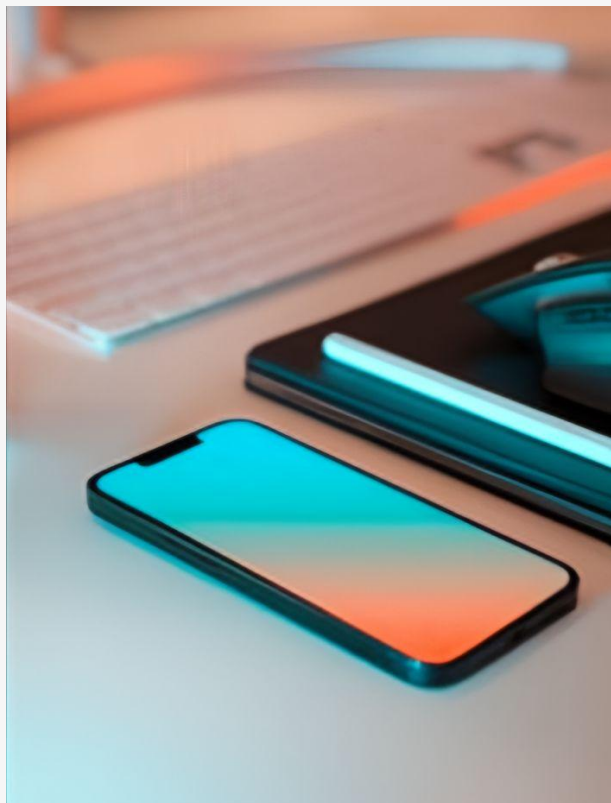


Balancing Human Touch and Digital Transformation in Freight Forwarding



Keeping Warmth in a Digital Era: The New Face of Freight Forwarding

Freight forwarders stand at a crossroads where efficiency and empathy must go hand in hand. Customers increasingly expect real-time visibility, transparent pricing, and seamless digital tools—yet they also value personal reassurance, clear communication, and trust built through human interaction.

The Tug-of-War: Tech vs. Service

It's tempting to think we must choose, either go all-in on impersonal automation or cling to "old school" service. But in reality, companies making the most headway are finding the overlap. This "hybrid approach" lets us serve customers the way they'd want to be treated, while using the right technology to speed up and clarify the process.

We are now embracing a hybrid approach: automation for speed and accuracy, combined with human expertise for judgment and relationships.

The Hybrid Model in Action

Choice and Empowerment

Instead of providing a single "lowest rate," we present multiple carrier and route options, clearly explaining the trade-offs between price, transit time, and reliability. This transparency empowers customers to make informed decisions.

Smart Systems, Human Oversight

While automation platforms like CargoWise provide seamless digital tools, real-time visibility, and transparent process management, exceptions will always arise. It is during these critical moments—such as emergency shipments or market fluctuations—that the manual team intervenes, providing the clear communication and personal reassurance that builds lasting trust.

Contextual Communication

We believe data should tell a story. That's why we augment every rate and route with proactive insights—explaining that a "surcharge" is due to peak season or highlighting that "capacity is tight" on a specific lane. This transforms standard pricing into strategic decision-making, ensuring our clients are never left guessing.

Why Balance Matters

This blended model isn't just a compromise—it's a competitive edge:

Stronger Trust

Customers value both speed and explanation, creating loyalty that price alone can't buy.

Greater Efficiency

Automation frees teams from repetitive tasks, letting them focus on problem-solving and client relationships.

Resilience in Uncertainty

By combining systems and people, we forwarders stay agile in volatile market conditions.

This balance is the foundation of a modern, reliable forwarding partner—one that leverages the best of technology to deliver efficiency, while never losing the human expertise required to navigate complexity and build genuine, lasting trust.

The Road Ahead

Looking forward, three themes will shape the future of freight forwarding:

Deeper Transparency

Full visibility into costs, risks, and carrier choices will become non-negotiable.

AI-Driven Forecasting

Smarter algorithms will predict price shifts and optimize routing before issues arise.

Integrated Systems

Connecting quoting, operations, finance, and CRM tools will eliminate silos and unlock efficiency.

Final Thought

The future of freight forwarding is not about choosing between digital transformation and human touch. It's about fusing the two to create services that are fast, transparent, and—most importantly—trustworthy.

LEADING STAFF

AEL-Berkman Forwarding
Gemma Huang
Operation Supervisor



Eleven Years of Harmony, A Journey of Growth with AEL-Berkman

When I commenced my tenure here at AEL-Berkman Xiamen Branch in May 2013, I brought four years of experience in U.S. route operations, complemented by a profound sense of anticipation and a touch of nervousness.

Little did I know that over the next eleven years, this place would become more than just a workplace. It would become a home for growth, trust, and countless shared achievements.

Starting as a front-line operator, I was grateful for the company's faith in me and the room it gave me to grow. Step by step, I moved into a leadership role, and today, I have the honor of serving as the supervisor of the BKM team. That journey—from newcomer to leader—has been the most valuable chapter of my career.

Professionalism and responsibility have always been my anchors. My early experience with U.S. trade lanes helped me adapt quickly, while the company's ongoing support deepened my skills in team management, process improvement, and customer service. Leading BKM team isn't just a role—it's a responsibility I cherish. I truly enjoy tackling challenges together with my team, and I take pride in every step forward we make.

By nature, I'm optimistic and communicative. I strive to bring that positivity into our workplace and share it with every colleague I meet.

Beyond my professional role, I have a deep appreciation for music. Singing is a longtime passion of mine, offering a creative outlet and a way to recharge, whether I'm exploring classic standards or contemporary hits.

And recently, I've unlocked a new life skill: making steamed buns! What started as a messy battle between flour and water has turned into a small triumph—soft, fluffy buns that actually taste good.

That process—starting with the basics, staying patient through each step, and finally savoring the result—reminds me a lot of our work. Good preparation, careful execution, and persistence always pay off. I'm truly grateful to walk this path alongside all of you.

Looking ahead, I'm excited to keep growing with the company and create more value in our work and discover more joy in life.

And whether you want to talk shop or swap “bun-making secrets”—my door (and my kitchen) is always open.