



Daffodil
International
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Internship Report

On

“An Analysis of the Supply Chain Management of Apex Footwear Limited”

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Date:

Professor Mohammed Masum Iqbal, PhD

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Subject: Submission of Internship Report on “An Analysis of the Supply Chain Management of Apex Footwear Limited”.

Dear Sir,

I am glad to present with much excitement, a report of my internship in the Apex Footwear Limited, in case of an Analysis of Apex Supply Chain Management. All through this research, I have done my best to ensure that I collected as much information as possible and touched on the relevant issues as per the guidelines given. This report has enabled me to learn useful information about the supply chain management of Apex footwear limited.

It has been a satisfying experience to work under you, your care and guidance. I have endeavored to ensure that my report is informative and reflective of the knowledge and skills I have acquired during my internship. I trust that this report will meet your expectations and contribute to the objectives of my internship program.

Thank you for the support and direction you have provided throughout this project. I hope that the report will meet your expectations.

Sincerely,



Shahariar Joy

ID: 241-14-020

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LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

This is to certify that the internship report entitled “An Analysis of the Supply Chain Management of Apex Footwear Limited” was prepared by Shahariar Joy, ID # 241-14-020, as a requirement of the master of Business Administration (Major in Supply Chain Management) program under the Department of Business Administration and the Faculty of Business and Entrepreneurship at Daffodil International University.

The report is recommended for submission.



.....

Professor Mohammed Masum Iqbal, PhD

Dean, Department of Business Administration

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Daffodil International University

Acknowledgement

First of all, I want to sincerely thank Almighty Allah for providing me with the courage, endurance, and chance to finish the internship and write this report.

I owe a debt of gratitude to everyone who helped and inspired me along the way. Professor Mohammed Masum Iqbal, PhD, my academic supervisor, has my deepest gratitude for his unwavering support, insightful advice, and helpful criticism throughout the writing of this report. His advice and prudence made this task the easiest and most significant.

I would also like to thank Md. Arifur Rahaman, Deputy General Manager, with regard to his support and cooperation towards me during my internship period at Apex footwear limited. His assistance, as well as time taken to explain the working process helped me to complete my project successfully.

I would also like to thank everyone in the Apex footwear limited staff and colleagues who assisted me by providing me with the information I required and their valuable opinions on how the business should run its supply chain activities. I had a real learning experience as they collaborated and were candid in my learning. Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who helped me finish my internship and this report, "An Analysis of the Supply Chain Management of Apex Footwear Limited," whether directly or indirectly.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This internship report is part of Master of Business Administration (MBA) course at the Daffodil international university. Under the name of the paper, “An Analysis of the Supply Chain Management of Apex Footwear Limited”, the researchers discuss the supply chain operations of the company, namely, planning, procurement, production, logistics, inventory control, and distribution. Apex footwear Limited is a well known company both locally and internationally that is playing in the footwear industry of Bangladesh. Its integrated supply chain makes it quality, cost-controllable, and provision of delivering on time, which are some of the major factors that contributed to the competitiveness and the growth of the company. The current report examines the supply chain management of Apex to enhance its operation efficiency and customer needs.

The primary data sources in this research are discussions and observations during the internship period, and the secondary data are data on the company, annual reports, and official website. In accordance with the objectives, methodology, and limitations, the report gives a general outline of the organization, extensively analyzes the operations of the supply chain, and a SWOT analysis which determines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The strengths that are identified in the analysis include, but are not limited to, the vertical integration of its supply chain, powerful procurement strategies, ERP-based planning, and observance of compliance standards in the global arena. However, it also indicates such issues as warehouse automation is necessary, the necessity to use imported raw materials, and rising logistics costs. The report recommends to invest in the automation technology, diversification of suppliers, AI-based demand prediction, and enhancing sustainability to enhance long-term competitiveness.

To mitigate these problems, the paper recommends the application of newer forms of forecasting, the increase in the number of suppliers by sourcing locally, more investment in warehousing and logistics automation, and the increase in sustainability measures, such as eco-friendly packaging and sustainability reporting. Supplier performance monitoring and workforce retention measures are also advisable to facilitate a long-term growth.

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Chapter – 01

Introduction

1.1 Introduction:

Apex Footwear Limited (AFL) is one of the leading and most recognized brands in the footwear business in Bangladesh, and it has a good market share both in the local and global market. Ever since its establishment as part of the Apex Group, the business has been known because of its creativity, high quality design and commitment to excellence. Apex footwear limited has grown through the years to be a reputable manufacturer and exporter of leather shoes and offers renowned international outlets in Europe, North America and Asia. Its large retail and distribution network can also serve a large market of customers in Bangladesh. From tanning leather to producing and distributing finished footwear, Apex Footwear has a vertically integrated company model. The company operates one of the largest tanneries in the nation, and its cutting-edge production facilities in Gazipur and other locations are equipped with up-to-date equipment, skilled staff, and effective management techniques. The company manufactures a variety of footwear items, such as boots, sandals, formal shoes, casual clothing, and specialty safety footwear. Offering goods under several proprietary and licensed brands, it serves men, women, and children from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds.

1.2 Scope of the study:

The supply chain management system of Apex Footwear Limited is the main topic of this internship report, which pays close attention to real-world observations made throughout the internship. Planning, procurement, production, inventory control, logistics, distribution, and vendor management are among the important functional areas that the study intends to investigate.

In order to maintain product quality, deliver goods on schedule, reduce operating expenses, and adjust to changing consumer demands in both domestic and foreign markets, Apex Footwear Limited controls its supply chain, as this paper explores. It also analyzes the ways through which integrated procedures and technology can enhance the efficiency of the supply chain.

The data and observations gathered in the head office and factory operations of the company are used in the study in order to focus on the relationships and coordination between the departments, such as the procurement department, production department, warehouse department, and logistics department. Conversations with key employees and reviewing

company documentation, internal reports, and publicly available data provided greater information. The scope does not cover the marketing, design, and auditing of financial operations of the Apex footwear limited unless it has a direct bearing or is involved in the operations of the supply chain. Based on Apex footwear limited as one case, this article which is intended to be used as a scholarly reference, tries to enhance knowledge about supply chain management in the footwear industry in Bangladesh. Furthermore, it aims at identifying potential areas of enhancement and providing useful ideas based on facts and observations.

1.3 Objective of the study:

The main objective of this study is to analyze the supply chain management system at Apex footwear limited with specific reference to its major activities, which include planning, sourcing, manufacturing, distribution, and logistics. The aim of the research is to understand the relationship of these roles to ensure a smooth effective movement of products that meet consumer demand and promote company growth.

In addition, the paper will help evaluate the sustainability and supply chain performance programs, identify the key supply chain integration challenges, and provide viable solutions to enhance overall competitiveness and efficiency.

Specific Objectives:

- Review the major supply chain processes, such as planning, procurement, logistics, production, and distribution.
- Examine processes that can guarantee a continuous and smooth flow of products to satisfy the clients.
- Analysis of strategies on integrated supply chain and drivers of performance and sustainability.
- Identify Supply chain integration challenges and give solutions to ensure efficient supply chain.

1.4 Methodology of the study:

This section of the research paper explains the methodology of data collection, organizing and the data analysis associated with the supply chain management system of Apex Footwear

Limited. The methodology will be aimed at assisting in achieving the most important goals of the report and answering the main questions of the investigation.

Sources of Data

Two categories of data have been used to develop this report, namely, primary and secondary sources.

Primary Data:

- Face-to-face meetings with the representatives of the supply chain and operations departments of the Apex Footwear Limited.
- Direct observation during the internship period at the factory and head office.
- Informal interviews and personal interaction with supply chain professionals.

Secondary Data:

- Internal documents and reports of Apex Footwear Limited.
- Company website: www.apexfootwearltd.com
- Industry-related publications and articles.
- Relevant course materials related to supply chain management.

Data Collection Procedure

It was found that the study was mainly based on the secondary data to observe supply chain structure and performance of the Apex Footwear Limited. Secondly, the primary data was generated during the internship period through first-hand observations and minor interviews with officials that participated in the different supply chain activities. Using these insights, the real life application of the concepts of supply chains in the organization was understood better, and difficulties and best practices were found in order to apply them in practice.

1.5 Limitations of the study:

Amidst the process of this study on the supply chain management of Apex footwear limited, there were a number of constraints experienced, which affected the depth and scope of the study:

- Limited access to sensitive information: As per company policy and confidentiality contracts, the subjective internal information concerning the supplier agreements, cost schemes, and procurement tactics was not available completely. This reduced the possibility to have a detailed financial analysis of the supply chain.
- Time Constraints: The length of the internship was fixed and time restricted the possibility to explore the entire range of functions of supply chain or to be involved in longer last term projects that might have offered more understanding.
- Poor Visibility of Some Departments: It was not possible to access some special sections like high-tech technology systems, exportation, and sustainability projects, and there was a lack of knowledge about these key aspects of Apex supply chain.
- Reliance on Secondary Data: As much as the primary data was based on observations and discussions, part of the analysis was based on secondary data such as company reports and web based information and this is likely to be looking at the challenges faced by old companies in its normal operations.
- Fast changing Industry: The footwear industry suffers constant changes in consumer trends, cost of raw materials, and regulatory demands. The fact that such an environment is dynamic is the reason why certain findings can become less relevant to the environment over time.

The limitations notwithstanding, there was an attempt to identify the trustful data among the existing resources and draw valuable conclusions based on the experience in practice and detailed research.

Chapter – 02

Overview of Apex Footwear Ltd.

2.1 About Apex Footwear Ltd:

Apex footwear limited is one of the most famous brands of the footwear market in Bangladesh which is a publicly traded corporation and it was founded in 1990 by Syed Manzur ELAHi. The company operates a fully vertically integrated manufacturing system with its state of the art manufacturing plant at Kaliakair, Gazipur and its headquarters at Dhaka which includes tanning, cutting, stitching and assembly. Apex has an approximate workforce of 10000, most of whom are women and produces a range of footwear products, including shoes, sandals, boots, and sportswear in children, female and adult markets. Along with producing under foreign brands, it has several well-known in house brands, such as Apex, Venturini, Maverick, Nino Rossi, Moochie, Sprint, Twinkler and School Smart. More than 250 stores, 275 franchises and a strong online platform through apex4u.com allow Apex to maintain the largest retail presence in the country. It also provides more than 15 percent of the total Bangladesh exports of leather footwear to more than 130 retailers in the world. The certifications of the organization include the ISO 9001, 14001, 45001, LWG Gold, WRAP, BSCI, SEDEX, and SATRA Lab, certifications that ensure that the organization is acting in compliance with the global standards with regards to labor, quality, and environmental policies. Apex remains on top of the industry through innovation, sustainability and supply chain integration and has a history of financial stability and export success.

2.2 Capital Structure of Apex Footwear Limited:

Apex footwear limited is a business with a high geared financial structure and therefore relies on debt financing to finance its operations and expansion. Based on the latest financial information (FY 2024/2025), the company has an approximate total debt of BDT 19.3 billion and total equity of BDT 6.8 billion. This gives it an approximate debt to equity ratio of about 2.83, which implies that every BDT 1 in equity capital has BDT 2.83 in debt.

The capital structure highlights a debt-to-capital ratio of 75 percent as a result of which approximately 75 percent of the total capital of the company (debt and equity) is attributed to debt financing. In addition to the lease commitments, among the other financial obligations, the debt comprises of short term borrowings (approximately BDT 12.9 billion) and long term borrowings (approximately BDT 3.1 billion).

The interest coverage ratio is approximated to be approximately 1.3 times, indicating that the earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) per the company are merely 1.3 times greater than its interest costs. Although this means that Apex is able to cover its interest payments, the margin is quite low and can be of concern in case there is a change in the earnings or the interest expenses rise.

Analysis and Implications:

- The large debt-to-equity ratio indicates a growth-oriented approach used to grow the business and facilities with outside debt.
- A debt share of 75 percent in the capital mix implies that there is a little room to stock more debt, in such cases of stress.
- The moderate interest coverage ratio suggests that the company should be keen in operating its earnings and expenditures to ensure that it is able to service its debts.
- Though this capital structure allows Apex to tap into the opportunities and scale effectively, it demands good performance in the operations and financial discipline to limit the risk.

2.3 Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Strategies:

Mission

1. Ensure Sustainable Growth Across All Operations
2. Become the Vendor of Choice for Customers
3. Generate Long-Term Shareholder Value
4. Practice Global Standards and Best Practices
5. Be a Responsible Corporate Citizen

Vision

Apex footwear Limited will not just expand its company, but its objective is to grow honestly. It shows how the organization is committed to long-term growth that is in line with moral corporate behavior, environmental management, social wellbeing, and satisfaction among the stakeholders. Honest Growth is a prospective where Apex thrives through maintaining honesty in all its business operations which has ensured that it impacted the economy, people and the

environment positively. Together with upholding corporate governance and international standards, the objective also lays a significant stress on creating long-term value.

Core Value

The corporate culture of Apex footwear is supported by a powerful system of corporate values that determine the work of the company and relations with the external environment:

- Respect for People
- Integrity
- Sense of Urgency
- Empowerment
- Courage

Strategies Objectives

Strong and flexible corporate strategy is the foundation of long-term success of Apex that centers on the following key areas:

1. Vertical Integration & Operational Efficiency

Apex has a complete supply chain that comprises; leather tanning, raw material processing, sole and insole manufacturing, cutting, sewing, and assembly in one industrial campus. This has provided the company with total quality, lead time and cost management.

2. Product Diversification & Brand Portfolio

Apex footwear serves multiple customer segments through its diverse in-house brands:

- Apex – flagship everyday footwear brand
- Venturini and Maverick – premium and formal styles for men
- Nino Rossi and Moochie – fashion-forward lines for women
- Sprint – sports and activewear
- Twinkler and School Smart school and kids' shoes

This wide portfolio allows the company to cater to all income levels and lifestyle needs.

3. Retail Expansion and Omnichannel Reach

Apex footwear has over 250 retail stores, 275 franchise locations, and more than 150 distribution partners, also commands the largest physical footwear retail network in Bangladesh. Additionally, its digital platform apex4u.com and mobile app extend its reach to the online shopping segment, offering exclusive bundles, seasonal offers, and home delivery nationwide.

4. Export Growth & International Presence

Apex sells footwear to more than 130 retailers around the world in Europe, North America and Japan. The company has also gained a reputation of supplying high quality products at constant lead times and adherence to worldwide social, labor and product safety regulations.

5. Sustainability & Compliance Leadership

Apex is a leader of the sustainability practices in the Bangladesh footwear industry. It has a LWG gold rated tannery, incorporates recycled materials (e.g. PVC, TPR), and implements FSC certified packaging. Its certifications like the ISO 9001, 14001, 45001, BSCI and SEDEX show its interest in ethical production, safe workplace, and environmental safety.

6. Technology, Innovation & Design

The investments in modern ERP systems, design labs and the SATRA certified test laboratories enable Apex to continue with its design innovation, product performance and quality assurance leadership. New styles are also implemented by the company, every year the company presents more than 3,500 original designs.

7. People Development & Corporate Governance

Employee development is a priority of the company, which is achieved by training, providing incentives based on performance, and career development programs. Good corporate governance and ethical leadership lead to stakeholder trust and long-term development.

2.4 Subsidiaries of Apex Footwear Limited:

Apex footwear limited falls under the Apex Group, a conglomerate group that operates in various segments and business sectors such as footwear, leather, pharmaceutical, advertising,

market research, hospitality as well as investments. Critical subsidiaries and sister companies are:

- **Apex Adelchi Footwear Bangladesh Limited**
A separate publicly listed footwear manufacturer and exporter, Apex Adelchi specializes in leather footwear for international markets and operates a growing domestic retail network.
- **Blue Ocean Footwear Limited**
A joint venture with Apex footwear Limited to Blue Ocean international based on the production and exporting of stylish leather shoe with expansion and export potential.
- **Apex Tannery Limited**
The leather processing arm of the group supplies high-quality raw leather to both Apex Footwear and Adelchi, ensuring vertical integration.
- **Grey Advertising Bangladesh Limited**
The group's advertising and marketing agency supports brand promotion across all Apex companies.
- **Quantum Consumer Solutions Bangladesh Limited**
The group's market research arm, Apex, provides brands with insights and consumer information.
- **Apex Investments Limited**
It handles the group of financial and investment activities across the area.
- **Apex Hotels Limited**
Provide best quality hospitality across the nation.

2.5 Hierarchy:

1. Board of Directors (Strategic Apex)

- **Chairman:** Mr. Golam Moin Uddin
Strategic leader and oversees corporate governance.
- **Managing Director:** Mr. Syed Nasim Manzur

Responsible for all strategic vision and long term planning.

2. Executive Management

- **Additional Managing Director (AMD) & CFO:** Mr. Dilip Kajuri
Financial planning, compliance, also financial performance.
- **Chief Executive Officer (CEO):** Mr. Firoz Mohammad
Head of operations, retail business, supply chain, and product development.

3. Senior Management

- **General manager (Operations):** Responsible for managing factory operations and coordinating production logistics.
- **DGM HR & Administration:** Oversees talent acquisition, organizational culture, training, and regulatory compliance.
- **Head of planning & production Control:** Make forecasting, material planning, scheduling, and production flow optimization.
- **Head of international business:** Handling export orders, global client relationships, and shipment coordination.

4. Mid-Level Management

Departmental Managers in key areas:

- Procurement & Sourcing
- Inventory & Warehousing
- Retail Operations
- Marketing & Brand Development
- Finance & Audit
- IT & ERP Systems

Every department leader supervises teams of assistant managers, officers, and coordinators who assure the daily execution of work.

2.6 Company Profile

Established: 1990

Headquarters: Gulshan-1, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Industry: Footwear Manufacturing, Retail, and Export

Employees: Approximately 10,000

Stock Exchange Listing: Dhaka Stock Exchange (APEXFOOT)

Website: apexfootwearltd.com

Overview:

Apex Footwear Limited is a Bangladesh based company which is the leading footwear manufacturer, retailer, and exporter in Bangladesh. It is the largest footwear manufacturer in south Asia that has grown in the country since its inception in 1990, and contribute to the export of the leather footwear industry in Bangladesh.

Manufacturing & Retail Operations:

Apex operates two main units:

- Unit 1: Manufacturing footwear for export to international brands in Europe, North America, and Japan.
- Unit 2: Make leather product for domestic retail operations with their own over 250 company stores, 275+ franchisees, and 150+ distributors in Bangladesh.

Product Range:

The company produces a variety of products such as men, women and children footwear such as formal, casual, boots, sandals and sportswear. It also deals with apparel, accessories, lifestyle, therapeutic foot wear and school shoes.

Brands:

Apex sells its products under a number of in-house brands including Apex, Venturini, Moochie, Nino Rossi, Sprint, Maverick, Twinkler, School-Smart, and Jatara. It also has licenses of international brands such as Clarks, Reebok, Nike, Asics, Steve Madden and Police.

Design & Innovation:

Apex incorporates the Italian design and local craftsmanship. The company has research and development units in Italy and Bangladesh which come up with around 1,500 new styles of footwear in a year.

Sustainability & Compliance:

The company follows sustainable manufacturing practices and holds multiple certifications, including WRAP Gold, ISO standards, BSCI, and LWG Gold, demonstrating adherence to quality, social responsibility, and environmental standards.

Awards & Recognition:

Apex Footwear Limited has received many awards over the years, there are the President's Export Awards and the HSBC Exporter of the Year award.

2.7 SWOT Analysis:**Strengths**

- **Market Leadership:** Apex is the biggest footwear manufacturer and retailer in Bangladesh that owns a large market share and a massive retailer network (250+ stores, 275+ franchises).
- **Vertical Integration:** The vertical integration allows the company to manage the whole chain of supply, processing leather, processing shoes, and finished shoes as well creating a quality and cost-effective part of supply chain.
- **Good Brand Portfolio:** There are several in-house brands and licenses on world-renowned brands such as Clarks, Nike, and Reebok that help to diversify the market, as

well as minimizing reliance on a single brand.

- **Export Strength:** Established export business in Europe, North America, and Japan with a huge foreign revenue and fame.
- **Quality & Compliance Certifications:** The experience of being certified as ISO, WRAP Gold, BSCI, and LWG Gold is an increase in credibility in international markets.
- **Design & Innovation:** The combination of the Italian design and local craftsmanship, with approximately 1,500 new designs each year (to keep up with the evolving trends in the consumer market).

Weakness

- **High Debt Level:** A high amount of debt-to-equity ratio enhances financial risk and interests.
- **Addiction to Leather:** Leather is heavily relied upon and this can follow the price fluctuations as well as environmental issues.
- **Weak Digital Presence:** The online retail platform and online e-commerce penetration is not as powerful as global competitors despite its expansion.
- **Complexity of the Supply Chain:** A complex but vertically integrated supply chain needs to be managed with constant efficiency management to prevent bottlenecks and high costs.
- **Skill Gap in the Workforce:** Requirement on constant upskilling and adoption of technologies in order to remain ahead of the competition.

Opportunities

- **Expanding Domestic Market:** There is an increasing middle class and urbanization in Bangladesh which will boost the demand of branded footwear.
- **E-commerce Development:** Digital sales networks and omni-channel retailing development can be used to increase revenue and customer interaction.
- **Sustainability Trends:** The growing demand of environmentally friendly and socially responsible products is consistent with the sustainability efforts of Apex, which has created the niche markets.
- **Diversification of Products:** Growth in new segments such as sportswear, casual wear and accessories might be an option.

- **Export Market Expansion:** Development of new international markets and also the use of trade agreements to boost exports.
- **Technological Improvement:** Introduction of automation, AI and ERP systems to streamline the production and inventory management.

Threats

- **High Competition:** Both local and international brands have come into the market of Bangladesh creating competition.
- **Raw Material Price Variability:** Variability in the cost of raw materials particularly leather and synthetic materials has the potential to affect margins.
- **Economic Instability:** Macroeconomic factors like inflation, currency fluctuations, and trade policy changes could affect business operations.
- **Regulatory Challenges:** Compliance with environmental and labor laws could increase operational costs.
- **Changing Consumer Preferences:** Rapid shifts in fashion trends require constant innovation; failure to adapt can result in loss of market share.
- **Global Supply Chain Disruptions:** Risks from geopolitical tensions, pandemics, or logistical constraints affecting export operations.

Chapter – 03

An analysis of supply chain management

3.1 Supply Chain Structure & Overview:

Apex footwear limited has one of the most developed vertically integrated supply chain systems in the South Asian footwear market. Its supply chain is very long since raw leather is processed and the final distribution is done in the domestic and global markets. Apex has total control over quality, cost, delivery schedule, and compliance because to this end-to-end integration, which sets it apart in Bangladesh's manufacturing industry. Since Apex's supply chain is vertically integrated, the majority of its supply processes are run internally. Better control over quality, lead time, and compliance is made possible as a result.

Key Components:

- **Tannery Division:** At Apex's LWG Gold-rated tannery in Savar, raw hides are transformed into finished leather. The value chain begins here, and Apex has authority over one of the most important raw commodities.
- **Sourcing and Procurement of Materials:** Sources leather, synthetics, soles, adhesives, threads, and packaging, among other materials, both domestically and internationally. Costs are controlled and quality is maintained through strategic sourcing.
- **Cutting & sewing Units:** Under stringent quality standards, these units process top materials internally, including pattern cutting, sewing, lasting, and assembly.
- **Sole Manufacturing:** To guarantee compatibility and cost savings, Apex produces rubber, TPR, and PU soles on its industrial site.
- **Finished Goods Assembly:** Modern, efficient production lines are used to assemble and complete all components.

3.1.1 Raw Material Sourcing:

a. Leather Processing (Backward Integration):

- Apex owns and operates a fully compliant leather tannery in Savar, Dhaka, certified with the LWG (Leather Working Group) Gold rating.
- This tannery processes raw hides into finished leather, maintaining full control over quality and reducing reliance on third parties.
- The leather produced is used for both export and local products, ensuring greater

consistency in material specifications.

b. Non-Leather Materials acquisition:

- Collecting other material like soles, (TPU, PU, rubber), linings, adhesives, threads, packaging, eyelets, and synthetic uppers are sourced from both local and international suppliers (India, China, Vietnam, etc.).
- Strategic vendor partnerships guarantee timely delivery and stable pricing.
- All materials undergo pre-production inspections to meet Apex's internal and customer-specific standards.

3.1.2 Production and Manufacturing Process:

Apex has several state-of-the-art semi-automated footwear manufacturing plants at Gazipur and Savar. Key operations include:

a. Cutting & Clicking:

- Cutting machines are used in the cutting of leather and synthetic uppers aided by computer. Patterns are streamlined to minimize wastage.

b. Stitching and Closing:

- The uppers are made by skilled workers assembling them with industrial stitching machines. The quality checks are done at the end of every major step.

c. Lasting & Assembling:

- Pre-fabricated soles and stitched uppers are lasted and assembled into final shoe shapes.
- Separate lines are designated for export and domestic products based on order volume and complexity.

d. Finishing & Packing:

- After going through a series of finishing processes that includes cleaning, polishing, tagging and packing, each product is shipped in branded packaging.
- Before the finished products go to the warehouse, 100 percent of the products are checked by Quality Control teams.

3.1.3 Production Planning & Coordination:

a. Demand Forecasting:

- The past sales data, the market trends, the retail performance, and the export orders are used by the planning department to predict the demand every quarter.
- They include seasonal variations, promotion schedules and sales promotions.

b. Production Scheduling:

- Weekly and daily production schedules are obtained based on the demand forecasts.
- ERP systems help in allocation of resources, material planning (MRP) and scheduling of the use of machines in various lines.

c. Co-ordination with Departments:

- The planning department collaborates with procurement, warehouse, production, merchandising and shipping to deliver on time and have optimum inventory.

3.1.4 Inventory Management:

Apex has an inventory model that is a hybrid of:

- **Centralized Warehouse (Main Distribution Center):** It is located close to the factory area where both retail and export shipment will be done.
- **Central Distribution Centers (CDCs):** These work with specific geographic areas in Bangladesh to provide faster replenishment to retail stores.
- **Retail Store Inventory:** It is managed by real-time point-of-sale (POS) systems, which are integrated with the main ERP that is used to monitor the levels of stock, returns and sales trends.

Apex uses the ABC analysis, safety stock policies, and FIFO techniques to control raw materials and finished goods.

3.1.5 Distribution & Logistics:

a. Domestic Distribution:

- Apex has a fleet of its logistics and collaborates with third-party logistics providers (3PLs) to deliver to the whole country.
- It operates over 250 company owned stores, 275 franchises, 150 dealers, and increasing number of online customers.

b. Export Distribution:

Apex footwear exports over 30 countries, including Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, and USA.

The export department:

- Order placement and fulfillment
- Customs documentation
- Coordinating shipments (air and sea)
- Ensuring compliance with destination country regulations

3.1.6 Quality Control & Compliance:

Apex has stringent quality and compliance standards throughout in its supply chain:

- **Certifications:** ISO 9001 (Quality), ISO 14001 (Environment), ISO 45001 (Health and Safety), WRAP Gold, BSCI, and SEDEX, LWG Gold.
- **SATRA-Certified laboratories:** Apex uses SATRA certified machines to test physical characteristics like strength, water resistance, slip, abrasion and chemical safety.
- **In-line and Final Inspection:** Each of the products will be inspected at each phase, and export orders will be inspected based on the AQL before shipment.

3.1.7 Sustainability Initiatives:

Apex embeds sustainability across its supply chain:

- **Renewable Energy:** Solar energy is utilized in production facilities.
- **Water and Waste Management:** The use of Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) and solid

waste recycling.

- **Green Procurement:** Adhesives, recycled materials and biodegradable packaging are water-based and recycled.
- **Employee Welfare:** These are paying decent salaries, safe working conditions, and training opportunities.

3.1.8 Technology in Supply Chain:

- **ERP System (SAP- Based):** It has a procurement module, inventory, finance, HR, and retail module.
- **POS System:** It is a system that is linked with ERP to facilitate real-time management of retail sales and stock.
- **Vendor Portals:** Are meant to be used in collaboration, invoicing, and monitoring the status of deliveries.

3.1.9 Challenges in the Supply Chain:

- **Lead Time Variability:** Due to import dependency on some raw materials.
- **Cost Fluctuation:** Price volatility of leather and imported components.
- **Labor Retention:** Difficulty retaining skilled workers during peak seasons.
- **Global Disruptions:** Port delays, freight cost hikes, and changing trade rules.

3.1.10 Apex's Supply Chain Strengths:

- A fully integrated and vertically aligned supply chain.
- Strong R&D and design innovation capacity
- Extensive domestic distribution infrastructure
- Global-standard compliance and certifications
- Experienced workforce and lean manufacturing practices
- Reliable supplier network and advanced planning tools

3.2 Supply Chain Analysis of Apex Footwear Limited:

Apex footwear limited runs one of the best and most integrated supply chains in the Bangladesh footwear industry. The ability of the company to serve the home and foreign markets is determined by the functionality of the supply chain elements in the company operating in unison. The supply chain is a significant portion of planning, procurement, production, logistics and distribution which are looked at in this research and their benefits to the competitiveness, sustainability and performance.

3.2.1 Forecasting Demand and Planning Materials Requirement

Apex Footwear Limited employs the centralized techniques of planning to estimate the demand based on seasonal sales patterns, buyer orders made by export, and retailers sales information of over 250 locations. The marketing and merchandising teams use the planning department to come up with rolling predictions every quarter. It is these projections that then guide decisions about procurement and manufacturing.

The sales history, promotional calendar and demand during special occasions (Eid, Puja, winter season) are used in developing forecasts. In case of exports, purchased orders, buyer timetables and nation-based lead times are relied upon to make predictions. The forecast once created is entered into the SAP based ERP system which calculates the Material Requirements Planning (MRP) schedules and thereby the needs of raw materials. The systematic planning reduces the material wastage and overstocking and harmonizes the cost and responsiveness throughout the production chain.

3.2.2 Source Development and Sourcing

Apex satisfies the production requirements using both internal and external sourcing. The most essential part is finished leather and its own LWG Gold-rated tannery at Savar has given it full control over quality, pricing and supply. This internal capacity reduces the number of hazards associated with the purchase of leather significantly.

In Bangladesh, India, Vietnam and China, Apex has suppliers of their other raw materials that include synthetic uppers, adhesives, linings, soles (PU, TPR and rubber), and packaging. The sourcing includes the supplier identification, collecting quotations, sample approval, and

negotiating and onboarding. Suppliers must meet standards of sustainability and compliance, such as ISO, WRAP, and BSCI standards.

Apex also emphasizes on multiple sourcing of key supplies to ensure that its production is not interrupted. Strategic vendors are formed through long term collaborations, performance reviews as well as shared goals.

3.2.3 Supplier Relationship Management

Instead of engaging its suppliers as transactional suppliers, Apex considers them as long term partners. The key relationship management objectives are transparency, mutual trust, and consistency of quality. Competes not only on price but also on lead time on deliveries, reliability and compliance.

Suppliers are measured against a set of performance KPIs (i.e., responsiveness, rejection rates, and on-time delivery). Apex provides capacity building opportunities, training involved in compliance as well as improving quality assurance processes besides the feedback regularly.

Excellent vendors are encouraged to be maintained and poor performing vendors are either terminated or threatened by means of official supplier appraisal systems. The high demand enables Apex to adapt during high-demand periods and ensure that it is operational throughout due to the strategic supplier partnerships.

3.2.4 Inventory and Production Strategy

Apex has Make-to-Order (MTO) and Make-to-Stock (MTS) business models. Shoes are manufactured beforehand and are kept in form of finished products in the central and regional distribution centers to serve the domestic retail and franchise outlets. The retail demand and the POS data at the time is considered to determine when to replenish these products seasonally.

Export orders are done on a Make-to-Order basis. All orders are produced according to customer specifications and the production process does not commence until the order has been verified. The approach enables it to be customizable and reduce the cost of finished goods inventories.

The production plan employs lean manufacturing methods, issuance of raw materials in batches and daily scheduling in order to minimize wastes. ERP helps the business to monitor the traffic in the warehouse, production process and material usage. Apex also keeps in store a safety stock

of raw materials (10-15%) needed to reduce chances of increased demand or become a victim of the supplier.

3.2.4.1 Production Planning and Scheduling

Sales projections and approved orders are the basis of production planning. The planning department uses ERP to develop production schedules that are balanced in terms of labor, machine capacity, and materials availability. There are lines in export products and domestic products.

The cutting, sewing, lasting, assembly, finishing, and packaging departments are separated by the factory floor. Departments are supplied with a daily goal plan and resource plan. They are tracking the completed goods with the help of barcode systems and issuing materials in digital form. Apex maintains production dashboards to monitor productivity, downtime and output quality.

3.2.4.2 Material Requirements Planning (MRP)

The MRP component of Apex ERP system automatically calculates the quantity of raw materials needed by the system using confirmed orders, projected demand and BOMs (Bill of Materials). It ensures that materials are at hand when required to any production line through the generation of weekly procurement schedules.

The system also considers the lead times, safety stocks as well as the current stock position to maximize the purchase orders. Such automation reduces the shortages of materials or overstock cases, improves the precision of procurement, and reduces errors in manuals.

3.2.4.3 Production Strategy

The production approach focuses on scalability and flexibility. Apex has over 30,000 pairs daily manufactured using semi-automated equipment. The company can balance between volume and quality by having separate processes in the local and international market.

The lean manufacturing techniques that are used by Apex include line balancing, JIT (Just-in-Time) and continuous flow. Quality at the source is further emphasized by in-line checks and laboratory tests that are SATRA certified on important merchandise that is being exported.

3.2.4.4 Inventory Strategy

The inventory is divided into three things raw materials, work-in-progress (WIP), and finished goods. The company has barcode tagging on tracking and FIFO to issue the inventory.

The finished goods are stored in regional warehouses and Central Distribution Centre (CDC) to distribute domestically. They are replenished weekly based on the POS sales trends and special deals. Finished goods are packed and ready to send to the export market in line with the customer delivery schedules.

Live inventory management reduces holding expenses and allows decision making to be made quickly. However, the process of automating the warehouse picking and dispatch process can still be enhanced.

3.3 Lean Supply Chain Management at Apex Footwear Limited

To enhance its productivity, minimize its wastes and improve its responsiveness in its supply chain, Apex Footwear Limited has actively incorporated the principles of lean supply chain management. In the production of raw materials till delivery of finished products, the vertically integrated business structure of the company helps in the efficient application of lean methods in the supply chain and the manufacturing process.

1. Elimination of Waste

Apex is committed to finding and getting free of waste in all its manifestations, including excess inventory, overproduction, waiting times, inefficient transportation, and flaws. Structured layouts and visual work instructions are used in the production units to optimize material circulation. Lean flow principles are followed by every department (cutting, sewing, lasting, assembling, and finishing) to guarantee that value-adding tasks are given priority and non-value-adding steps are kept to a minimum.

Apex employs ERP-integrated demand planning in warehouse and procurement operations to prevent material underutilization and overstocking. To prevent needless holding expenses and

guarantee supply continuity, safety stock levels are meticulously maintained (usually between 10 and 15 percent).

2. Just-In-Time (JIT) Material Flow

Apex's lean methods place a strong emphasis on Raw supplies being delivered to the factory floor just in time. Raw materials are distributed in accordance with daily production schedules produced by the ERP system rather than being stored in excess on the line. This guarantees less material handling, lower inventory levels, and a more efficient production flow.

JIT scheduling is particularly important for exports. In order to guarantee on-time production without overcommitting resources, materials are scheduled and released in accordance with the delivery schedule agreed upon with the international buyers.

3. Continuous Improvement (Kaizen)

Kaizen, or continual improvement, is a culture that Apex promotes. Regular improvement meetings are held on each factory floor, during which operators and supervisors pinpoint bottlenecks and suggest improvements to the workflow. Factory management monitors and evaluates these projects. Operators receive training on how to identify quality problems early, flag inefficiencies, and offer ideas for process or layout changes.

4. Quality at Source

Instead of focusing on final product inspections, Apex uses Quality at Source approach. Quality control staff is incorporated in all the essential steps of manufacturing process in order to identify defects at an early stage and reduce the rework and product rejection rates. SATRA-certified tests centers are also facilitating international standards of quality control especially in export goods.

Apex seeks to enhance lean targets of minimized waste levels and enhanced efficiency by reducing potential disruptions or recalls by incorporating quality checkpoints in the supply chain.

5. Demand-Driven Replenishment

The retail operations of Apex are driven by real-time point-of-sale (POS) systems which are connected to the ERP platform. The central planning system automatically makes fast-moving product replenishment orders and receives sales data of over 250 locations. This demand-oriented approach ensures that the shelves in the stores are stocked in an efficient manner without placing the warehouse in an overly straining situation and also assists in keeping the stocks at a lean inventory level.

6. Supplier Collaboration and Lead Time Reduction

Besides the price and quality, the suppliers are selected and nurtured on their ability to deliver on smaller and more frequent quantities and meet the short lead times. This enhances lean operation and reduces the requirement of large inventory buffer.

There is also the sharing of monthly or quarterly demand plans and making of advance requirements with major vendors in a manner of close collaboration by Apex. In such a partnership, suppliers will have an opportunity to align their individual delivery and manufacturing timelines with the lean goals of Apex.

7. Visual Management and Floor Discipline

Visual management tools that are used in Apex production floors to maintain a visual check on material flow, machine availability and the performance of the line include color-coded bins, floor markings, standard work boards and status lights. These systems enhance transparency and reduce downtime by making employees and managers respond to any problem promptly.

Chapter – 04

Findings

4. The Supply Chain Management Practices of Apex Footwear Limited:

Vertically Integrated Supply Chain: Apex Footwear Limited has a vertically integrated supply chain, meaning that it controls all of the principal activities within itself, from manufacturing and distributing finished shoes to processing raw leather in its own tannery. With this arrangement, Apex can reduce its dependence on third-party vendors, which can provide greater control over production schedules, costs and quality. The integration also guarantees quick decision making, better consistency and streamlined departmental communication, all of which are essential for meeting rigid export deadlines and seasonal changes in demand.

Strategic Procurement and Supplier Management: Apex's procurement system is specifically designed to enable sourcing from local and international suppliers. Apex processes its leather, but purchases all the other components from high quality suppliers; soles, linings, packaging, adhesives, synthetic textiles, etc. Price negotiation, sample quality testing, and compliance verification are all part of a rigorous evaluation process that goes into choosing these providers. To ensure flexibility and mitigate supply risk, Apex maintains strong relationships with its suppliers and often works with multiple vendors for critical components. Supplier performance is continuously monitored to ensure quality and on-time delivery of the products.

Efficient Production and Manufacturing Process: Apex has industrial facilities in Savar and Gazipur where they have developed an efficient manufacturing mechanism. This business is organized so that it can perform both make-to-order manufacturing for foreign customers and make-to-stock production for the home market. There are separate production lines for local and foreign orders, the production process is divided into cutting, sewing line, lasting line, assembling line, finishing line, and packaging line. Production planning is closely coordinated with sales and demand forecasts and lean production methods help minimize waste. Quality control measures are employed at each stage of the process to ensure consistent product quality.

Advanced Planning and Forecasting System: Apex uses a data-driven planning and forecasting system to match supply and demand. Based on past sales, retail data, export orders and seasonality, the planning section generates estimates for both monthly and quarterly timeframes. The company's ERP system then utilizes these forecasts in order to schedule labor, production, and procurement. This predictive capability also boosts responsiveness to market

demands and allows for effective utilization of resources, reducing overstock or understock scenarios. Moreover, it allows sales, planning, procurement and manufacturing to coordinate between different functions.

Structured Inventory and Warehouse Management: Apex has a well-organized and centralized inventory management system. The main distribution centre is located near the production facilities and raw materials and finished products are stored in safe, temperature-controlled warehouses. By combining the inventory system with ERP software, it is possible to track stock levels, order status, and consumption rates in real-time. To ensure smooth functioning even in the event of unexpected increase in demand or supplier delays, the organization holds safety stock levels and follows FIFO (First-In, First-Out). Automation is not widely utilized in warehouse operations (despite being one of the most effective solutions), which sometimes leads to inefficient manual handling.

Extensive Distribution and Logistics Network: Apex has one of the most extensive distribution networks in the footwear industry of Bangladesh. Product deliveries are made to over 150 wholesalers, 275 franchise locations, and over 250 company owned retail locations across the nation. Apex relies on its own vehicles in addition to using outside logistical companies to deliver. The commercial and logistics groups are responsible for coordinating overseas delivery, transportation, customs clearance and shipping documents for exports. With this well-structured logistics architecture, Apex is able to ensure timely delivery, meet export deadlines, and respond quickly to retail demands.

Technology and ERP Integration: Apex has adopted leading business technology platforms throughout its supply chain. The company unites departments such as finance, human resources, production planning, inventory and purchasing through an ERP system. A centralized point-of-sales system links retail locations together for synchronized sales and inventory reporting. Connected technology has reduced delays, enabled more accurate planning and made data-driven decision making possible. There are still some areas in logistics and warehouse that require further automation and digitalization to achieve international best practice.

Quality Assurance and Global Compliance: The operations of Apex's supply chain are tightly interconnected with quality assurance. The business has a number of international certifications

to include the Leather Working Group (LWG) Gold certification for sustainable leather sourcing, ISO 9001 for quality management, ISO 14001 for environmental management, ISO 45001 for occupational health and safety, and WRAP for social responsibility. Products undergo intensive testing both during and after manufacture in SATRA accredited laboratories. These requirements improve Apex's reputation as a high-end manufacturer and make it a trusted supplier for customers around the globe.

Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility: Apex has a strong commitment to sustainability throughout its supply chain. Not only does the company use FSC-certified packaging, raw materials with a low impact on the environment such as water-based glues and recycled thermoplastics, the company's tannery is also equipped with an effluent water treatment plant that controls wastewater. There is the use of energy-efficient equipment and solar energy in the production facilities. These activities embody Apex's goal of achieving "Honest Growth" by balancing profit and social and environmental responsibility. The company's commitment to environmentally-friendly and ethical practices also fulfills the increasing demand for such products around the world.

Workforce and Vendor Relationship Management: The success of APEX's supply chain is heavily reliant on its skilled workforce and strong vendor relationships. The corporation has thousands of workers in its factories, and many of them are women. Apex is a safe environment with fair compensation and regular training. Furthermore, a strong relationship with vendors is developed by leveraging joint growth opportunities, sharing problem-solving approaches, and consistent communication. Apex treats its suppliers as strategic partners rather than just vendors, which enhances cooperation and benefits both sides over the long term.

Challenges Identified: Despite its benefits, Apex faces several operational challenges. Being highly dependent on imported raw materials, the business is susceptible to fluctuations and interruptions in global supply chains, price changes, and delays in custom clearance. Manual distribution and warehouse operations can slow them down and put more reliance on labor. The logistics cost is constantly increasing, especially for e-commerce fulfillment and last-mile delivery. Seasonal demand spikes can strain manufacturing lines and often create a temporary limited labor supply. These challenges indicate the need for increased funding on labour retention plans, digital supply chain solutions and automation..

Summary of Findings:

- **Vertically Integrated Supply Chain:** Apex manages the entire process in-house, from tanning the leather down to distributing complete footwear, ensuring quality, cost control, and reliability.
- **Strategic Procurement:** Our company purchases our materials from local and international suppliers, after a rigorous evaluation process of vendors, regular compliance checks and close performance monitoring.
- **Efficient Manufacturing:** separate make-to-stock and make-to-order manufacturing model allows Apex to cater to both the domestic and export market efficiently.
- **Advanced Planning & Forecasting:** With ERP driven forecasting, stockouts/overstock in inventory, and other shortages can be reduced and the planning, production, and sales can be aligned.
- **Inventory & Warehousing:** Centralized and regional warehouses maintain smooth distribution, although manual processes are still being practiced in some operations.
- **Distribution & Logistics:** Apex has one of the biggest distribution network in Bangladesh supported by own fleet & 3PLs.
- **Technology Adoption:** ERP and POS integration enhances operations but more automation is required in logistics and warehousing.
- **Quality & Compliance:** International certifications (ISO, WRAP, BSCI, LWG Gold) make Apex a reliable global supplier.
- **Sustainability:** Initiatives such as ETPs, solar energy, eco-friendly packaging, green procurement.
- **Challenges:** High dependence on imports, increasing logistic costs, low levels of warehouse automation and seasonal labor shortage.

Chapter – 05

Recommendation & Conclusion

5.1 Recommendation:

Several suggestions can be made to improve the operational efficiency, responsiveness and competitiveness of Apex Footwear Limited in view of the thorough analysis of the supply chain management system. Although Apex has worked to create a strong vertically integrated supply chain, further developments need to be made in the fields of automation, supplier co-operation, precision of forecasting and sustainability. In order to reduce manual handling and speed up the process, the warehouse and logistics processes should be enhanced with automatic aids such as barcode scanning, automated picking machines, and real-time vehicle tracking. Second, to reduce its excessive dependence on imports and provide greater reliability of lead time, Apex should increase the number of suppliers of its materials and locate substitute local suppliers for key inputs such as soles and synthetic materials. Third, the business is encouraged to use analytics and forecasting tools driven by AI to make more accurate projections of demand, especially for products that are seasonal and sensitive to fashion. Fourth, in order to allow for more rapid stock replenishment and lower inventory mismatches, Apex should better link production planning and retail point-of-sale systems. Fifth, and increasing the usage of environmentally friendly raw materials and releasing a sustainability report with compliance of GRI standards can improve sustainability practices. Last but not least, optimizing the use of ERP and incorporating lean tools into production and supply chain staff requires staff training. In conclusion, the following tactical measures are recommended:

- To increase picking and inventory accuracy, deploy conveyor systems and other warehouse automation solutions.
- Introduce an online platform for supplier collaboration to streamline order, invoice, and compliance procedures.
- Make an investment in tools for predictive demand planning that take buyer-specific, regional, and seasonal factors into account.
- Create a centralized logistics control tower to track deliveries in real time and save money on transportation.
- To lessen the impact on the environment, increase the usage of biodegradable and sustainable packaging materials.
- By providing simpler return and exchange procedures through online and physical

channels, reverse logistics can be improved.

- To test different planning scenarios and replicate disruptions, create a digital twin of the supply chain.
- To promote continuous improvement and supplier accountability, implement vendor performance scorecards.
- For SKUs that move quickly, include automated replenishment triggers from POS systems into production scheduling.
- Create a supply chain innovation team to investigate cutting-edge technologies such as drones, smart labelling, and blockchain.

Apex Footwear Limited may increase its competitiveness in the home market and more effectively develop its global presence by putting these suggestions into practice and transforming its supply chain into a more flexible, technologically advanced, and ecologically conscious system.

5.2 Conclusion:

The internship at Apex Footwear Limited provided me with knowledge that I find important about the organization, effectiveness and difficulties of a complicated supply chain in a major manufacturing and retail company. According to the report, Apex has basically produced a vertically integrated supply chain model that affords it the authority in procuring raw materials, manufacturing, inventory control, and distribution in both home and foreign markets. Apex is able to guarantee quality, effectiveness and on-time delivery irrespective of all of its activities because to its in-house leather tanneries, state-of-the-art production facilities and ERP-integrated planning tools.

The company's ability to meet fluctuating market demands is backed by the excellent relationships with suppliers, lean manufacturing techniques and commitment to quality at source. Furthermore, Apex is now better able to respond quickly and accurately to changes in demand due to the use of technology such as SAP-based ERP systems, retail shop POS connection, and production performance dashboards. Internationally recognized certifications such as ISO, WRAP, LWG and BSCI, also further integrate sustainability and compliance across the supply chain to make Apex a socially conscious and globally compliant company.

Notwithstanding these advantages, the study also mentioned a series of downsides, including a low potential for automating warehouse operations, some level of dependence on imported goods, increasing logistics costs, and employee turnover during peak periods. A string of strategic proposals have been put forward in response, with a focus on supply chain digitization, better forecasting, automation, diversification of suppliers and green sourcing. Apex will be able to improve long-term competitiveness and reduce risk and increase the agility of the supply chain by putting these suggestions into practice.

All things considered, this report and the internship experience have provided me with a comprehensive understanding of how a high-end supply chain works within the context of the growing footwear industry in Bangladesh. The supply chain of Apex Footwear Limited is a very powerful industry standard, which is ideally poised to grow its market dominance at home and abroad with further investments in efficiency, sustainability and innovation.

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