach, considering short-term and long-term benefits. Many countries south of the U.S. have low labor costs. Often, that can translate into lower landed cost. But not always.

However, shorter lead times will require less inventory and less working capital, create exponentially quicker times to market and allow for more strategic options like redesigning your distribution networks.

Now you are talking resilience and reliability.

Nearshoring will also require new logistics capabilities and hubs. The Dominican Republic and Panama can form the backbone of supply chain for the Western Hemisphere. These countries' strategic locations and emerging infrastructure make them ideal hubs for supporting nearshoring initiatives.

The Dominican Republic has the location, land and labor to become a supply chain hub for the Western Hemisphere, capitalizing on reoriented global trade flows. It can even support eCommerce via two-day shipping to the Eastern United States – [where 80% of the U.S. population lives](#).¹⁰ The Caribbean country needs to add Leadership and Lighthouse to complete the five Ls of location, land, labor, leadership and lighthouse digital technology to qualify as a great location for a supply chain hub. (More detail on the five Ls later. They're worth a complete section below.)

Many already refer to the nation of Panama as a logistics hub for the Americas. In ReGlobalization, Panama may handle inventory coming north from South America and by sea from Asia. Companies will then release that inventory to the East, Gulf or West Coasts of the U.S., countries in Central and South America, or Mexico.

Mexico's proximity to the western United States makes it ideal for eCommerce for the western U.S. At the same time, you have many options to consider for manufacturing hubs and logistics hubs in the Americas, as well as for Europe, Asia and the rest of the world.

Reshoring: Returning Manufacturing to Your Home Country

Reshoring, also known as onshoring, involves shifting manufacturing and services back to the company's home country and customer base to strengthen supply chain resilience and protect intellectual property. However, back does not mean back to the same locations and facilities in previous manufacturing powerhouses. Many of those factories have been torn down or converted to condominiums. The labor force has gone back to school or trained to learn new trades. Many, frankly, are not interested in working in manufacturing any longer.

Starting in the 1960s, many U.S. companies moved production overseas, particularly Asia. Lower labor costs and less stringent regulations accelerated this offshoring process dramatically in the 1990s and 2000s. China became the factory of the world – a title held by the United States in the 1940s and 1950s.

However, many factors, including the supply chain chaos of the pandemic and post-pandemic periods, have led companies to reevaluate their approach. Overseas labor costs have risen, and modern automation now offers significant labor-saving opportunities. Reshoring allows for better quality control and intellectual property protection. Politicians and consumers increasingly push for “made at home” products and protection for domestic jobs.

When implemented strategically, reshoring offers several benefits:

- Shorter supply chains, reducing transportation costs and lead times
- Greater control over production processes and quality
- Improved responsiveness to market changes
- Enhanced brand image through domestic production
- Contribution to local economies and job markets

However, reshoring also presents challenges. You must plan for higher labor costs in developed countries, the lack of manufacturing skills and infrastructure and the initial costs of relocating production.

Automation can help. [Bath and Body Works](#) offers a perfect example of successful reshoring through hard work and automation. One-time capital investments helped the

company dramatically reduce labor needs when it reshored virtually its entire supply chain to a “beauty park” near Columbus, Ohio. Leads times for products – hence time to market – plunged.¹¹

Such companies, who understand the fragility of global supply chains, now view reshoring as a strategy to increase resilience and reduce dependence on foreign suppliers.

While reshoring won't suit all industries or companies, it certainly plays a part in ReGlobalization. Reshoring is part of the significant shift in global manufacturing trends and highlights the complex interplay between economics, politics and business strategy CEOs must face in today's world of perpetual disruption.

Friendshoring Strengthens Supply Chain Ties with Trusted Partners

Friendshoring is an economic and geopolitical strategy that relocates supply chains, manufacturing and critical operations to nations viewed as political allies or friendly partners.

Growing tensions between major trade partners contribute to this trend. Geostrategic conflicts between China and the U.S. have many countries and regions looking for trading partners who are allies. So do worries about trade sanctions, export restrictions and the potential that more shooting wars will break out.

Friendshoring partners typically share strong political, economic or security ties, creating stable environments for supply chains. This reduces the risk of disruption from adversarial or unstable nations. In other words, your friends are less likely to hold up shipments and restrict trade for “national security” concerns.

While friendshoring and nearshoring often include the same regions and countries, geographic proximity does not limit friendship. The U.S., for example, has historic ties to nearby Canada, Central and South America. But the United States also has historic ties to Western Europe and growing ties to Eastern European and the ASEAN countries. And India could one day rival China as a manufacturing powerhouse.

Friends far away can be more beneficial to countries and companies than doing business in nearby countries who might curtail your operations for political reasons. That's how friendshoring can enhance supply chain resilience by anchoring critical supply chains in countries that share similar values, interests or alliances.

Globalization: From National Economies to ReGlobalization

The concept of globalization has undergone significant transformations over the past few centuries, evolving from national economies to a more interconnected global economy. Over millennia, local trading routes gave way to international trading routes. Cross-border commerce created international economies. Growing technology and trade led to globalization.

Historians trace the foundation of modern economic theory back to the [concept of comparative advantage](#), which David Ricardo introduced in the early 19th century. Comparative advantage posits that countries should specialize in producing goods for which they have a lower opportunity cost, thereby maximizing efficiency and trade benefits.¹²

During this period, economies were primarily national, with limited international trade. Nations focused on self-sufficiency and protecting their domestic industries through tariffs and trade barriers.

U.S. history offers a prime example. In the first half of the 19th century, the [Whig Party backed protective tariffs](#). Whig leaders like Henry Clay and Daniel Webster argued that high tariffs would protect nascent American manufacturing. The taxes would raise money for railroads, canals and other infrastructure improvements.

In general, their goal was to create a diversified but self-sufficient economy.¹³

However, the late 19th and early 20th centuries marked a significant shift toward international economies.

Innovations like the steam engine and the telegraph advanced transportation and communication, facilitating international trade and investment. Countries established trade agreements and trade organizations.

Notable developments on the path from national economies to international economies included the 1860 Anglo-French Cobden-Chevalier Treaty, various bilateral agreements and the 1869 opening of the Suez Canal.¹⁴ Between 1870 and 1914, global integration facilitated a rapid growth in world trade. Europe was a significant player in this trade boom of 3.4% per year.¹⁵

Still, many trade deals involved one-to-one commerce between European countries like Britain, France, Germany and Austria-Hungary – internationalization, not true globalization.

And, beyond tariffs and the lack of global treaties on trade, there were plenty of trade barriers – like World War I, World War II and the Cold War.

Still, internationalization marched on. In 1947, 23 countries came together for the [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade \(GATT\)](#), further promoting cross-border economic activities. GATT eventually morphed into the World Trade Organization in 1995.¹⁶ The [WTO currently has 166 members](#) that represent more than 98% of global trade.¹⁷

This post-1995 era saw the rise of multinational corporations and the explosion of global supply chains, as businesses sought to leverage comparative advantages on a larger scale. Globalization made China the factory of the world. For China, ReGlobalization puts that country in a situation comparable to the United States in the 1960s – seeking low-cost manufacturing abroad. China is looking to Mexico, Vietnam, Cambodia and other regions.

Mexico is akin to the pre-1940 and postwar United States – a potential manufacturing powerhouse. While Mexico is in a prime position to take advantage of ReGlobalization, economies will change over the decades. In 20 years perhaps, Mexico will be looking offshore for low-cost manufacturing. Perhaps this manufacturing will go to Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras or possibly to Africa.

When this shift occurs, Africa, with its vast potential, is likely to emerge as the new frontier for global manufacturing. Yet, opportunities in Africa are already abundant and ripe for exploration today.

Africa, particularly Nigeria, is working to establish itself as a key player in global economic integration and manufacturing. According to [the United Nations](#), Nigeria will be the third most populous country in the world by 2050, with 400 million people. In addition, 70% of its population will live in urban areas. Thus, Nigeria offers an unparalleled labor force and consumer base.¹⁸

Africa's broader economic rise reinforces its pivotal role in future global markets, with the East, North, Central and West African regions forecasting growth rates ranging from 4.1% to 5.7%, driven by urbanization, infrastructure investment and industrial expansion.¹⁹ Moreover, the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) is set to streamline cross-border trade, covering 1.2 billion people with a gross domestic product of \$2.5 trillion. According to the [U.N. Economics Mission for Africa](#), ACFTA could boost intra-African trade by 52.3% just by eliminating import duties. Removing non-tariff barriers could double that trade.²⁰

These advancements position Africa for ReGlobalized supply chains, offering businesses access to vibrant consumer markets, cost-efficient production opportunities and vast natural resources. Enterprises that invest in Africa now will secure first-mover

advantages, establishing a robust foundation for sustainable growth in an increasingly interconnected and rapidly evolving global economy.

That's the beauty and the challenge of ReGlobalization. Your executive team needs alliances and partners who can continually adapt your operations in a world where disruption is the new normal. It's exciting, exhilarating – and frustrating. But that's the only way to a competitive future.

President Trump: A Consequential Event That Puts ReGlobalization on Steroids

Past President Trump being elected as the 47th President of the United States is a ...

- Consequential event
- Watershed moment
- Historical milestone ...

with far-reaching implications impacting the whole world. His trade and economic policies will have transformative impacts. These impacts will result in huge disruptions of global business, especially for global supply chains. However, at the same time, these disruptions also present a unique opportunity for companies to enhance their competitive stance via supply chain optionality, agility, responsiveness and resilience.

In fact, given the surfing theme of my recent book “Insightful Leadership: Surfing the Waves of Organizational Excellence,”²¹ I began to think of the Trump re-election as the underwater earthquake that caused the tsunami racing across the ocean.

Some see the tsunami as a powerful wave that causes devastation and disaster. But just for a moment, think of yourself as being on a surfboard and seeing this wave coming your way. Wow, if you play it right this could be the best ride of your life, even the best ride of the 21st century. I am a supply chain surfer, and I am eager to jump on the Trump tsunami to discover a whole new level of success. I call this ride of a lifetime ReGlobalization. Time to wax your surfboard. The first Trump tsunami wave will come ashore on Jan. 20, 2025.

It could be argued that I spent my entire business career on supply chain. But, for the first 20 years of my career we did not even have the term “supply chain.” Nevertheless, I know it is accurate to say my career has been focused on supply chain for as long as folks have been talking about supply chain. So now, here with these many years focused on supply chains and after the 2020 COVID-19 crash of supply chains, the Trump tsunami is coming ashore in Supply Chain Bay.

I hear many yelling about the disaster, disruption and the destruction of the tsunami. But as I sit on my surfboard, all I see coming is the greatest supply chain opportunity for success of all time. But let me leave you sitting in the bay on your surfboard for a while, as I go back and explain how I see President Trump presenting us supply chain folks with the opportunity of a lifetime.

In my professional supply chain career, I have avoided writing or speaking about political issues. After all, I am an engineer, a supply chain expert, an entrepreneur, a leader of businesses, not a politician. Now, however, the Trump tsunami is coming ashore in my Supply Chain Bay. Thus, I have no choice other than to address this tsunami. I see the consequential Trump re-election converging with my global supply chain focus, and there is no way that I can exclude politics from:

- The nearshoring, reshoring and friendshoring dialogue
- The tariff paranoia
- The pervasive impacts on supply chains

There is an action and a reaction, a stimulus and a response, a cause-and-effect relationship between the reelection of past President Trump and my career in supply chain thought leadership.

To further understand this action/reaction relationship, one needs to understand how Trump won the 2024 election and how he will pursue success for the next four years. So, let me begin by explaining how I believe Trump won a second term as a result of his focus on the following agenda:

1. **Trade policy/national security:** President-elect Trump will step into a more hazardous geopolitical arena than the one he left four years earlier. The second Trump administration will focus on fortifying the domestic industrial base, reducing economic dependencies on rivals, strengthening military capabilities and enhancing the global supply chain resilience and capabilities of the United States. The strategy of joining capabilities with our allied trading partners will overmatch our adversaries.
2. **Economic policy:** When past President Trump left office, the economy was still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Inflation was relatively low, but unemployment was high, as was the growth of the federal debt. As expected, unemployment has gone down, but the federal debt, government spending and inflation remain elevated. Trump's economic policy will be to protect domestic industries and create jobs, to significantly reduce trade deficits, combat unfair trade practices such as dumping, to reengage in creating energy independence, to streamline government spending and to reduce regulations.
3. **Specific strategic political objectives:** President-elect Trump began to take action before his inauguration on open borders and the impacts of open borders

on crime, illegal immigration and illegal drugs. Trump has been having success in getting Canada and Mexico to commit to enforcing laws already on their books with respect to illegal immigration and drugs. President Trump will continue to aggressively pursue important strategic political objectives he views as priorities.

Then, onto how President Trump will achieve success on all three topics: tariffs. Trump has said his “favorite word” is tariff and that tariff is “the most beautiful word in the dictionary.” To understand this, tariffs need to be viewed through multiple lenses: as a trade policy, an economic policy and a tool for achieving broader political goals.

Here are the impacts of tariffs for each of these perspectives:

1. **Trade policy:** Tariffs on products made in unfriendly or unfair countries will encourage companies in the United States to ReGlobalize, to source from countries where total delivered costs are lower or to reshore to domestic companies that deploy cost-saving automation to achieve lower total delivered cost.
2. **Economic policy:** Countries have choices on how to use economic policy to increase economic growth, employment rates and balance of trade. Reducing regulations, energy costs and taxes while increasing intellectual property protection reduces your cost of operations, making companies more competitive. Or you can add tariffs, making the competition less attractive. Or you can ReGlobalize to trading partners who have lower costs.
3. **Strategic tool:** Tariffs can be used to exert political pressure and improve negotiation success on issues like immigration, borders, illegal drugs, pollution, human rights, etc., between the United States and countries we wish to include in our trading block and our economic ecosystem.

To gain insight into how President-elect Trump views tariffs, I thought it would be good to ask my AI friend Copilot about the main point in Trump’s book “The Art of the Deal.” Here is Copilot’s response:

“‘The Art of the Deal’ by Donald J. Trump, co-written with Tony Schwartz, is part memoir and part business advice. Here are some of the main points from the book:

1. **Guiding business principles:** Trump outlines several principles that have guided his business decisions:
 - **Aim high:** Set ambitious goals and focus on achieving them.
 - **Prepare for the worst:** Always have a backup plan.
 - **Know your target audience:** Understand who you are dealing with and what they want.
 - **Promote aggressively:** Make sure people know about your product or service.

- **Fight for what you believe in:** Stand your ground if you think you're right.
 - **Keep costs low:** Be frugal and avoid unnecessary expenses.
2. **Early life and career:** Trump discusses his upbringing and early career, including working with his father on low- and middle-income housing projects in New York City.
 3. **Major deals:** The book details several of Trump's significant deals, such as the development of Trump Tower, his first casino ventures in Atlantic City and his involvement with the United States Football League.
 4. **Negotiation tactics:** Trump shares his strategies for negotiating successful deals, emphasizing the importance of persistence, adaptability and leveraging strengths.
 5. **Public image:** The book also highlights the role of public image and media in business success, suggesting that even bad press can be beneficial if handled correctly.

These points provide a glimpse into Trump's approach to business and his philosophy on deal-making.”

This refresher helps us understand President-elect Trump’s view on tariff being a beautiful word and the good, bad and risky views of tariffs.

First, the good view of tariffs. The good view of tariffs is the use of tariffs as a negotiating tool to accomplish specific strategic political objectives.

President-elect Trump began to take action before his inauguration on open borders and the impacts of open borders on crime, illegal immigration and illegal drugs. Trump has been having success in getting Canada and Mexico to commit to enforcing laws already on their books with respect to illegal immigration and drugs.

President-elect Trump set ambitious goals, understood the president of Mexico and the prime minister of Canada, has made a strong case about open borders and was clear on his desired objectives. President-elect Trump accomplished his objectives by leveraging U.S. strengths via the threat of tariffs. The result will be good for all. Well done President-elect Trump, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. One certainly can expect President Trump to continue to aggressively use tariffs as a negotiating tool to pursue important strategic political objectives.

The second view of tariffs, the bad view, is when tariffs are put in place without a well thought out plan or a backup plan. An example of the bad view is where a tariff is put in place without an adequate maturation period. Other countries enact retaliatory tariffs, causing a revengeful struggle.

A revengeful struggle is not a backup plan. Rather, it drives all sorts of bad behavior that ultimately hurts all parties involved. The outcome here can be disruptions in supply chains, increased cost, poor customer satisfaction and overall chaos. This approach is an unacceptable disaster. The results are totally inconsistent with “The Art of the Deal.” Tariffs implemented in this way are bad.

The third view of tariffs, of course, falls between the good and the bad. Results here come in an unlimited number of variations.

Discussions often start about using tariffs as a tool to level the playing field. Of course, each side has their own view of the situation. Each party needs to reasonably understand both their perspective and the perspective of the person on the other side of the table.

This is where the risky element comes into play. Because just like every union negotiation, every marriage, divorce and every court case, the results may be satisfactory for both parties. Or, one party leaves satisfied, with the other dissatisfied. The worst result, of course, comes when neither side leaves satisfied.

Independent of the outcome, hopefully both sides conduct themselves with integrity and a true desire to reach a satisfactory outcome. With tariffs, the deal often involves a balance, with an understanding that on some mutually agreed date each party will deploy a specific plan of action.

In these cases, there should be no surprises. In this way, each party has adequate time to evaluate their options and establish a path forward. Hopefully, each party has either anticipated the potential for not reaching an agreement or has adequate time built into their negotiation to develop a ReGlobalization path forward given the potential outcomes from the negotiation.

It is here that organizations are wise to evaluate their supply chains and evaluate the “hot spots” where disagreements or failed negotiations are most likely. They should conduct contingency planning on various scenarios to assure they are ready to address these risky situations.

For example, it should not be a surprise to anyone that the world today has two major trading groups. North America, Europe, India, Japan and South Korea are generally on the same page. The second trading group involves Russia, China, Iran, Afghanistan and North Korea, who are generally on the same page.

Nor should it be a surprise that the two trading groups often view trade differently. Therefore, if you are doing significant trade with the other trading group, it would be wise to evaluate the impacts on your supply chain if you face a disruption of service. It is very important for you to be able to answer the questions about redundant sourcing,

alternative supply chains and ReGlobalization when you are dealing with companies or sourcing located outside of your trading group.

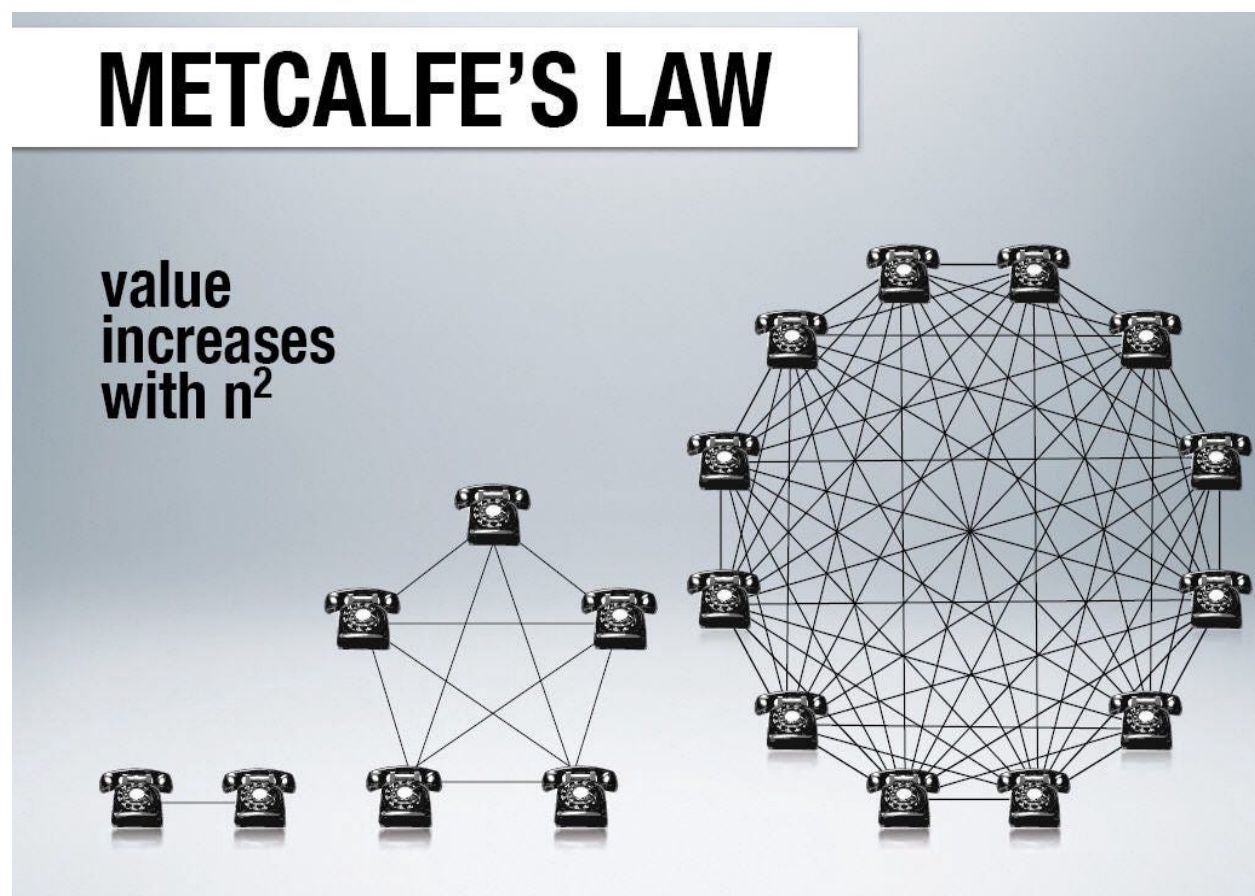
The four clear conclusions that can be extracted from Trump's view on tariffs are:

1. There is a clear disagreement on the viability of unexpected tariffs. Some view tariffs as a strategic tool that can solve major problems (e.g., border control, drug trafficking and human rights). Some view tariffs as a flawed economic policy that causes major problems, (e.g., trade wars, a tax on consumers and inflation). This is the Trump tsunami syndrome: Do the tsunami waves represent disaster, disruption and destruction, or are they the greatest supply chain opportunity for success of all time? I see both sides of this disagreement. Using tariffs as a negotiating tool to hold countries accountable can succeed at solving major problems. At the same time, imposing unanticipated tariffs on trade will result in chaos and/or increase costs to the consumer. Without getting political, my view is using tariffs as a strategic tool is good when it works but bad when it does not. I would suggest that companies should not wait to deal with sudden tariffs. Instead, a better strategy is to anticipate the tariffs and increase the optionality and resilience of their supply chains. Companies that preplan their ReGlobalization strategy and deploy this strategy before tariffs take effect can avoid price increases and chaos.
2. There is a clear conclusion that when a person is known for doing what he says, using tariffs as a negotiation tool will succeed. To be more to the point, please consider:
 - President-elect Donald Trump was elected to return to the White House. The electorate wants change.
 - Past President Donald Trump is known to be a person who does what he says.
 - President Trump will use tariffs as a negotiation tool and will often succeed in accomplishing his objectives without actually imposing tariffs.
 - When President Trump does not win the negotiation, he will impose tariffs, and this will result in substantial ReGlobalization.
 - President Trump will increase tariffs on China.
3. The Trump use of tariffs will result in an unprecedented surge of companies who choose to view the Trump tsunami as an opportunity to innovate, to strengthen their supply chains and to gain competitive advantage. These companies will:
 - Pursue nearshoring, reshoring and/or friendshoring
 - Make major changes to their global supply chains
 - Pursue ReGlobalization with vigor
4. The Trump use of tariffs will result in an unprecedented surge of 3PLs building logistics capacity to adapt to these tariffs and ReGlobalization.

Understanding Internationalization and Globalization/ReGlobalization through Metcalfe's Law

Metcalfe's Law provides a valuable framework for understanding the progression from internationalization to globalization. It also underscores why it is important for companies to get ReGlobalization right.

According to Metcalfe's Law, the value of a network is proportional to the square of the system's connected users. One telephone doesn't offer much. But as the graphic illustrates, each added telephone grows that network – and its power – exponentially.



In other words, one multiplied by one equals ... one. One added to one equals ... two. Three plus three equals six.

But multiplication creates the following exponential effect:

ADDITION	MULTIPLICATION
$1 + 1 = 2$	$1 \times 1 = 1$
$2 + 2 = 4$	$2 \times 2 = 4$
$3 + 3 = 6$	$3 \times 3 = 9$
$4 + 4 = 8$	$4 \times 4 = 16$
$5 + 5 = 10$	$5 \times 5 = 25$
$6 + 6 = 12$	$6 \times 6 = 36$
$7 + 7 = 14$	$7 \times 7 = 49$
$8 + 8 = 16$	$8 \times 8 = 64$
$9 + 9 = 18$	$9 \times 9 = 81$
$10 + 10 = 20$	$10 \times 10 = 100$
$11 + 11 = 22$	$11 \times 11 = 121$
$12 + 12 = 24$	$12 \times 12 = 144$

Therefore, while addition only adds incrementally, multiplication can increase your network's power by an ever-increasing number. When it comes to hypergrowth, multiplication beats addition any day. And every business wants hypergrowth.

That's how internationalization, globalization and ReGlobalization all differ in their economic scope and impact.

Internationalization is additive and does not take advantage of Metcalfe's Law. It involves a company expanding operations into foreign markets through activities like exporting, importing, setting up subsidiaries and tailoring products or services to meet local needs. The goal is to grow the business incrementally by entering new markets.

Globalization is multiplicative. It encompasses the broader process of increasing interconnectedness and interdependence of the world's economies, cultures and populations. Activities include the free flow of goods, services, capital, information and people across borders. The goal is to create a more integrated and interdependent global economy.

The late 20th century witnessed an unprecedented acceleration of globalization, driven by technological advancements, deregulation and liberalized trade and investment policies. Thomas L. Friedman's book "The World is Flat" encapsulates this era, highlighting how the world became more interconnected and interdependent.

Globalization multiplied business opportunities. Companies operated seamlessly across borders, accessing new markets and resources.

However, this rapid globalization also brought about challenges. Interconnected economies meant a disruption on one side of the world cascaded elsewhere. The

growing reliance on single-source supply chains that started in China amplified the effect of any disruption in Asia. And trade wars, geopolitical tensions and economic disparities became more pronounced.

Then, along came the 2008 financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2009, The World Trade Organization recorded the [sharpest contraction ever in global trade](#) – 12%.²² Even COVID didn't have such a large effect, as global trade volumes [dropped by only 5.3%](#) in 2020.²³

Both disruptions, however, exposed the vulnerabilities of global supply chains and the risks associated with overreliance on distant markets.

Thus, the move toward ReGlobalization. Since ReGlobalization is not a full retreat from globalization, companies and countries can still take advantage of Metcalfe's Law. While ReGlobalization's scope is broader than internationalization but narrower than globalization, executive teams still want to increase interconnectedness and interdependence within specific regions.

This approach also fosters regional cooperation and integration, as countries within a region collaborate to strengthen their economic ties and build robust supply networks.

By diversifying supply chains and reducing dependency on distant markets, businesses can mitigate risks and enhance resilience. ReGlobalization's narrower scope also can simplify the complexity and cost of your operations.

As we move into this new phase, your company must balance global integration with regional stability. Winning at ReGlobalization will be essential for achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

The Western Hemisphere: Primed for Complexity – and Success

Given the above history, Western Hemisphere economies are facing drastic disruption and change – standard operating procedure since 2020. Beyond Xshoring – the combination of nearshoring, friendshoring and reshoring – companies are facing changes in tariffs and trade agreements.

The [United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement \(USMCA\)](#) replaced the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on July 1, 2020.²⁴ The U.S. has 14 comprehensive free trade agreements with 20 countries. These range from deals with Japan focusing on free trade in critical minerals (2023) to CAFTA-DR, which includes the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. U.S. Customs and Border Protection maintains [a list of free trade treaties here](#).²⁵

In addition, companies must deal with a growing consumer preference for locally produced goods and services. Such “hyper reshoring” often involves food, nutritional and artisanal products. That trend has been documented with research on consumers from the [United States](#)²⁶ to [Poland](#).²⁷

However, the November 2024 election of Donald Trump to another term as president will result in significant tax and tariff advantages for “Made in America.” That will force such “hyper reshoring” to include products that go well beyond food, nutritional and artisanal products.

CEOs and chief supply chain officers who examine all of the above could be forgiven for sighing in exasperation.

After all, before 2020, CEOs had a simple decision-making equation: labor vs. automation. For decades, high labor costs usually sent production away from developed countries – offshoring. Automated production systems either kept production in developed countries or allowed CEOs to, on occasion, reshore.

Pandemic supply chain failures complicated that equation. Sure, China offered your company cheaper total landed costs. But what did it matter if the factory of the world shut down? Without products to deliver, product price point doesn’t matter.

And in a world of tariffs and economic nationalism, low-cost countries might not be so low cost in the future. Complexity means you’re going to have to consider more than labor and logistics.

The Logic Rationale: The Five Ls, Including a Digital Lighthouse for an AI Era

So, where should your company turn for redesigned supply chains, competitive advantage and profitable growth? It all depends upon which countries, regions and partners offer your operations the best combination of the five Ls – location, land, labor, leadership and lighthouse digital technology.

1. **Location:** Drives transportation costs, tariffs, taxes and customs.
2. **Land:** A major cost driver and major constraint in some geographies, particularly the East Coast, Gulf Coast and West Coast of the United States.
3. **Labor:** A major cost driver and major constraint, particularly in developed countries and continents like the United States, Canada and Europe.
4. **Leadership:** Deep knowledge and experience that goes beyond logistics to cover the whole E2E supply chain, including raw material availability, cost and the need for advanced digital and artificial intelligence technologies.

5. **Lighthouse digital technology:** Technology that leverages artificial intelligence, machine learning and cloud computing to autonomously resolve most supply chain disruptions without human intervention. This digital supply chain network must go well beyond track and trace.

For millennia, lighthouses have guided ships away from trouble. These physical buildings perhaps date back to 2000 B.C. in India. The most famous in ancient times, and perhaps the first purpose-built lighthouse, was that of Pharos of Alexandria, built about 285 B.C.

Today's equivalent of a lighthouse? Lighthouse digital technology – a digital supply chain network. And, unlike lighthouses, where you need many operating on numerous islands and coastlines, a single digital supply chain hub can guide logistics across vast stretches of ocean, land and air. That's the magic of today's digital technology – the aforementioned use of AI, machine learning and cloud computing.

Think of Singapore in the Eastern Hemisphere. That digital supply chain hub offers logistical and operational support and analytics for all logistics providers and shippers. They monitor, report and coordinate the flow of goods.

For example, a digital supply chain network can control ships coming into port, coordinate getting containers off that ship and into a free trade zone, breaking down that container's contents and getting the goods and parts back on a ship or plane to the appropriate destination. Or simply facilitate transshipment.

Imagine handling thousands of those transactions autonomously. That's how a digital supply chain network hub can reduce costs, improve key metrics and navigate complexity in an increasingly volatile environment. And since 80% of global commerce moves via water, a country or port that houses lighthouse digital technology can position itself for exponential growth as a supply chain hub.

Singapore seized that opportunity in 1965, when its GDP was a paltry \$500 per person. The country transformed every part of its infrastructure – port facilities, roads, buses, mass transit, parking, taxis, restricted travel areas, fare collections, vehicle ownership, air travel and freight, cycling – every aspect of mobility. By 2023, [per capita GDP topped \\$84,000](#).²⁸

Dominican Republic: An Eastern United States Logistics Hub

The world has plenty of underutilized parcels of real estate that can transform into excellent logistics hubs for their regions. When judging the potential of those properties, I use the aforementioned five Ls of real estate: location, land, labor, leadership and

lighthouse digital technology. In “[The World Is Flat, Except When It Isn’t](#),” I noted how the Dominican Republic has the potential to be an excellent logistics hub for the eastern half of North and South America. It has the land, the labor and the location.²⁹

The Caribbean country has plenty of land available to expand ports and logistics networks.

Labor is affordable. Contrast that to the United States and Canada, where land is expensive and scarce. North American port and logistics labor is also expensive and repeatedly prone to strikes or the threat thereof.

A strike last year by [longshoremen in Canada paralyzed West Coast](#) ports for two weeks.³⁰ Another [Canadian dockworkers’ union](#) is threatening another strike.³¹

Just last year, U.S. West Coast unions agreed to a six-year contract. But contentious contract negotiations led to slowdowns and disruptions. Many companies moved shipments to East and Gulf Coast ports. In 2024, that concern shifted to the East and Gulf Coasts. Despite an agreement that prevented a strike, [the difficult talks between](#) East and Gulf Coast port operators and their unions show that labor strife will not dissipate soon.³²

Such challenges do not currently exist in the Dominican Republic, where leadership is looking for high-quality jobs.

And at just 800 miles southeast of Miami, the Dominican Republic sits astride major global trade routes and has free trade agreements with the U.S., Europe and many other countries. It can capture much of the coming growth in transshipment and eCommerce. (As mentioned above, the country can support two-day eCommerce fulfillment to 80% of the United States.)

Considering its advantages, the Dominican Republic is almost criminally underutilized as a logistics hub. It already offers extensive infrastructure and strategic connectivity across the region. With dozens of weekly cargo transportation options to and from the U.S., including many daily routes along the East Coast from New York to Miami and the Gulf Coast, it’s a logistics gateway for North, Central and South America. The Dominican Republic also facilitates deconsolidation for containers arriving from Asia and Europe, redistributing them efficiently throughout the Americas and Caribbean.

To support these growing capabilities, the country has 15 ports, including four large ones, and eight airports, seven international. Additionally, nearly 100 free trade zones and almost 5 million square feet of warehouse space support diverse goods, from refrigerated products to dry storage. This infrastructure enhances resiliency. Throughout the country’s history, no single weather event, including hurricanes, has been able to shut down all points of entry and exit.

The Dominican Republic also offers light and value-added manufacturing, especially in medical devices and personal care, with a rapidly growing sector that highlights its potential as a production and distribution center. Charter and commercial flights add flexible, cost-effective cargo capacity, especially for smaller shipments, making the Dominican Republic an invaluable partner in today's interconnected supply chain landscape.

Forward-thinking leadership could leverage modern port technology and geographic advantages to connect global supply chains between the Americas, Asia, Europe and Africa.

As global trade patterns shift and decoupling from China accelerates, a country like the Dominican Republic could take advantage of lighthouse digital technology and play a key role in creating more resilient, diversified supply chains.

Mexico: A Central United States Manufacturing Hub

In the prior section, we explained why the Dominican Republic is an excellent option for the logistics hub for at least the eastern half of the Americas. For its part, Mexico could be an excellent option for a manufacturing hub for at least the Western Hemisphere.

Mexico already manufactures and exports vehicles, auto parts, electronics, appliances, petroleum, medical instruments, agricultural products and more. It's close enough to serve as an eCommerce hub for the Western United States.

Over the past few years, U.S. manufacturers have been weighing Mexico vs. China for factory production. And Mexico has been winning.

China has also increased its investment in Mexico's manufacturing sector. Since 2006, China has invested \$2.073 billion in Mexico. More than half of that (55%) came since 2020. Many experts believe some of that surge includes Chinese firms circumventing U.S. tariffs.

But although Chinese investment has clearly grown, U.S. foreign direct investment in Mexico dwarfs China. For example, in 2022, [United States FDI in Mexico reached](#) \$20.2 billion, while China's was just \$569.7 million.³³

Such investments are paying off for Mexico. Manufacturing accounts for [40% of the nation's economy](#), and, last year, Mexico topped China as the United States' largest trading partner. Analysts predict Mexico's exports to the U.S. could grow 33.8% a year.³⁴

Today, according to Tompkins Ventures research, Mexico has 80 million square meters of industrial space. Close to 25 million square meters have been developed in the last three years. Mexico's manufacturing sector will continue to grow, as the country plans to develop another 30 million square meters in the next five years. Mexico also has strong protections for intellectual property – long a complaint for U.S. and European businesses who operate in China.

According to Tompkins Ventures research, in 2023, the United States imported from Mexico:

- \$130.03 billion worth of vehicles
- \$85.56 billion worth of electrical and electronic equipment
- \$81.62 billion worth of machinery, including nuclear reactors and boilers
- \$25.01 billion worth of mineral fuels, oils and distillation products
- \$22.33 billion worth of optical, photo, technical or medical apparatus

Those figures will only grow.

The USMCA helps. So does Mexico's lower labor costs – [\\$4.82 per manufacturing labor hour vs \\$6.50 for China](#).³⁵

While that can translate into lower costs, transportation and logistics south of the Rio Grande still lag behind the high-tech, complex supply chains that connect the Americas with Asia, especially China. U.S. companies that look south to Mexico will need dependable partners like Tompkins Ventures for sourcing, procurement and logistics.

Mexico is not China. China has a decadeslong head start on its connected ecosystem to serve retail businesses and new investments. Mexico will require a lot of do it yourself. Unless, of course, you find the right partners.

That's another key. Relationships and building trust are critical for successful business endeavors in Mexico. You don't know what you don't know until you face the import regulations, the fact that border towns and big cities are crowded and expensive, but that you can find manufacturing gold just a few miles away from the crowds.

A more detailed explanation is below. But for now, let's be clear that you and your partners will not redesign your distribution networks overnight. First, your team must create a baseline of all current manufacturing, distribution and client locations. From there, you move your manufacturing anchors to the new country – in this case, Mexico.

Next, you redesign your inbound supply chains that feed into your new manufacturing anchor. After that, you optimize your deliveries (outbound) from your new manufacturing anchor (Mexico) to your clients.

Beyond tremendous cost savings on outbound logistics, Mexico's close proximity to U.S. markets reduces transit times from months to days. You will lower inventory costs, transportation costs, labor costs and tariffs.

You can increase sales, increase growth, reduce inventory overages and outages, and get the right product to the right place at the right time much more frequently.

The next stage involves replacing supply chain inputs from Asia with a localized, nearshoring supply base to feed your manufacturing. Eventually, your enterprise will also lower inbound transportation costs. You will increase reliability and reduce working capital needed to finance factory inputs.

In the end, your enterprise improves its sustainability, risk mitigation and diversification. Time to market for new products is so much faster when your partners are working in similar time zones, and you can ship engineering samples in an instant.

Panama: A Western United States Logistics Hub

South of Mexico sits Panama. The Central America country, like the Dominican Republic, offers an excellent example of a country that can handle large portions of logistics activity in the North and South American region.

Known for its strategic geographic location, Panama serves as one of the most connected countries in Latin America, bridging the East and West coasts of North, Central and South America with efficient, direct services that support international trade. This positioning makes Panama indispensable in today's ReGlobalization movement as companies seek resilient, agile solutions for global supply chains.

The world-famous canal has been operating since 1914. A third set of locks opened in 2016, doubling capacity and allowing for bigger New Panamax cargo ships. Canal zone authorities are continuing to invest in [logistics technology, new anchorages and infrastructure improvements](#).³⁶

Yes, climate change means the canal will face more droughts. These disruptions curtail the flow of goods through the canal, since each ship requires 52 million gallons of fresh water.

While a concern, two developments will minimize this disruption in the future.

First, Panama's Supreme Court recently allowed the country to build a new reservoir to increase water availability. The \$1.6 billion project will take six years and ensure a minimum of 36 transits a day, with the capacity to [increase transits to 40 a day](#).³⁷

Second, over more than a century, Panama has developed a vast network of warehouses and 3PL providers.

Tompkins Ventures partners have taken advantage of that experience and expertise without necessarily using the canal. Panama can store inventory coming from Asia and other South American countries in its warehouses near the Pacific. Instead of sending that inventory across the canal, 3PLs in Panama deconsolidate those shipments. Some goes to the West Coast of the United States. Some heads to the 11 Central and South American countries that border the Pacific, plus landlocked Bolivia.

And Panama can forward inventory to Mexico for eCommerce delivery into the Western U.S.

Panama also has a stable, skilled and abundant workforce to meet the demands of companies looking to diversify their supply chains.

Advanced port infrastructure on both coasts supports Panama's logistical strengths. State-of-the-art technology enables the efficient handling and swift movement of goods across continents, connecting Asia, the Americas and Europe. Strong port and logistics infrastructure enhances Panama's capacity as a transshipment hub, allowing goods to flow seamlessly between the Caribbean, North and South America.

Beyond the canal and ports, Panama's logistics infrastructure includes 16 free trade zones, including two prominent ones: the Colon Free Zone, one of the largest in the world, and the Panama Pacifico Special Economic Area. These zones offer favorable conditions for businesses, including tax incentives, simplified customs processes and a streamlined regulatory environment.

Panama is further expanding its logistics capabilities by developing the Tocumen Airport, billed as "The Hub of the Americas." This end-of-the-runway logistics complex will serve global companies by integrating air cargo services with existing maritime and land transportation networks.

The resulting multimodal logistics platform will enhance supply chain efficiency. The proximity to Tocumen International Airport allows for rapid distribution of high-value and time-sensitive goods, reinforcing Panama's position as a logistics leader.

And to remain competitive in ReGlobalized logistics markets, Panama continues to embrace technological advancements. Leadership, namely government officials, canal authorities and operators, are embracing smart port technologies and improving their

digital logistics solutions to boost operational efficiency and provide real-time data insights. These innovations enable supply chain managers to make informed decisions, fostering resilience and adaptability across logistics networks.

So, Panama has four of the Ls needed to drive ReGlobalization success: Location, labor, leadership and lighthouse digital technology. Its only limitation is land. Despite that, as a major logistics and transshipment hub, Panama will come out a winner in a ReGlobalized world.

More: The Rest of the Story

To illustrate the concept of ReGlobalization, I have suggested The Dominican Republic, Mexico and Panama as locations that have many positive aspects for ReGlobalization in the Americas. However, at the same time we must be clear that ReGlobalization is not as simple as deciding to multi-source your materials and components via nearshoring sites based on cost. The reality is that some raw materials and some components are not available from a location in the Americas. And as mentioned before, China will remain an important supplier for your overall supply chain.

In fact, “The Rest of the Story” has to do with finding quality, cost-effective options and developing a resilient supply chain for all of your materials and all of your component manufacturers. This pursuit is a never-ending journey where we need to continually deal with VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) while upgrading our supply chain to maximize conformity of our products’ quality and cost competitiveness.

So, if you’re not nearshoring into Mexico, where will that inventory originate?

While China will be the genesis for many products, parts and materials distributed from supply chain hubs like Panama and the Dominican Republic, a growing portion will come from other countries in the region. With ReGlobalization, some combination of raw materials, manufacturing capability and capacity, transportation and logistics capabilities will determine where the other country in the region is.

Panama and the Dominican Republic can handle light manufacturing and value-added services for finished goods. But face it, you’re not going to procure appliances or automobiles there.

You can, however, source appliances, automotives (including parts and combustion engines), medical equipment and more from Mexico. And Juarez and Guadalajara host hotbeds of assembly for consumer electronics. (Although Asia will provide many components as the Western world builds supply chains in the Western Hemisphere.)

In addition to Mexico, Brazil and Colombia can become powerhouses of apparel manufacturing. Brazil also has plenty of manufacturing capability and capacity for canvas shoes and furniture.

According to a KPMG survey reported in [Sourcing Journal](#), Mexico, Canada, Brazil, Columbia and Chile are the top five favored sourcing countries outside the United States.³⁸

Many nations have room to increase production in machinery, chemicals, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, computers and electronics, according to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The region “[demonstrates diverse industrial performance and harbors substantial growth potential](#).”³⁹

According to the [World Bank](#), in 2021, the top five exports from Latin American and Caribbean nations were petroleum oils and oils derived from bituminous minerals, copper ores and concentrates, nonagglomerated iron ores and concentrates, soya beans and gold.⁴⁰

Those raw materials could back a lot of manufacturing. Since then, the Latin American and Caribbean nations have seen a dramatic increase in export value (17% in 2022) followed by a slight decrease (2.2% in 2023), according to the [Inter-American Development Bank](#).⁴¹

But remember, the friendshoring part of Xshoring allows you to look farther away.

Because “The Rest of the Story” must be viewed from a global perspective, and we encourage companies to never stop the pursuit of better suppliers to allow you to improve customer satisfaction and profitable growth. ReGlobalization is not easy, and doing it right takes a very detail-oriented mind and a passion for pursuing supply chain excellence. This pursuit will often be global, so it is important for you to view the rest of the world as your playground.

Toward this end, your pursuit for DSCO (Dynamic Supply Chain Optionality) should continue. The top five countries in the ASEAN region (The Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam) are already industrialized. Those countries and the continent of Africa provide a good starting point:

- **The Philippines:** The Philippines has lengthy, historic (but sometimes problematic) ties with the [United States and North America](#). Their shared history spans from U.S. colonialism to a current bilateral security alliance, military ties and shared strategic and economic interests.⁴²

- **Thailand:** Thailand has long been a key U.S. ally, hosting U.S. military bases during the Cold War. [Bilateral economic relations remain strong](#), and the U.S. has designated Thailand a major non-NATO ally.⁴³
- **Indonesia:** From playing a role in Indonesian independence to the 2023 U.S.-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, ties between [Indonesia and the U.S. remain strong](#). Still, many experts say the Southeast Asian country will never formally align with the U.S., seeking to balance its ties to North America and China.⁴⁴
- **Malaysia:** The U.S. and Malaysia have historically cooperated on security, education and economics. But Malaysia [also seeks to balance relations with the U.S. and China](#).⁴⁵
- **Vietnam:** Even the U.S. and Vietnam have forged closer ties, decades after the Vietnam War. Vietnam is the United States' 10th-largest trading partner, and the countries [are increasing cooperation](#) in the face of China's claim to own virtually the entire South China Sea.⁴⁶

And for its part, Africa's 54 countries offer a unique blend of economic diversity and untapped potential for manufacturing development. A select group of nations – Nigeria, South Africa, Morocco, Ethiopia and Kenya – stands out for their significant readiness to evolve into supply chain and industrial hubs. These countries are driving this transformation through strategic investments, abundant natural and human resources, improving infrastructure and favorable policy environments.

While they anchor the continent's industrial progress, realizing Africa's full potential will require addressing persistent challenges such as uneven infrastructure, energy deficits and regulatory inefficiencies. Collaborative efforts among governments, private stakeholders and international partners, combined with targeted investments, will be crucial in transforming Africa's manufacturing sector into a shared success story for the continent.

- **Nigeria:** Africa's largest economy, Nigeria combines abundant natural resources and a large, youthful and educated population to expand its manufacturing base. As the U.S.'s [second-largest trade partner in Africa](#), with over \$10 billion in bilateral trade, Nigeria attracts significant investments in oil, mining and agriculture. Emerging industries in cement, food and beverages, and automotive assembly add momentum, though infrastructure and energy challenges remain pressing.⁴⁷
- **South Africa:** As one of the continent's most industrialized nations, South Africa boasts a [diversified manufacturing base spanning automotive](#), metals and machinery. A strategic location and strong infrastructure make it a prime hub for investments. While energy shortages and labor unrest pose risks, its position as a regional economic leader ensures continued appeal to global partners.⁴⁸

- **Morocco:** Morocco leads Africa's automotive industry, producing 700,000 vehicles annually and generating \$14 billion in exports. Major players like Renault and Stellantis power a sector that contributes 22% of GDP. With a U.S. Free Trade Agreement driving growth in automotive and aerospace industries, Morocco is cementing its role as a North African industrial powerhouse.⁴⁹
- **Ethiopia:** Ethiopia is a rising star in textiles and apparel manufacturing, attracting foreign investors through its industrial parks and pro-business policies. While infrastructure gaps and political uncertainty persist, its light manufacturing sectors are gaining global traction, positioning Ethiopia as a competitive player in Africa's industrial landscape.
- **Kenya:** Kenya's strategic location in East Africa and infrastructure advancements fuel its agro-processing and textiles sectors. The government's agenda emphasizes manufacturing's role in economic growth. Recently named a U.S. major non-NATO ally, Kenya exemplifies strong international partnerships, fostering investments in technology and industrial development.

To capitalize on these opportunities, African nations must strengthen policies, enhance workforce training and invest in infrastructure to ensure their positions as strategic industrial partners. As ReGlobalization reshapes global supply chains, these five leading nations are well-positioned to deepen international partnerships.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) underscores that ReGlobalization offers a unique opportunity for Africa to strengthen its emerging industries, create millions of jobs and foster sustained economic growth. By addressing challenges and leveraging their unique strengths, these nations can secure pivotal roles in global supply chains and manufacturing over the coming decades.

The Solution: Creating A ReGlobalization Blueprint for Your Supply Chain

ReGlobalization involves rethinking, redesigning and restructuring an organization's global supply chain while addressing the rapidly and continuously changing economic, political and business landscape.

Some combination of nearshoring, friendshoring and reshoring can help businesses capture opportunities for profitable and sustainable growth. And such moves are imperative in a world where disruption is the new normal and China is no longer the undisputed destination for foreign investment.

Deciding whether to redesign your supply chain is a complex process that requires you to carefully consider strategic and operational factors. Tompkins Ventures uses a structured approach and tools that evaluate 1,500 factors relating to ReGlobalization. That includes import and export data and strengths for every country in the world over

the past 30 years. Below is just a snapshot of the type of data you need. (X marks countries with exports of \$10 million a year or more in the selected category; Y marks countries with exports between \$1 million and \$10 million a year in the selected category.)

Capability Matrix

Data Source: Tompkins Ventures Sourcing Team

Product Matrix				Latin American Country						
Focus	Industry	Products	Specifics	Mexico	Dominican Republic	Costa Rica	Brazil	Colombia	Chile	El Salvador
Apparel	Footwear	Business								
		Casual		X	X		X	Y		Y
		Active		X	X		X	Y		Y
	Clothing	Menswear		X	Y		Y	Y		X
		Sportswear		X	X		Y	X		X
		Womenswear		X	Y		Y	Y		X
		Workwear		X	Y		Y	X	Y	X
	Accessories	Apparel Accessories		X	Y		Y	X		Y
		Handbags, Purses and Wallets		Y			Y			
		Jewelry and Watches		Y					Y	
		Luggage and Travel Bags		X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
		Lingerie and Hosiery		X		Y		Y		X
			Audio Equipment		X	Y	Y	Y		Y
		Cameras and Camera Equipment		X		Y	X	Y	Y	

Whether you partner with Tompkins Ventures or go on your own, your executive team must have that kind of granular data to evaluate the feasibility of ReGlobalizing, the ability to mitigate risks and the possibility of capitalizing on the benefits while aligning with long-term goals.

Step zero is ideation. This is where your organization identifies opportunities for ReGlobalization. Your supply chain executive team will develop a list of product categories that are candidates for ReGlobalization.

Note that your supply chain executive team must include procurement, manufacturing, transportation and distribution.

From there, Tompkins Ventures recommends the following process, also shown in the ReGlobalization flow chart.



Step 1. Self-Assessment

A high-level review of the opportunities resulting from Step Zero. A self-assessment tool that looks at:

- Geopolitical and economic conditions of potential new locations
- High-level cost analysis of shifting operations
- Recommendations on whether the company should proceed with a detailed analysis.

Step 2. Strategic Feasibility Analysis

This phase dives deeper, narrowing the options for new operational hubs, suppliers and logistics providers. This assessment primarily focuses on evaluating ReGlobalization options, emphasizing a structured, step-by-step approach for businesses considering relocating operations. Here we focus on qualitative assessments and strategic decision-making.

If the strategic feasibility analysis suggests that ReGlobalization is a viable option, the detailed feasibility analysis will result in a deeper dive into the specifics. The focus shifts to:

- **Identifying suitable partners:** This involves researching and shortlisting potential providers who can deliver the required services in

the new location.

- **Budget-level cost review:** A detailed analysis that estimates the financial impact of the proposed changes. Factors considered include raw material, manufacturing, logistics costs, duties, tariffs and taxes.

Step 3. Operating Plan

This phase provides a data-driven operational change plan. The strategy includes:

- SKU-level analysis to determine the most cost-effective supply chain changes.

- **Operational adjustments:** A plan for shifting logistics flows, adjusting procurement processes and optimizing inventory management.

This phase focuses on developing a comprehensive plan for implementing the ReGlobalization initiative. Key activities include:

- **Determine relocation scope:** Decide what proportion of your organization's manufacturing and distribution activities you will move.
- **Granular product review:** Analyze procurement costs in detail, along with raw material and associated costs, to develop sourcing guidelines.
- **Granular logistics review:** Determine specific transportation and distribution costs to support the new sourcing plan.
- **Supply chain performance evaluation:** Examine historical data on demand and supplier reliability to recommend the most effective course of action.

Step 4. Implementation Plan

This phase will define how the ReGlobalized business will operate, the technology required to maintain and evolve it, and the implementation strategy required to achieve it.

This phase will outline the detailed steps for procurement, transportation, distribution, and technology needed to implement the relocated operations. The accompanying dashboards will support your evolution of ReGlobalization, begetting Dynamic Supply Chain Optionality (DSCO).

This structured evaluation process that ranges from strategic feasibility to detailed cost-benefit analysis can help you make informed decisions that align with your goals for efficiency, risk mitigation and growth.

The insights gained from each phase will empower you to decide whether a supply chain redesign is the right move, enabling a go/no go business decision.

ReGlobalization: A Journey, Not a Destination

Following the ReGlobalization process presented in this paper is a journey. We at Tompkins Ventures have been at work on this journey for over two years. In fact, we began talking about growing VUCA before COVID-19. And in the 2022 book *[Insightful Leadership](#)* we presented a call to action for massive supply chain upgrades.

Now, we are armed with:

- A self-assessment strategic feasibility tool,
- A ReGlobalization database,
- A global boots-on-the-ground procurement team,
- A global transportation, distribution and fulfillment costing capability,
- A team of ReGlobalization coaches with over 100 years of experience around the world who have completed hundreds of reshoring, nearshoring and friendshoring implementations,
- A team of supply chain strategy experts with over 100 years of deploying supply chain strategies for a wide variety of leading global companies,
- A Dynamic Supply Chain Optionality (DSCO) tool that deploys artificial intelligence and machine learning by providing continuous monitoring, calibration and upgrading of your global supply chain to address political upheaval, weather events, competitor actions, economic shifts – or something unforeseen, requiring you to alter your ReGlobalization plan and shift to an upgraded version of your path forward.

We are ready to engage. Send us an email or give us a call. We would love to guide you through our ReGlobalization process.

Email : Reglobalization@Tompkinsventures.com

Phone : (800) 959-8951

Notes

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