IBM Newsroom

IBM Introduces Sterling Inventory Control Tower to Help Organizations More Effectively Manage Inventory and Build Resilient Supply Chains

Provides End-to-End Visibility and Intelligent Insights to More Effectively Act on Inventory to Meet Actual Demand

ARMONK, N.Y., June 30, 2020 – IBM (NYSE: IBM) today announced the launch of IBM Sterling Inventory Control Tower (ICT) to further help companies manage inventory and build resilient supply chains more effectively. Many companies lack the end-to-end inventory visibility and intelligence needed to effectively predict disruptions, optimize decision-making and mitigate the business impact. IBM Sterling Inventory Control Tower is enabled with AI and is designed to provide insights to see inventory wherever it is, identify and understand the impact of external events to predict disruptions, and take actions based on playbook recommendations to mitigate the upstream and downstream effects. This can allow for faster response to market changes and the delivery of better customer experiences.

Now more than ever, inventory challenges are top of mind across every industry. Supply chain Inventory Control Towers is purpose-built to be used by organizations to get near real-time insights with anticipated use cases such as:

- In grocery stores to expand inventory visibility to see beyond warehouses, including in-store locations and supply in-transit, and keep shelves stocked;
- In hospitals to provide visibility into supply and demand gaps for critical items at PAR locations such as critical lifesaving equipment and supplies, making them available at the right place and time;
- In automotive to get visibility into aftermarket service parts by SKU, and stocking locations across ERP and other systems, to help ensure critical parts are in stock to meet customer expectations.

The purpose-built Sterling Inventory Control Tower can help organizations see, predict and more effectively act on inventory to better predict disruptions, improve resiliency, manage exceptions and respond to unplanned events. Capabilities include:

- **See Inventory Across the Supply Chain.** Correlate data across silos and disparate systems to provide a single inventory view, while quickly detecting internal and external events that could impact inventory. By establishing end-to-end visibility throughout the entire supply chain all the way from raw material availability and supplier order to the “last mile” of customer delivery, businesses can track days of supply by product to customize safety stock reserves by location and reallocate inventory across locations and channels.

- **Predict and Assess Disruptions.** Help businesses by connecting data between a wide array of internal and external sources. Smart-alerts can help quickly detect the most relevant and impactful events so disruptions can be predicted sooner, while data drill down enabled by natural language queries helps to understand and assess the supply chain impact. This can allow businesses to adapt to growing market and customer complexity and meet customer commitments with accurate inventory information and insights.

- **Act to Mitigate Potentially Disruptive Events.** Allow businesses to better collaborate across the supply

chain to quickly respond to unplanned events. The solution's AI-powered virtual Resolution Rooms can provide a collaboration space that can help teams quick convene and identify the root causes of supply chain disruptions and develop the right solutions. Additionally, Digital Playbooks provide guidance on best practices and preserving organizational knowledge to help speed issue resolution over time, while natural language capabilities provide immediate answer to questions, driving greater productivity for a wide range of users.

"The past few months have shown us that what was once considered 'good enough' inventory management may no longer be sufficient. Even as businesses strive to reopen and emerge smarter, inventory remains dynamic because supply, demand and transportation capacity are in flux," said Jeanette Barlow, VP of Offering Management, IBM Sterling. "As a result, some businesses may be losing sales, aggravating customers by over promising, losing margins due to markdowns and expedited shipping charges, carrying excess safety stock, all while limiting their ability to enter new sales channels. Enterprises should embrace advanced technologies such as AI to more effectively act on their inventory across all channels in near real-time, which can help mitigate fluctuations in demand and supply disruptions in order create smarter, innovative and resilient supply chains."

IBM Sterling Inventory Control Tower is part of the IBM Sterling Supply Chain Suite, which includes applications for supplier, order and inventory management, providing connectivity to an extensive ecosystem of customers, suppliers and partners through one of the market's leading multi-enterprise business networks, the IBM Sterling Supply Chain Business Network.

To learn more about the new IBM Sterling Inventory Control Tower read the IBM Sterling blog, "Navigate Supply Chain Disruption with an Inventory Control Tower." To learn more about how to improve supplier collaboration with the recently released IBM Sterling Business Transaction Intelligence solution read the IBM Sterling blog, "What Will it Take to Enable Transparent and Efficient Supplier Collaboration."

About IBM Sterling Supply Chain

IBM Sterling Supply Chain solutions empower IT and supply chain professionals with visibility, transparency and trust to help proactively predict and mitigate disruption, improve B2B information flow, and optimize inventory utilization and fulfillment. Learn how our AI- and blockchain-enabled solutions can help you build an intelligent, self-correcting supply chain at www.ibm.com/supply-chain.

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