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# AI to add operational and decision-making agility to express logistics

*By optimizing logistics process, AI and ML help companies realign their operations to be in sync with the changing market scenario.*

ETCIO • March 22, 2021, 08:57 IST



By Charles D'Costa

The rapid growth in the express logistics industry in India is majorly fuelled by rapid expansion of the e-commerce segment. And the factors that are helping the express logistics industry meet the new-age customer demand are [artificial intelligence](#) (AI), [machine learning](#) (ML) and [deep analytics](#). The new-age technology adoption has led to a paradigm shift in strategic and operational outlook as well as approach.

The [logistics operations](#) in general and express logistics operations have so far been reactive in approach and the key objective has been only to cater to the market demand. However, the integration of AI and ML has made the entire express logistics operations futuristic, adaptive and responsive to the evolving demand matrix.

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Delivering new-age customers experiences calls for supply chain efficiency powered by predictive analytics. A tech-enabled operational eco-system always leads to enhanced efficiency and profitability. Express logistics operation is essentially time-sensitive and speed is of paramount importance. Hence, adopting AI, ML and deep learning goes a long way in eliminating factors that are beyond control, thus making the movement visible and outcome predictable.

The new-age technology intervention has given rise to an intelligence-driven logistics narrative which enhances human capabilities by automating routine work and channelizing human resources to value-driven goals.

By optimizing logistics process, AI and ML help companies realign their operations to be in sync with the changing market scenario. Analysing data, AI-driven operations can easily adjust to the seasonal fluctuation in order volume. It's a kind of predictable forecasting where customer demand patterns are correctly predicted and virtual truck capacities can be planned from the order placement to the point of sale.

The best part of adopting AI, ML or deep learning is that it empowers the systems and processes to respond promptly to any suddenly developed situation without any human supervision. AI also guides the networked systems and workforce during those evolving situations, thus enhancing the productivity and responsiveness of the operational facilities of an [express logistics framework](#).

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In an express logistics hub, planning, scheduling and controlling the logistics processes such as inwards and outward vehicular movements, warehousing, etc. define its throughput and dwell-time efficiency. AI and ML could become the game changer in such scenarios.

Similarly, deep learning also helps in enhancing operational efficiency. In various developed markets, deep learning is being extensively used in warehouses to determine the shortest route for the pickers. The deep learning mechanism powered by AI algorithms optimizes the picking process to add agility to the operational dynamics.

AI, ML, and deep learning process huge volumes of data to forecast the necessary procedural modification to be adopted, capacity planning to be initiated, supply chain optimisation strategies to be implemented. Such an in-depth predictive analysis identifies patterns in data volume by scrutinising mined data.

Another significant part of the application of AI is predictive maintenance, which eliminates operational or system downtime by pre-empt malfunctioning of key operating equipment. The concept has been successfully implemented in several express logistics facilities in the developed countries. In India, the implementation will gradually gain momentum as the cost of tech equipment is decreasing.

The introduction and adoption of these advanced technologies transform the value chain dynamics of the express logistics industry. With competition getting intensified in the express logistics space, AI, ML, and deep analytics are set to play a key role in adding speed by offering superior transit time and real-time decisions.

The tech-integration helps in multiplying efficiency levels, productivity, and throughput of any logistics facility. Being a consumption-based economy, India offers tremendous growth opportunities for the express logistics. According to study by Deloitte, the domestic express logistics industry is expected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 17% and become a Rs 48,000 crore market by 2023. Such a huge growth spectrum can only be leveraged by companies with new-age tech-driven operational mechanisms.

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