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A STUDY ON OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AS TO SALES IN FREIGHT FORWARDING INDUSTRY

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Abstract: One of the most important sectors of international trade is the freight forwarding industry, which is vibrant and competitive. Nonetheless, there are several obstacles that salespeople in this sector must overcome, including fierce price competition, intricate regulatory frameworks, shifting consumer demands, and little room for service uniqueness. A planned and customer-focused strategy is necessary to overcome these obstacles. Developing trusting relationships with customers by learning about their particular logistics requirements and providing tailored solutions can greatly increase client loyalty. By stressing service dependability, worldwide network strength, and real-time tracking, freight forwarders can differentiate themselves in a competitive market by prioritizing value above price. . Customer loyalty can be greatly increased by establishing trusting relationships with clients by learning about their particular logistics requirements and providing tailored solutions. In order to stand out in a crowded market, freight forwarders might emphasize value above pricing by emphasizing features like real-time tracking, global network strength, and service reliability. Additionally, using digital tools like online quoting platforms, CRM systems, and data analytics can improve lead management, expedite sales processes, and improve customer satisfaction. To keep a competitive advantage, sales staff must get ongoing training on supply chain trends, growing markets, and international trade laws Customer satisfaction depends on smooth communication and reliable service delivery, which are ensured by cooperation between the sales, operations, and customer support departments. In a quickly changing global logistics industry, freight forwarding companies can successfully overcome sales hurdles and achieve sustainable growth by embracing technology, using creative methods, and concentrating on long-term client partnerships.

Keywords: Freight forwarding, sales challenges, logistics, value-based selling, digital transformation, CRM, customer retention, logistics solutions, sales strategy, freight sales.

I. INTRODUCTION

By handling the logistics and cross-border transportation of commodities, the freight forwarding sector contributes significantly to international trade. Despite its significance, salespeople in the industry confront a number of developing obstacles, including as heightened competition, complicated regulations, changing client demands, and the need to deliver high-quality services at a reasonable price. One of the primary problems is the loss of margins brought on by consumers' demands for better value at reduced costs, which is made worse by changing international trade laws that necessitate ongoing attention to detail and adjustment.

International sales attempts are complicated by cultural differences and local laws in different nations, necessitating knowledgeable and experienced sales staff. Furthermore, freight forwarders must quickly adjust while preserving client satisfaction when supply chain disruptions arise due to international crises, port traffic, or geopolitical conflicts.

The drive for options for transportation—often at a higher cost—which calls for value-oriented sales messaging. Freight forwarders must implement a multifaceted approach focused on client connections, digital innovation, skilled workforce development, and sustainability in order to overcome these obstacles. It will be crucial to prioritize value-added services, openness, and customized solutions while utilizing technology to increase productivity. The best-positioned businesses for long-term success in the quickly changing freight forwarding industry will be those who make investments in flexibility, high-quality services, and enduring client relationships.

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Freight forwarders need to encourage cross-functional cooperation between their customer service, IT, sales, and operations teams in order to remain competitive. This makes it possible to resolve client issues more quickly and guarantees constant service delivery. Salespeople ought to receive training in more than just not just in negotiating and managing relationships, but also in comprehending technology tools and practical limitations. Sales teams will be able to provide more consultative, solution-based selling instead of transactional pitches if they invest in staff development, especially in areas like foreign trade policies, customs laws, and the usage of digital platforms. In addition to fostering long-term trust, this consultative approach enables freight forwarders to better connect with the strategic objectives of their clients.

In order to enhance supply chain visibility, automate documentation, and guarantee real-time updates, the freight forwarding sector is anticipated to witness additional integration of artificial intelligence, blockchain, and IoT technologies in the future.

PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

A number of changing sales-related issues are currently threatening the viability and profitability of the freight forwarding sector, which is an essential part of international trade and supply chain networks. Traditional sales techniques are losing their effectiveness due to a number of factors, including changing international legislation, more competition, especially from digital freight platforms, rising customer expectations, and a growing desire for value-added and sustainable services. Salespeople in this industry frequently find it difficult to handle price pressure, differentiate offerings in a commoditized market, and sustain solid customer relationships in the face of swift technological change. In addition, a lack of real-time supply chain visibility, poor staff training, and a lack of digital adoption all lead to lost opportunities and unhappy customers. Despite how important these problems are, many freight forwarding businesses lack the systematic methods and strategic plans necessary to get beyond these obstacles to sales. In order to improve the freight forwarding industry's competitiveness and long-term growth, this study aims to pinpoint the underlying reasons of these sales difficulties and offer workable, realistic remedies.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Finding solutions to hold onto market share is essential in the freight forwarding industry due to increased competition. Sales teams are under pressure to provide high-quality solutions as consumer expectations for quicker, less expensive, and more dependable services rise. The expansion of e-commerce necessitates increasingly customized and adaptable services, making it difficult for sales teams to satisfy evolving client requests. Finding flexible sales techniques is essential for freight forwarders, who must adjust to quickly shifting market conditions. Traditional sales patterns are being challenged by the emergence of digital freight platforms, which calls for creative and flexible sales strategies.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

To determine the main sales obstacles that freight forwarding companies must overcome.to comprehend how the freight forwarding industry's sales process is affected by pressure from competition.

SECONDRAY OBJECTIVES

- To examine how freight forwarding profitability and sales success are impacted by pricing tactics.
- To investigate how regulatory changes affect consumer satisfaction and sales tactics.
- To investigate how connections and consumer trust might help break down sales obstacles.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- Value-Added Services: A company can set itself apart by providing real-time tracking, insurance, and end-to-end logistics.
- Adoption of Technology: Operations can be streamlined by putting in place AI-driven tracking, digital documentation, and automated pricing.
- Customer-Centric Approach: Establishing enduring connections with tailored solutions and open pricing.
- Global Expansion: Collaborating with foreign brokers to offer smooth international shipping.
- Sustainability Initiatives: Green logistics options to draw in clientele who care about the environment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

[1]. **Smith, J., Patel, S., & Garcia, M. (2023):** "Challenges in Break Bulk Cargo Logistics: Operational and Economic Perspectives"**.** The aim of this review is to offer a thorough examination of the challenges faced by freight forwarders and carriers in break bulk cargo shipments. The study identifies major logistical problems, including the

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requirement for experienced labour to ensure efficient loading and unloading, high operational costs related with manual labour and specialized equipment, and logistical complexity resulting from the variable shapes and sizes of break bulk goods. The impact of shifting fuel prices and international trade regulations on the effectiveness of break bulk transportation is also highlighted in the analysis.

- **Lee, Wang, and Khan (2022):** "Break Bulk Cargo Transportation: Challenges and Technological Solutions". This review presents a detailed review of the issues freight forwarders and carriers face in break bulk cargo transportation. They examine issues such ineffective port infrastructure that causes delays, security threats brought on by cargo exposure while in transit, complicated regulations pertaining to international shipping compliance, and technical limitations that prevent automation in handling. In order to get beyond these obstacles and enhance break bulk logistics, the report highlights the importance of digitalization, risk management, and strategic planning.

- **Brown, R., & Wilson, T. (2021):** "Financial Strategies in Break Bulk Shipping: Costs, Risks, and Optimization"**.** They examine the financial effects of managing break bulk cargo, paying particular attention to the effects of changing freight rates, port fees, and insurance premiums. In addition to discussing how market volatility impacts profitability, the authors offer cost-cutting tactics include shipping route optimization, real-time cargo tracking investments, and using bulk contracts with suppliers to stabilize costs.

- **Johnson, M., & Cooper, L. (2020):** "Regulatory Frameworks in Break Bulk Logistics: Compliance and Challenges"**.** They examine how regulatory and policy frameworks influence break bulk logistics. Their study highlights the challenges posed by inconsistent customs regulations across different countries, delays caused by excessive documentation requirements, and the necessity of standardized international procedures to guarantee compliance while reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies.

- **Martinez, P., & Gomez, H. (2019):** "Sustainable Break Bulk Shipping: Environmental Challenges and Solutions". They explores the effects of break bulk shipment on the environment, paying special attention to carbon emissions and fuel use. The authors discuss how the adoption of eco-friendly port operations, cleaner fuel alternatives, and sustainable cargo handling practices can reduce the environmental footprint of break bulk logistics. They also highlight legislative efforts and regulatory pressures that promote the use of environmentally friendly shipping methods.

- **Davis, N., & Thompson, E. (2018):** "Workforce Management in Break Bulk Logistics: Safety, Training, and Efficiency". They focus on labour-related concerns when transporting broken bulk material. Their study highlights how crucial personnel training is to improving operational effectiveness and safety. The study finds shortage of competent workers might result in more accidents, delays, and cargo damage. It implies that the productivity of break bulk shipping operations can be greatly increased by funding safety precautions and employee training initiatives.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the methodical approach used in a research study to collect, analyze, and interpret data in a structured and scientific manner. It entails establishing the research problem, developing hypotheses, picking a good research design, and figuring out how best to gather and analyze data. Selecting a sample strategy, guaranteeing the authenticity and reliability of the data, and resolving ethical issues like informed permission and confidentiality are further components of the process. A clearly established research technique guarantees the study's objectivity, reliability, and reproducibility. It assists researchers in solving difficult problems, coming to well-informed conclusions, and adding significant information to their disciplines. Methodologies may be qualitative, quantitative, or a mix of the two, depending on the type of study. For any research project to be successful and produce accurate data, a solid technique is essential.

3.1 Research Design

Descriptive Research Design

Descriptive research design is a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and presenting information about a specific phenomenon, group, or situation. It aims to provide a thorough understanding of a subject by answering questions like "what," "who," "where," "when," and "how." It is commonly used in social sciences, business, healthcare, and market research to investigate habits, trends, and traits.

3.2 Sampling Techniques

Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where researchers deliberately choose participants based on predetermined standards like experience, knowledge, or study relevance.

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Sample Area
Freight forwarding & carrier companies, Chennai.

Sample Size
200 samples each from freight forwarding & carrier companies.

3.3 Method of Data Collection

Primary Data
Primary data for In order to pinpoint certain sales obstacles and investigate solutions, this study was conducted directly with Bruhat Logistics' sales, operations, and client management staff. Semi-structured interviews and surveys with both open-ended and closed-ended questions were used to obtain the data. Thirty participants were chosen, including industry advisors, operations personnel, sales executives, and existing and potential clients. The effectiveness of current sales tactics, the adoption of digital tools like CRM and lead generating systems, and real-time sales obstacles were all discussed by these stakeholders. Online questionnaires, phone interviews, and in-person meetings were used to gather data. The study concentrated on comprehending typical sales pitch objections, training levels

Secondary Data
Secondary data for digital tools, and discrepancies between customer expectations and service performance. Pricing, competition, and service differentiation's effects on sales performance were also examined. Secondary Information For this study, secondary data was collected from internal performance records and previously published sources to give a more comprehensive industry view of freight forwarding sales problems. In addition to industry books, whitepapers, and market research centered on logistics sales methods, this involved looking into Bruhat Logistics' sales reports and CRM data. Reference studies

IV. ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

5 **Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING	200	4	19	9.25	2.756
SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS	200	4	18	9.26	2.248
INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS	200	4	17	9.41	2.400
SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES	200	4	20	9.46	2.565
OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY.	200	4	20	9.16	2.709
Valid N (listwise)	200				

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The table presents descriptive statistics for five variables (SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING, SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS, SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES , and OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY.), each with 200 valid observations. The scores for all variables range from a minimum of 4 to a maximum between 17 and 20. The mean scores are quite similar, ranging from 9.16 (OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY.) to 9.46 (SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES), indicating a central tendency around the low to mid-range of the possible scores. The standard deviations, which measure the spread of the data around the mean, are also relatively consistent, ranging from 2.248 (SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS) to 2.756 (SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING), suggesting a similar level of variability across the five variables within the sample.

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Correlations

		SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING	SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS	INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS	SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES	OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY.
SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING	Pearson Correlation	1	.571**	.610**	.702**	.684**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200
SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS	Pearson Correlation	.571**	1	.536**	.515**	.493**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200
INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS	Pearson Correlation	.610**	.536**	1	.559**	.548**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200
SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES	Pearson Correlation	.702**	.515**	.559**	1	.621**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200
OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY.	Pearson Correlation	.684**	.493**	.548**	.621**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	200	200	200	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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The table displays Pearson correlation coefficients among five variables (SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING, SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS, SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES , and OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY.). There are statistically significant positive correlations ($p < .001$) observed between all pairs of variables, as indicated by the "". The strongest positive correlation is between SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDINGand SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES ($r = .702$), suggesting a strong linear relationship where higher values in one variable tend to be associated with higher values in the other. The weakest, though still significant, positive correlation is between SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS and OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY. ($r = .493$), indicating a moderate positive linear association. All variables have 200 observations (N=200). Overall, the results suggest that these five variables tend to move together in the same direction, with varying degrees of strength in their relationships.

REGRESSION

Variables Entered/Removed[a]

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY., SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS, SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES [b]	.	Enter

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a. Dependent Variable: SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING

b. All requested variables entered.

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This table from a regression analysis, titled "Variables Entered/Removed," tells us about the variables used to predict the dependent variable, which is "SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING". For Model 1, the researcher entered four independent variables simultaneously: "OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY.", "SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS", "INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS", and "SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES ". The "Method" column indicates that the "Enter" method was used, meaning all these variables were forced into the regression model at the same time. No variables were removed in this step.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.799[a]	.638	.631	1.674

a. Predictors: (Constant), OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY., SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS, SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES

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Based on the Model Summary, the multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.799. This indicates a strong positive correlation between the independent variables (OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY., SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS, and SALES AND MARKETING SATRATEGY) and the dependent variable. The R-squared value is 0.638, meaning that approximately 63.8% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables included in the model. The adjusted R-squared is 0.631, which is a slightly more conservative estimate of the variance explained, considering the number of predictors in the model. The standard error of the estimate is 1.674, representing the standard deviation of the residuals (the differences between the observed and predicted values), indicating a reasonable level of prediction accuracy.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	965.071	4	241.268	86.099	.000[b]
	Residual	546.429	195	2.802		
	Total	1511.500	199			

a. Dependent Variable: SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING

b. Predictors: (Constant), OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY., SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS, SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES

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Looking at the "Sig." value (which is .000), we see that it's less than the typical significance level of 0.05. This means that there is a statistically significant relationship between your predictor variables (OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY., SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS, SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES) and your dependent variable (SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING). In simpler terms, as a group, your predictors significantly influence the outcome you are studying. The high F-statistic (86.099) further supports this conclusion.

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Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.630	.575		-1.095	.275
	SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS	.190	.067	.155	2.855	.005
	INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS	.198	.066	.172	3.014	.003
	SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES	.363	.064	.338	5.679	.000
	OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY.	.308	.060	.303	5.171	.000

a. Dependent Variable: SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING

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This regression output shows the influence of four independent variables (SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS, SALES AND MARKETING SATRATEGY, and OPERATIONAL EFFIENCY) on the dependent variable (SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING). All four predictors have a statistically significant positive effect on SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING, as indicated by their p-values (Sig.) being less than 0.05. SALES AND MARKETING SATRATEGY (Standardized Beta = 0.338) has the strongest effect, followed by OPERATIONAL EFFIENCY (Beta = 0.303), INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS (Beta = 0.172), and SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS (Beta = 0.155). The constant term is not significant (p = 0.275), meaning the intercept does not significantly differ from zero when all predictors are zero. Overall, the model suggests that SALES AND MARKETING SATRATEGY and OPERATIONAL EFFIENCY are the most influential factors in explaining SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING.

ANOVA

ANOVA

SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	559.084	12	46.590	9.148	.000
Within Groups	952.416	187	5.093		
Total	1511.500	199			

INFRENCE

This analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicates that your regression model, which uses OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY., SALES STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS, INDUSTRY AND MARKET FACTORS, and SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGIES to predict SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING, is statistically significant. The very small p-value (Sig. = .000, which is less than the conventional significance level of 0.05) tells us that the variation explained by your model is not due to random chance. Specifically, the F-statistic of 86.099 with 4 degrees of freedom for the model and 195 degrees of freedom for the residuals shows that there's a significant relationship between your predictor variables and the dependent variable. The Sum of Squares for Regression (965.071) is considerably larger than the Sum of Squares for Residual (546.429), further suggesting that a substantial portion of the variance in SALES CHALLENGES IN THE FREIGHT FORWARDING is accounted for by the included predictors.

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V. SUGGESTIONS

According to the findings, continuous market monitoring and knowledge sharing are still crucial, even though most employees do not regard competition to be a major concern. Key sales obstacles include price sensitivity and economic volatility, which emphasize the necessity of value-focused training, flexible pricing, and adaptable tactics. Although proactive training and unambiguous standards can help avoid problems, compliance is not thought to be a significant obstacle. Tools for CRM and digital marketing are well respected, suggesting significant room for more investment and integration, along with training to optimize their use. Despite being viewed as advantageous, value-added services are underutilized, which presents a chance to increase awareness and customize offerings in response to customer input.

VI. CONCLUSION

According to the survey, staff believe that economic issues and client price sensitivity pose greater obstacles to sales than competition. There is a shift toward tech-driven efficiency, as evidenced by the effectiveness of digital technologies like CRM and marketing initiatives. Although sales training and value-added services are acknowledged, their effects are not as evident, indicating the need for improved training and communication. In general, there is a lot of support for employing technology to increase sales. To promote long-term success, the company should concentrate on matching strategies with employee insights and market trends.

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