**ETHICAL AND SECURITY ISSUES WITH TECHNOLOGY IN REVERSE LOGISTICS**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Globally, technology has played a significant role in supporting firms to focus on new markets for their growth. However, customers' needs are satisfied when the goods reach them in good condition. Recently, there has been an increased use of e-commerce platforms where customers interact with their companies through virtual means. Through these platforms, the companies receive the customer's order(s), some pay for the goods online while others wait to pay for delivery. As a result, the company is in full accountability of the goods till they are delivered. Thus, they incur transportation costs, any damages that may occur, and losses if the customer fails to accept the products. The need for effective logistics comes in that it ensures smooth transactions between the company and its customers. Logistics is crucial because it provides the firm with all the information in the market and understands the customer's needs. Competing firms in the market are embracing reverse logistics for diversification purposes. Reverse logistics involves product movement from the end user to the manufacturer (Shah et al., 2019). It allows recycling, reusing, or collecting defective products for customers. This paper will discuss the security and ethical issues related to reverse logistics.

**Information Security Issues**

Several security concerns arise in reverse logistics. Most security issues result from tracing the reverse units' value (Bajar et al., 2022). The total amount of the returned item can be lower than that of the placement. This minimizes the total profits of the firm. Regarding defective goods, the firm lacks a precise value that it may write in its bookkeeping records. However, the matter cannot be zero as the company may replace some sub-components. Therefore, firms need to note the relative usability of any product to enhance their tracing and security. In addition, third parties engaging in reverse logistics should receive an adequate selection. For instance, suppliers offer some warrants based on the product's nature. Using modern technological software, a firm can claim payments from the supplier for the returned poor-quality items when the warranty has not lapsed.

Another issue is the potential loss of clients when a firm works with subcontractors who can interact directly with customers. The logistics software considers the nature and quality of the business connection between the contractors and the company. This is essential to support the contractors to first deal with the items needing repairs without reaching the suppliers or manufacturers, such as automobile customers. The software tracks the replacement processes where quality products are advanced, and those parts with defects are returned. It is crucial to have set days when contractors to transit defective products to the manufacturers. This will ensure the company has a proper inventory record for accurate financial records.

Losing client loyalty is a security issue that arises in reverse logistics. Customers are always on the lookout where their needs will be met with satisfaction. Some clients may be reluctant to buy from the company without proper customer service. Consumers should be able to make returns without too much trouble to maintain customer loyalty. In addition, customers have expectations that goods will not be damaged upon return. Therefore, sufficient packaging is also necessary for customer satisfaction. Building trust with customers through efficient return systems is essential for firms to maintain high customer satisfaction and loyalty.

**Ethical Responsibilities and Considerations**

As observed above, reverse logistics involves several things to maximize the customer experience. For example, returning defective items, saving costs, item recall, and protecting the environment. To help in doing so, some ethics must be observed.

***Supporting a sustainable environment***

Firms must observe ethical responsibility to keep the environment clean. For instance, hazardous sprays are used to assemble vehicles in the automobile industry. When automobiles' lifespan ends, most products are disposed of carelessly in the environment, which has health concerns for society. The aquatic life is destroyed when practices products are disposed of in the water bodies. Additionally, the waste products destroy the aesthetic appearance of the land. An effective reverse logistics procedure should allow these products to be recycled by the manufacturers. Waste products get recycled to make other valuable household items, resulting in a sustainable environment.

***Intra-organization element***

It is a concern that one company cannot attain a sustainable environment solely. Therefore, it calls upon the companies around society to come together and uphold ethical and environmental standards. Each company is mandated to support philosophies that promote the safety of its end users (Makaleng & Lambert, 2022). In addition, logistics get influences the firm's stakeholders. For instance, the government controls the policies that guide the firm's operations. In consideration of product recall, firms should put in place adequate resources to correct products with anomalies and poor quality. They may refurbish the returned items to upgrade their value and restore the minimal challenges.

***Ethical commitments promotion***

Reverse logistics is bound to ensure that jobs in the community are preserved. Even though there has been an increase in technology that can replace some of the steps in reverse logistics; still, the ethical standards require them to avoid depleting the supply chain jobs. Therefore, the standard stipulates that the origin should be from the customer to the distributor, who takes it to the manufacturer. Before the product gets back to the manufacturer, it has been handled by several people. It may get damaged more than initially, resulting in a dilemma between the supply chain stakeholders and the firms on whether to overlook them in returning defective items. Any return is considered an additional cost to the system, and therefore the manufacturers should offer funds to support the movement of the things through the supply chain. Ethically, firms must recall all cheap products from the market despite the costs to be incurred additionally. Also, the standards hold that companies must only provide items that offer value to their hard-earned money.

**CONCLUSION**

Reverse logistics allows end-users to return faulty items to the manufacturer's company, enabling firms to obtain unused products from the customer and recycle and reuse them. As discussed in the paper, reverse logistics face some security issues, such as tracing the reverse unit's value, the potential to lose clients after working with subcontractors, and losing customers' loyalty. Additionally, there are ethical concerns to ensure that environment where the firm is located is preserved and given a better aesthetic value. Also, there are jobs for the society members. Firms that observe these ethical standards and embrace high professionalism and integrity remain competitive.

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