



Warehousing insight paper 2025

# Sales Playbook







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## Core narrative

The modern warehouse is no longer a static cost centre. It must evolve into an intelligent, resilient, and sustainable hub for businesses and become a strategic platform for growth, resilience, and differentiation.

This paper examines the forces reshaping the warehousing landscape, from geopolitical shifts, and the urgent need for sustainable operations, to the increasing requirements for digital transformation, alongside evolving labour dynamics.

This convergence of forces necessitates a shift, for organisations to change their view of their warehouses from tactical necessity, to a true business differentiator and a cornerstone of their supply chain and business resilience.

What is the fundamental shift?	Why now?
<b>From:</b> Operational excellence (low cost, high efficiency).  <b>To:</b> Strategic foresight (resilience, digital integration, circularity).	Geopolitical shifts (nearshoring), customer expectation inflation (e-commerce), labour shortages, and urgent sustainability mandates.



# Key takeaways

The key takeaways and messaging from the paper are that the warehousing landscape of the future will be shaped by accelerating trends and emerging technologies, leading to significant shifts in where value is created and captured.

1

## Hyper-personalisation of fulfillment

The "segment of one" customer expectation, tailored experiences and offers, will extend into the warehouse.

- **AI-driven micro-fulfilment:** Proliferation of highly-localised, automated hubs powered by AI to enable hyper-fast, personalised deliveries, reducing lead times.
- **Predictive inventory placement:** AI and machine learning prescribing optimal inventory placement across the network at a granular SKU level, anticipating customer needs before orders are placed, minimising safety stock.
- **Dynamic routing & delivery modalities:** Integration of last-mile drones, autonomous vehicles, and dynamic route optimisation for hyper-efficient, eco-friendly delivery.

3

## Sustainability as a core profit driver

Environmental stewardship will move beyond compliance to become a core value proposition, integral to long-term financial health.

- **Net-zero warehouses:** The aspiration for facilities to have a net-zero carbon footprint, achieved through 100% renewable energy, advanced energy storage (batteries), and smart energy management systems.
- **Circular economy hubs:** Warehouses designed as central hubs for the circular economy, actively participating in reverse logistics for product repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing, and recycling.
- **Sustainable logistics networks:** AI-optimised routing, electric vehicle fleets, and intermodal transport integration to dramatically reduce the carbon footprint of inbound and outbound logistics (Scope 3 emissions reductions).

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## Cybersecurity as a foundation for resilience

As warehouses become more interconnected and reliant on data, cybersecurity will be the non-negotiable bedrock for operational integrity and resilience.

- **Holistic cyber-physical security:** Integrated strategies to protect not just data and networks, but also automated systems and physical access points from sophisticated cyber threats.
- **Blockchain for data integrity and trust:** Extending immutable ledger capabilities to secure sensitive inventory data, track compliance, and prevent fraud across multi-party supply chains.

2

## The rise of the 'cognitive warehouse'

Beyond automation, the future warehouse will be truly intelligent and self-optimising.

- **Digital twins as the operational brain:** Creating real-time virtual replicas of the entire operation for continuous simulation, predictive maintenance, and autonomous problem-solving.
- **Pervasive sensor networks:** Every asset, product, and movement will be digitally tracked, creating a real-time data lake that feeds AI algorithms for continuous improvement and transparency.
- **Autonomous decision-making:** AI managing and optimising warehouse workflows with minimal human intervention, proactively identifying efficiencies and resolving minor issues.

4

## Ecosystem integration and warehouse-as-a-service

The boundaries between physical warehouses, digital platforms, and logistics partners will blur, creating highly integrated and flexible networks.

- **Integrated interoperability:** Seamless integration across WMS, TMS, ERP, e-commerce platforms, and external logistics providers to enable real-time data exchange.
- **Robotics-as-a-Service (RaaS):** Lowering the barrier to entry for automation, enabling more companies to use advanced robotics without significant upfront capital expenditure.
- **Shared user models:** The rise of flexible, multi-tenant warehouse models that allow for dynamic allocation of space and resources, enhancing supply chain resilience.



# Message house

This section provides the necessary messaging, proof points, and conversational starters to engage leads on the paper's three core themes.





## Pillar 1: Supply chain resilience & de-risking

Key messaging	Proof point	Pain point focus	Conversational phrasing
Build adaptive networks: Mitigate geopolitical and climate risks by moving from hyper-optimisation to robust, strategic redundancy.	The shift to nearshoring/reshoring demands increased domestic/regional warehousing capacity and multi-node networks (Page 2)	How is the fragility of global supply chains (e.g., Red Sea tensions, regional conflicts) currently impacting inventory costs and lead times?	"We help you move away from vulnerable single points of failure by making your supply network modular, adaptable, and closer to consumption."
Safeguard: Use technology to anticipate, model, and mitigate disruption before it hits.	Reliance on Digital Twins is key to simulating disruption impacts and optimising mitigation strategies (JIT Automotive section, Page 11).	Does the business have the data and modelling capability to truly understand the cost and impact of an unplanned 48-hour disruption?	"We can implement the systems needed to model risk and automatically pivot to alternative supply chain solutions when core routes fail."



## Pillar 2: Sustainable & circular operations

Key messaging	Proof point	Pain point focus	Conversational phrasing
Sustainability as a profit driver: Evolve beyond mere compliance by creating new value streams through circularity and resource efficiency.	Warehouses contribute ~15% of overall supply chain emissions - it's an essential focus for significant carbon savings (Page 8).	Beyond reporting compliance, how are warehouses actively designed to be Circular Economy Hubs that create new revenue streams?	"By turning reverse logistics into repair, refurbishment, and recycling processes, your warehouse becomes a revenue stream, extending product lifecycles and protecting your operating margin."
Achieve net-zero intelligently: Target net-zero goals through advanced energy management, not just expensive CapEx.	Tools like Energy Insight (EI.) deliver real-time data, predictive insight, and action guided by human experts to drive better decisions and bigger savings (Page 10).	Is the current energy monitoring giving businesses the real-time, auditable data needed to satisfy increasingly strict ESG reporting requirements?	"We ensure your sustainability investment pays you back. With advanced energy intelligence, you gain unparalleled transparency and control to find and eliminate hidden waste, driving down emissions and operating costs simultaneously."





## Pillar 3: Intelligent automation & labour strategy

Key messaging	Proof point	Pain point focus	Conversational phrasing
The cognitive warehouse: Transition from fixed automation to an intelligent, self-optimising ecosystem driven by AI.	The market is shifting to integrated, intelligent solutions: The global logistics automation market is projected to reach \$90.0B by 2030 (Page 5).	Are current automation investments delivering the flexible, 24/7 throughput you need, or are there still bottlenecks caused by labour shortages?	"The future is the Cognitive Warehouse - using pervasive sensors and AI to create a real-time virtual replica that predicts maintenance needs and autonomously solves minor issues."
Empower the workforce: Solve chronic labour shortages and skill gaps by using flexible automation to augment human capability.	AMRs can deliver 300%+ productivity and flexibility, freeing employees up for more strategic decisions (Page 3).	Are labour dynamics forcing businesses to cap throughput during peak seasons, and how are they reskilling teams for automation management?	"Automation isn't about replacing people; it's about intelligent augmentation. We bring flexible robotics and the strategy to upskill your team, allowing you to scale without constant hiring pressure."



# Persona-specific pain points & value

Tailor your conversation to the specific role's top priorities.

Persona	Key pain points	Our value proposition
Supply Chain Director/VP of Operations	<p>Risk of disruption (climate/geopolitical) halting production.</p> <p>Chronic labour shortages impacting throughput.</p> <p>Inefficient use of existing high-value space.</p>	<p><b>Resilience &amp; throughput:</b> Implement flexible automation and multi-node networks to guarantee continuity.</p> <p>Use verticality/AS/RS to optimise existing cubic space and avoid expensive expansion.</p>
CFO/Head of Finance	<p>Rising energy and labour costs eroding margin.</p> <p>Difficulty justifying ROI for CapEx on large-scale automation/infrastructure.</p> <p>Unexpected costs from supply chain volatility.</p>	<p><b>Cost control &amp; agility:</b> Introduce Robotics-as-a-Service (RaaS) to turn CapEx into OpEx.</p> <p>Use Energy Insight to guarantee cost savings.</p> <p>Turn circularity into a tangible revenue-generating process.</p>
Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO)/Head of ESG	<p>Inability to accurately measure and reduce Scope 3 emissions.</p> <p>Pressure to find impactful initiatives beyond token efforts.</p> <p>Need for auditable, real-time data for compliance (ESOS/SECR).</p>	<p><b>Data-driven decarbonisation:</b> Provide unparalleled data transparency (EI.) and consulting to tackle Scope 3.</p> <p>Establish the warehouse as a Circular Economy Hub for verifiable, high-impact reductions.</p>

# Objection handling

Use these responses to pivot back to the strategic value of the insight paper.

Customer objection	Strategic pivot
We already have a WMS and some automation in place.	"That's a great foundation, but the industry is moving past basic automation to Integrated Intelligence - the Cognitive Warehouse. Are your current systems connected enough to self-optimize, predict failures, and autonomously adjust to real-time demand shifts? We focus on generating prescriptive intelligence, not just historical data."
Automation is too expensive - we can't justify the large CapEx right now.	"That capital expenditure hurdle is precisely why we advocate for the 'As-a-Service' model, especially Robotics-as-a-Service (RaaS). It drastically lowers the barrier to entry, gives you flexibility to scale quickly for peak demand, and shifts the cost from a fixed asset (CapEx) to a flexible operational expense (OpEx)."
Our primary focus is just moving boxes faster, not all this complexity around 'resilience' and 'circularity'.	"That's understandable, but the complexity is the new reality. The cost of a single major disruption—a geopolitical shock, a key shipping route closure, or a severe climate event—now far outweighs the cost of proactive resilience. We show you how cost-optimized resilience (like regional buffers and circularity revenue streams) is the new path to long-term profitability."
The cost of land is our biggest problem right now. Nothing else matters.	"Our focus shifts from finding more land to intelligently optimizing every cubic metre. We use high-density storage, advanced automation (AS/RS), and verticality strategies to renovate your existing footprint into a highly efficient operation, delaying or eliminating the need for expensive new greenfield sites."



Beyond the box.

The next generation  
of modern warehousing

## The insight paper

The insight paper for Unipart staff can be accessed via this **internal** webpage: <https://updates.unipart.com/beyond-the-box-campaign-sales-assets>

For external, new contacts, the content is currently gated, with contacts needing to give us their details in order to access the paper, via this **external** webpage: <https://updates.unipart.com/beyond-the-box-warehousing-insight-paper>

If you wish to share the paper with a contact who is already in Hubspot, or do direct outreach with the paper, please contact Hannah Lockey-May ([hannah.lockey-may@unipart.com](mailto:hannah.lockey-may@unipart.com)) who can give you the correct version of the paper to share.

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