How to Protect your Business’s Supply Chain From Being Disrupted

One of the easiest ways for a business to gain an advantage over rivals is to cut selling costs and increase profit margins. Businesses can reduce these costs by finding ways to move products from point A to point B in the least costly manner. This network of moving products from the organization to the customer is called a Supply Chain; it involves the business itself, the manufacturer of the product, warehouse centers to hold the product, and stores that ultimately sell it to everyday customers. Each network is vulnerable to many different problems that can drive up the cost of moving products. Most businesses devote resources to forecasting how many customers will buy their product so they can produce enough to sell, as well as planning how many drivers are needed to get orders to the stores quickly, but most of them do not expend much energy planning for rare events that could potentially disable their supply chain network for a period of time.

This study is necessary because there is very little prior research available to guide firms in protecting their supply chain against rare disasters. These events could be anything from a wild fire burning up a warehouse full of products, to a hacker getting into the company’s computer system and downloading a virus. Different industries have various exposure levels to these incidents and some industries face much greater exposure risks than others. Most of the currently available research does not provide the means to identify industry specific risk levels, or how to react to these risks once they are defined. My focus will be on several leading industries including: Health Care, Energy, Manufacturing, and Technology.
Through this thesis, I will examine scholarly articles to identify trends specific to these top industries. I will also develop a handbook that outlines the best practices for handling potentially harmful situations for each industry. Covered by my study will be able to review material relevant to their industry and survey possible scenarios that could disrupt their supply chain. This deliverable will provide a practical resource guide available to companies concerned with protecting their supply chain.