

## **The Global Impact of Container Inventory Imbalance and the Factors that Influence Container Inventory Management Strategies**

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### **Abstract**

Container shipping celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2016, as an innovation that had a tremendous impact on the global supply chain. This paper focuses on the impact of container inventory imbalance that mounts a substantial pressure on global supply chains. The primary objective of this paper is to explore best market practices and ascertain as to what factors influence these strategies. It also evaluates the impact of container inventory imbalance to the global supply chain. The study refers to interviews with industry experts and questionnaire responses from shipping lines operated in Sri Lanka in addition to the desk research to explain the impact of the container inventory problem in the global scale. If carriers provide the right quantity of containers demanded by exporters at the right location at the right time, the optimum supply chain performance could be guaranteed. The consequences of container fleet imbalances are ultimately borne by exporters, importers, consumers, traders and even—inadvertently—other players in the cargo supply chain of international trade. Therefore, carriers need an effective solution to the global container inventory imbalance problem.

**Keywords:** Container Inventory Imbalance, Freight, Forecasting, Flexibility, Strategy