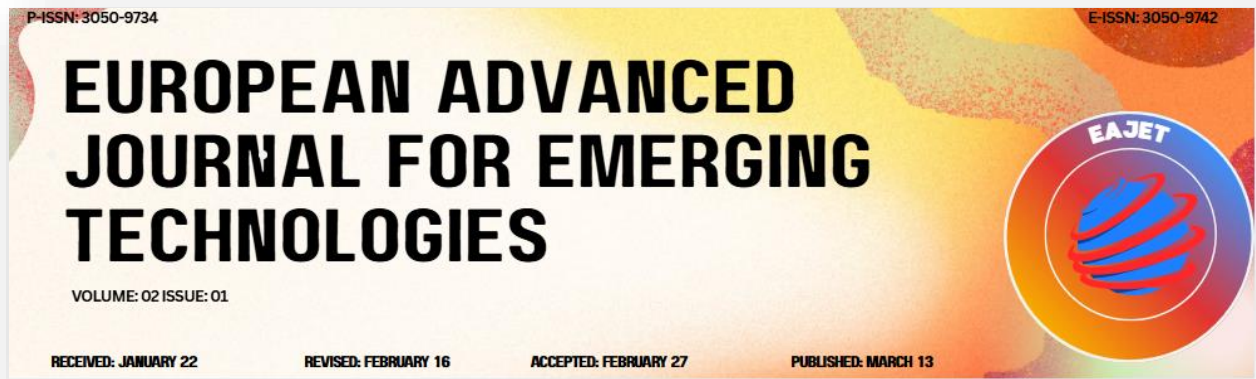




Smart Agents for Sustainable Retail and Paint Supply Chains

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Abstract

Agentic systems are autonomous socio-technical systems that leverage artificial intelligence for more intelligent and tactically effective operation. The educational retail and chemical paint manufacturing industries have significant footprints for education, economic vitality, and environmental impact. Within those industries, agentic artificial intelligence enables supply-chain optimization and promotes sustainability across four dimensions: reduced negative influence on the social environment and community; improved capability for quality service, customer satisfaction, and community engagement; reduced use of non-renewable resources; and reduced risk of failure to meet applicable environment-related regulations.

Realizing the potential of agentic artificial intelligence requires accessible Sensor-to-Decision System of Systems data infrastructure capable of overcoming traditional silos within and among organizations. For the retail industry, the infrastructure supports agentic processes that enhance demand forecasting, inventory, risk of stockout, logistics, and fulfillment by detecting demand signals, understanding customer preferences and price responses, striking a balance between service and cost, minimizing lead time, and applying customer-centric fulfilment policies. Similarly, for the paint industry, the infrastructure enables agentic processes that enhance raw-material supply risk control and formulation transparency by assessing supply risk, cultivating strong supplier-firm relationships, establishing formulation-traceability matrices, exploring substitutes for environmentally harmful substances, monitoring product quality, and ensuring compliance with relevant product-requirement regulations.

Keywords : Agentic AI Decision Systems, Autonomous Supply Chain Optimization, Sustainable Retail Logistics, Green Paint Manufacturing Processes, AI-Driven Demand Forecasting, Carbon Footprint Reduction in Supply Chains, Intelligent Inventory Management, Circular Economy in Manufacturing, Predictive Procurement Analytics, ESG-Compliant Operations Strategy.

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) that supports supply chain activities through simulations, optimization, and predictive task automation is well understood, but applications of agentic AI that leverage data control, decision autonomy, and action capabilities are still being explored. Research in this area is of particular relevance to retail, where consumables may remain on store shelves for months at a time, as well as to paint manufacturing, where a product may

have a lifetime in years and stockouts can be avoided by creating different formulations based on available raw materials. Sustainable practices are essential in these sectors; retailers can contribute significantly to GHG emission reduction by lowering food spoilage and waste, while paint producers can improve product transparency and consumer safety by restricting the use of potentially dangerous substances.

Existing literature on the implications of agentic AI in supply chains lacks studies that consider networks of

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heterogeneous systems running on distributed data infrastructures and decision-autonomous systems acting in real time. Addressing this research gap necessitates the formulation of specific research questions; in this case, the objectives are to illustrate how agentic AI enables sustainable optimization of data-driven demand forecasting and inventory management in retail supply chains, as well as risk assessment and supplier collaboration in paint manufacturing supply chains.

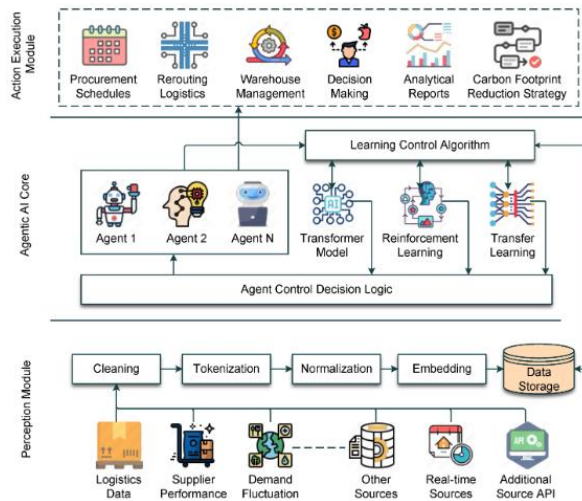


Fig 1: Intelligent Supply Chain Process Automation with Agentic AI

1.1. Background and Significance

Agentic AI provides real-time visibility of supply chain operations down to the component level and enables agents in the supply chain to achieve their own short-term goals while helping maintain accomplishment of the objectives of the supply chain as a whole. Such capability can help optimize sustainability metrics on a continuous basis without continual human oversight. Demand Forecasting and Inventory Management modules are proposed for Retail supply chains and Raw Material Sourcing and Formulation Transparency for Paint Manufacturing supply chains.

Supply chains provide a substantial proportion of retail sector carbon footprints and Brand Owners have committed to Net Zero emissions for Global Value Chains by 2040. Unsustainable replenishment of natural resources and failure to maintain a clean environment could lead to extinction of the human species and Agentic AIs can therefore be deployed to optimize a combination of such metrics such as Stockout Rate, Customer-Centric Fulfilment, and Lead Time. Enabling Supply Chain Agents adopt sustainable Supply Chain decisions at execution levels requires intelligent synthesis of Sourcing & Demand Data, collaboration with Suppliers for eco-efficient raw materials, Facilities, Packing, Waste Management, or Sourcing Product Components from Suppliers closer to consuming Markets.

Equation 1: Basic “signal + noise” demand model

Let demand at time t be:

$$D_t = \underbrace{\mu_t}_{\text{baseline}} + \sum_{k=1}^K \underbrace{\beta_k x_{k,t}}_{\text{external/internal signals}} + \underbrace{\varepsilon_t}_{\text{noise}}$$

Step-by-step

1. Start with baseline: $D_t \approx \mu_t$
2. Add explanatory signals (POS, holidays, promotions, web searches, weather, etc.):

$$D_t \approx \mu_t + \sum_k \beta_k x_{k,t}$$

3. Add irreducible uncertainty:

$$D_t = \mu_t + \sum_k \beta_k x_{k,t} + \varepsilon_t$$

2. Theoretical Foundations of Agentic Artificial Intelligence in Supply Chains

Two coherent streams of research integrate agentic AI and supply chain management: substantive, decision-making

capabilities empowered by emerging technologies and mechanisms of governance that shape the exercise of those capabilities. Agentic AI performs decentralized decision-making through socio-technical systems of intelligent, interconnected, communicative entities dynamically empowered with specialized, data-driven knowledge tailored to execute specific tasks. This research extends the dialogue by proposing a conceptual framework that draws upon theories of agentic AI, governance, decision autonomy, and socio-technical systems to construct a model that illuminates the role of decision autonomy in supply chain governance and facilitates simultaneous alignment of agentic AI systems with supply-chain-specific metrics for economic, environmental, and cultural sustainability.

The preceding stream of research focuses on the challenges of specifying authoritative rules governing agentic AI actors and aligning their decisions with broader organizational objectives. Supply chains function as networks whose nodes generally must satisfy the competing demands of multiple supply chain partners. A modified market transaction governance framework articulates the nature of supply chain autonomy and risk incentives. Building upon that infrastructure, agentic AI-Supply Chain Governance (AI-SCG) Theory proposes a system-level, time-invariant supervisory mechanism that enables supply chains to operate autonomously while remaining aligned with prescribed quality, cost, speed, resilience, and security parameters. AI-SCG Theory is further extended to process industries by integrating the classical strategy-logistics-inventory triad with agentic AI concepts that cluster an industry's agentic AI capabilities around model-, rule-, and metric-based decision-making for simultaneous supply-side and demand-side sustainability.



Fig 2: Agentic AI in Supply Chain for Smarter Operations

2.1. Research design

The first synthetic agentic AI decision-making in supply chains leverages horizon scanning for demand sensing, predicts demand elasticity across segments, and addresses inventory-related issues by automating demand replenishment elevation and quantity on specific e-commerce partners based on forecasted stockouts and lead time considerations. Future work will investigate customer-centric demand fulfillment with order-splitting and reducing safety stock levels while ensuring sustainable service levels. Together, these initiatives create a retail supply chain capable of gaining and sustaining customer trust.

Agentic AI-enabled solutions are being developed to analyze supply-side risks and formulate transparency in paint industry supply chains. Such contributions evaluate the supply risk levels of non-category-specific goods, create a new supplier collaboration platform for high-supply-risk products, enable traceability of formulation disclosures, outline qualimetrics-based raw material substitution strategies, leverage data-driven simulations for smarter quality control, foster formulation lifetime transparency, and gauge material circularity.

Equation 2: Constant-elasticity demand curve

Assume ϵ is constant and negative (usual retail):

$$Q(P) = Q_0 \left(\frac{P}{P_0} \right)^e$$

Derivation

1. Start from $e = \frac{dQ}{dP} \frac{P}{Q}$

2. Rearrange:

$$\frac{dQ}{Q} = e \frac{dP}{P}$$

3. Integrate both sides:

$$\int \frac{dQ}{Q} = e \int \frac{dP}{P} \Rightarrow \ln Q = e \ln P + C$$

4. Exponentiate:

$$Q = e^C P^e$$

5. Use anchor point (P_0, Q_0) : $Q_0 = e^C P_0^e \Rightarrow e^C = \frac{Q_0}{P_0^e}$

6. Substitute:

$$Q(P) = Q_0 \left(\frac{P}{P_0} \right)^e$$

3. Methodologies for Sustainable Optimization in Retail and Paint Manufacturing

Empirical evidence indicates that the full-spectrum enhancement of business operations and global impact is possible only by combining both quantitative and qualitative or interpretative approaches. This requires the presence of an infrastructure capable of serving an entire supply chain, compatible with both quantitative- and qualitative-oriented

approaches, and covering the whole supply chain, considering the interactions of all the agents involved in it.

Data for the retail supply chain are retrieved from several sources. Demand- and inventory-level data are provided by a supermarket chain, whose duty of business intelligence includes the collection of external data; these data cover exchange-rate fluctuations, food-price index, and consumer-confidence developments in several categories. Other data sources cover electronic payment transaction totals (an indicator of overall consumption) as well as exchange-rate developments that are especially relevant for the veneer sector. News agencies and other kind of press release provide information on special events affecting demand in the supermarket. Quality control for Agentic AI transparency combined with the interest of consumers in the source of information behind products' quality and environmental impacts are the basis for the demand-sensing model used to improve Fulfillment Efficiency. Several elasticity-calibration approaches have been considered, ensuring also that some key-sector elasticities are comparable over time. The main advances of the new dynamic/incremental technology-cum-transport-cost-reduction alternatives are stockouts avoidance, lead-time reduction and safety-stock calculation.

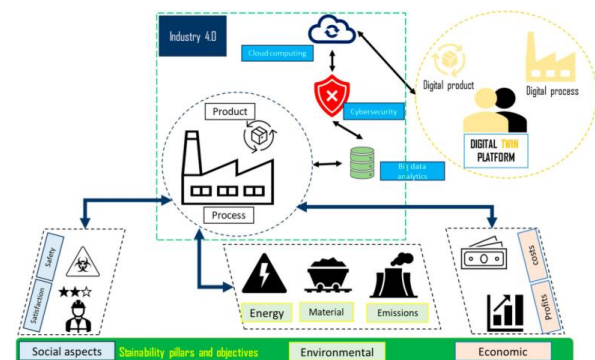
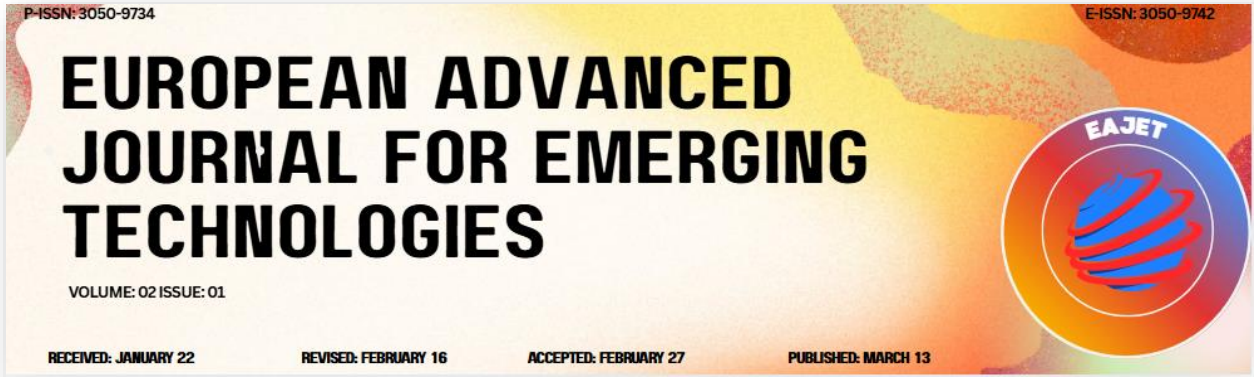


Fig 3: Enabled Sustainable Manufacturing

3.1. Data Infrastructure and interoperability

Agentic AI-Enabled Sustainable Supply Chain Optimization



in Retail and Paint Manufacturing: an objective, evidence-based examination with formal structure and clear, scholarly argumentation.

Data sources encompass market demand and competitive supply offer data, business management data, sustainability compliance data, and information from knowledge sources, producers, and consumers. Data interoperability is ensured by information systems standards such as the Open Geospatial Consortium, the Open Group, the W3C Data on the Web Best Practices recommendation, ISO 25012, and ISO/IEC 27040, with particular attention to data quality and the use of suitable ontologies. Onto-sharing provides the means for one information system to use data or information generated by other information systems. Formal ontologies give optimal data-computing interpretation for heterogeneous and distributed SCs of different levels of development.

Data integration and accessibility method architectures can be described as follows: the agentic model layer serves as a common interface connecting semi-autonomous agents residing in the agent-periphery infrastructure with the enterprise-data-cloud closures. Web-services-oriented data access and querying systems support the combination of agentic SC-shared data with static, highly qualitative, ready-to-use business environment data and SC pilots of standard operations. The SCS and SC-integrated route-tracing-support layers support SC operations performed with high DS quality and during SC-shared risk periods through multi-layer-DS-semantic queries and through the interaction of autonomous SC-operations-design agent systems. Agent-based and MAS-based social-emulation environments enable dynamic social-emulation analyses of social-base changes and processes with historical-calibrated or controlled-setting data and for SC-development-and-resilience-stimulation applications.

Equation 3: Lead-time demand distribution

Assume daily demand is i.i.d. normal:

$$D \sim \mathcal{N}(\mu_d, \sigma_d^2)$$

Lead time is L days (fixed). Lead-time demand is:

$$D_L = \sum_{i=1}^L D_i$$

Step-by-step mean

$$\mathbb{E}[D_L] = \sum_{i=1}^L \mathbb{E}[D_i] = \sum_{i=1}^L \mu_d = L\mu_d = \mu_L$$

Step-by-step variance

If independent:

$$\text{Var}(D_L) = \sum_{i=1}^L \text{Var}(D_i) = \sum_{i=1}^L \sigma_d^2 = L\sigma_d^2$$

So:

$$\sigma_L = \sqrt{L} \sigma_d$$

4. Agentic AI in Retail Supply Chains

Models supporting supply chain risk management, governance, and compliance with regulations (López-Muñoz, 2020) cover data privacy and security aspects. These include types of risk, governance frameworks, fulfillment-related constraints, compliance with regulations, auditability and ethical considerations, and resilience strategies that ensure adequate systems behavior even during crises.

In retail supply chains, agentic AI supports demand forecasting and inventory management by advancing foundational data synthesis and mart creation (Duran et al., 2023). Demand sensing models include location- and product-specific elasticities estimated from external data

sources; dynamic replenishment policies minimize disutility due to stockouts and incoming-order delays; and safety stock levels mitigate shortages. Customer-centric fulfillment is fostered by systematically simulating virtual stockouts and enabling backordering.

In paint manufacturing supply chains, agentic AI enhances supply risk management and formulation transparency, thus promoting responsible sourcing practices. Automating supply risk assessment leverages the calculation of risk-related metrics and allows supplier performance to be monitored by means of configurable dashboards. Supplier collaboration supports supply diversification and avoids exposures to key raw material providers; formulation transparency is achieved through a combination of control-chart-based quality verification, dynamic substitution of out-of-spec ingredients, and machine-learning-driven models predicting formulation sensory properties; and quality-related product information is communicated through suitable QR codes embedded in product packaging.

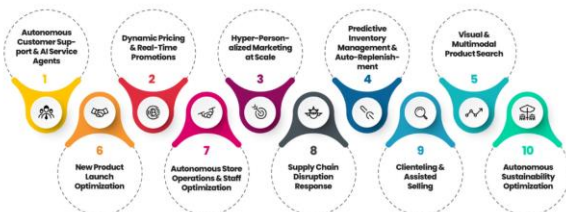


Fig 4: Agentic AI in Retail

4.1. Demand Forecasting and Inventory Management

Models for demand forecasting, inventory control, and related activities in retail supply chains are prevalent in the literature. However, progress could be accelerated significantly if a broader range of models were developed and made available in an interoperable format. Selected advances within this domain therefore follow.

Demand Sensing. The recently introduced concept of demand sensing applies advanced data techniques (most

notably big data and AI) to improve the accuracy of near-term forecasts as a basis for executing daily replenishment activities. Demand sensing models draw on heterogeneous internal and external data sources, notably POS data from multiple stores, social media, and web-search data.

Demand Elasticity. As discounts are frequent in consumer goods industries, the price elasticity of demand is a key parameter for maximizing revenue and profit from promotional activities. A new model for demand elasticity as a function of promotions and other variables has been developed. Based on causal inference, estimated price elasticity can be integrated into retailer promotion decisions using yield-management techniques.

Dynamic Replenishment. Stock replenishment decisions are broadly classified into either time-based (e.g., daily replenishment based on demand-sensing) or volume-based (e.g., based on forecasted demand). New models using a hybrid approach examine both type of decisions holistically. By also modeling other relevant demand and supply parameters, strong and weak correlation patterns emerge, together with tailored roles and responsibilities.

5. Agentic AI in Paint Manufacturing Supply Chains

The agentic optimization of paint manufacturing supply chains encompasses critical aspects of supply raw material sourcing, formulation transparency, production quality, waste minimization, vehicular emissions, and toxicity. Agentic AI enables real-time support for collaborative supply risk assessments with different suppliers, focusing on disruptive events such as critical material shortages or environmental catastrophes in supplier regions. Agentic supply chains promote a deeper partnership with suppliers, seeking shared objectives rather than traditional win-loss negotiations. A focused agentic AI initiative with selected suppliers can implement a secure data exchange network, quantitative sourcing strategy for alternatives, and

dashboards for sharing qualitative findings, driving product innovations.

Transparency increasingly characterizes customers' preferences when selecting product brands. Agentic AI facilitates formulation transparency throughout the product development life cycle, allowing the formulation label to accurately reflect sourcing, production, and distribution practices. A common data network—built upon regulatory, customer base, and supply base requirements—acts as the foundation for the assessment of each formulation chemical during RFQ formulation approval and provides the basis for product label compliance. Agentic AI addresses two challenges that hinder lifecycle transparency: organizations' limited ability to manage extensive supplier and product-related datasets and the management of non-disclosure-protected information in a business-network context.

The segregation of formulations into core and non-core categories leads to prioritized monitoring. Cycle-time transparency, with both suppliers and customers, can likewise be achieved. Respective checklists for vehicles, spare parts, and packaging wastes drive waste-reduction initiatives. Agentic AI additionally tackles risks arising from toxic content in formulations that exceed customers' tolerable thresholds by emphasizing the discovery of alternatives during RFQ formulation approval. By monitoring dedicated suppliers for locally produced alternatives, agentic pain-AI may ultimately develop a product portfolio free from toxic agents. The comprehensive management of painted product safety certificates and claims across time, regulatory bodies, and territories rounds out the understanding of formulations' product safety status across their lifecycle.

Equation 4: Safety stock for cycle service level (CSL)

Let CSL be the probability of **no stockout during lead time**:

$$CSL = \Pr(D_L \leq ROP)$$

Assume $D_L \sim \mathcal{N}(\mu_L, \sigma_L^2)$. Standardize:

$$\begin{aligned} \Pr(D_L \leq ROP) &= \Pr\left(\frac{D_L - \mu_L}{\sigma_L} \leq \frac{ROP - \mu_L}{\sigma_L}\right) \\ &= \Phi\left(\frac{ROP - \mu_L}{\sigma_L}\right) \end{aligned}$$

Set $\Phi(\cdot) = CSL$. Let $z = \Phi^{-1}(CSL)$. Then:

$$\frac{ROP - \mu_L}{\sigma_L} = z \Rightarrow ROP = \mu_L + z\sigma_L$$

Define safety stock:

$$SS = z\sigma_L$$

So:

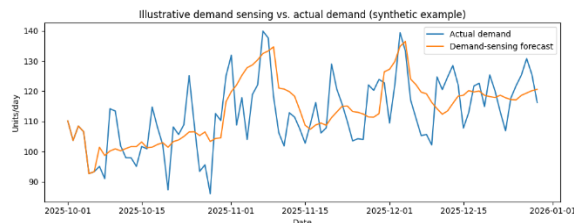
$$ROP = \mu_L + SS$$

5.1. Raw Material Sourcing and Formulation Transparency

In paint manufacturing supply chains, an agentic AI approach enhances raw material sourcing and formulation transparency through several models. A supply risk assessment model captures risks in sourcing from low-scoring or high-risk-impact regions, and a supplier collaboration model manages supplier engagement during crises. Formulation traceability and material substitution models ensure formulation transparency for brands and customers. Quality control appoints auditors or lab testers and traces quality over time. A product lifecycle transparency model tracks batches through production, distribution, and customer ownership for complete circularity information.

Agentic AI enhances supply chain risk management at both the enterprise and supply levels. Recent crises have showcased the fragility of global supply chains, particularly due to over-reliance on a few suppliers. Although uncertainty is inherent in manufacturing, reducing

vulnerability can improve resilience. Establishing proper second- and third-sourcing options is challenging due to quality concerns, and shocks can create demand spikes that lead to stockouts. Technology-enabled collaboration emerges as an effective strategy, allowing manufacturers and brands to jointly audit supplier production conditions and estimate actual raw material availability. Sharing long-term sales projections enables accurate forecasts and the establishment of quality-acceptable secondary suppliers. During extreme demand spikes, transparency in sourcing and material substitution can mitigate risks. When built as an agentic AI-enabled socio-technical system the agentic AI component supports organizations in managing data privacy—both directly by detecting data privacy leaks, managing data retention, detecting excessive information, and suggesting ways to address detected issues—management also by providing the risk profile of the data stored in the agentic AI-enabled system, privacy risk assessments, suggestions to implement DPIAs, and numerous additional supporting elements.



6. Risk Management, Governance, and Compliance

Data privacy, security, and compliance are increasingly important considerations for organizations across industry sectors. Multiple trends and events are intensifying the need for regulations, frameworks, and technology for better data governance. Consumer data privacy is of heightened concern, as social media, hacking, leaks, and big tech companies occupy the news headlines. A number of countries have enacted, are enacting, or are proposing

initiatives to regulate consumer data use and disclosures. Organizations have been taking steps to implement new legislation, but awareness of many global, regional, and national regulations is limited. Maintaining privacy and ensuring compliance can be both complex and costly, particularly for companies processing data across various jurisdictions.

Risk management is crucial for any organization, especially large enterprises that rely on data for their operations. Risks include insufficient or poor-quality data records as well as insider or external threats. Consequently, adhering to regulations becomes even more important, with many organizations being subjected to security policies from other organizations with which they interact.

Achieving regulatory compliance adds to the overall risk management burden. Organizations must comply with data protection legislation that regulates the privacy and data security of their data. Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) are an aspect of legislation that map an organization's operations against a list of potential risks and identify steps to mitigate these risks. DPIAs are also a regulatory requirement for organizations that operate in certain regions.

Equation 5: Paint manufacturing: Substitution / formulation decision (constraints)

Let formulation require components $j = 1..m$ with target bounds:

- concentration x_j
- required: $l_j \leq x_j \leq u_j$
- total: $\sum_j x_j = 1$

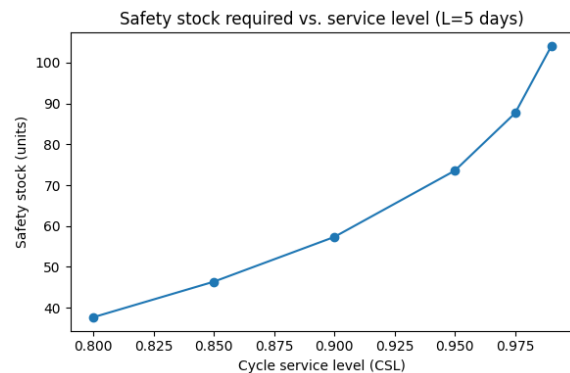
If a hazardous substance must be below threshold T :

$$\sum_{j \in H} x_j \leq T$$

6.1. Data Privacy and Security in Agentic Systems

Data privacy and security are critical in agentic supply chain systems with autonomous decision-making capabilities that are designed for business objectives. Typical risk types cover product safety, ambient pollution, data privacy, confidentiality and integrity, security of actors involved, human safety, and economic loss. Risk management frameworks are needed to evaluate the probability and severity of such risks throughout the supply chain and to assign ownership, responsibility, and accountability. These typically cover prevention, detection, mitigation, transfer, escalation, and acceptance. A risk-informed governance framework examines supply chain activity and information dependencies, demand changes, threat landscape change, detected violations, and privacy breaches. Autonomous control without human intervention raises inherent ethical issues, and ethical and reputational risks are incorporated.

Data privacy and security is a critical concern of any system that electronically supports trading or that enables access of human users to their private data, either in storage or during transactions. Hence, agentic systems must comply with relevant data privacy and protection regulations (e.g. GDPR) and employ security measures to ensure that the appropriate data is accessible only to the right actors at the right time and that the data is not modified, deleted, or leaked to bad actors. User provisioning, both for customers and for agents, is critical. Users must be identifiable to the system, preferably through some authentication mechanism, using a standard that integrates well with other existing systems for user authentication and access control. External auditability is required.



7. Conclusion

Research findings suggest that agentic AI can enable sustainable supply chain optimization in retail and paint manufacturing. Demand-sensing models with sell-out data support customer-centric fulfillment and drive optimization of stockouts, lead times, and safety stock, while elasticity-based dynamic replenishment reduces overstock. In paint manufacturing, lifecycle transparency and QRM considerations mitigate supply risks, and a detailed framework addresses formulation safety and formulation transparency to build customer trust. Methodologically, a multi-faceted mix of quantitative, qualitative, simulation, and optimization techniques, underpinned by quality data infrastructure, empowers examination of complex supply chain problems. Agentic AI-based Supply Chain Automation Platform—a locally developed next-generation agentic AI framework—focuses on demand forecasting and inventory management in retail supply chains, encompassing demand sensing, replenishment, stockout avoidance, lead-time reduction, safety-stock optimization, and customer-centric fulfillment. Agentic AI-enabled optimization methods also support raw material sourcing, supply risk assessment, supplier collaboration, formulation safety, quality control, and lifecycle transparency in paint manufacturing supply chains.

Future directions extend lead-time-padding and stockout-avoidance models to the apparel industry, examine risk-governance privacy and security measures for AI-based systems, and investigate agentic AI integration with the evolving multi-system Web3. Agentic AI demonstrates scalability across supply chains and wide applicability in business domains supported by Agentic AI-based Supply Chain Automation Platform.

Cycle service level (CSL)	z (normal quantile)	Lead-time SD (σ_L)	Safety stock (SS)
0.8	0.842	44.72	37.6
0.85	1.036	44.72	46.4
0.9	1.282	44.72	57.3
0.95	1.645	44.72	73.6
0.975	1.96	44.72	87.7
0.99	2.326	44.72	104.0

Table: Safety stock and reorder point table (illustrative)

7.1. Future Directions

Towards practical implementation, a coherent technology and data architecture is needed, empowering enterprises to optimally define data points, orchestration models, and collaboration patterns enabling agentic functionality at every operational level. tangible benefits emerge from combining multiple optimization configurations, as illustrated for a service retailer emphasizing elasticity in product demand and keeping stockouts and lead time to a minimum while a semiconductor supplier prioritizes sustainability in the ESG dimensions of TBL. management information systems are essential, ensuring reliability of data published for operational, evaluative, and marketing purposes. AGI can support further academic research as agentic functionality

expands to other governance structures. Scalability progresses in parallel with the design of realistic process networks capable of executing agentic functions at all echelons. for retail the focus is on demand sensing, continuous elasticity forecasting, dynamic minimum order quantity replenishment, freight demand management, and safety stock level adjustment; while for paints, supporting element production simulation enables raw material supply risk assessment, rectification of exposure through supplier-enabled composition inspection, commodity substitution, use of operational quality control to satisfy customer specification even on formulates under supplier transparency control, and disclosure of ingredient sustainability credentials for product lifecycle marketing.

Finally, rooting AGI in threshold and performance index political economy broadens future investigation, exploring demand advisement, local product offering adjustments, and production quantity distribution. the dimensioning of supply channel networks and fulfilment centres mapped through TBLs in feed-forward supply chain models for demand uncertain and price elastic products implementing distributed patronage can also incorporate resource-oriented general equilibrium modelling of extensive product portfolios. Further AFI adoption of agentic tool implementation will be made feasible through the qualitative insights generated by process explorations, defining what-all and how can be truly achieved with all-theory agentic technologies.

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