**A Roadmap for Lateral Trans-shipment in Supply Chain Inventory Management**

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Dear Editor,

We are privileged to submit our manuscript to your esteemed Journal. All of us have materially participated in the research and manuscript preparation.

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This declaration is true, and all authors have approved the final article.

Our study documents a novel approach in lateral trans-shipment as a solution to support manufacturers and wholesalers to drive total inventory costs down whilst increasing customer service level. In view of the highly mathematical probability analysis that were published in previous studies, ordinary managers find these analytical results inaccessible. To fill this knowledge gap, our study has developed a set of five model-based lateral trans-shipment decision rules to support superior inventory management decision. By following these simple decision rules, practitioners can determine whether it is more cost effective to trans-ship or to backorder, size of trans-shipment, favourite wholesaler, preferred supplier, and the extra quantity for preventive lateral trans-shipment.

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We trust that our manuscript serves your publication objectives faithfully and will stimulate ongoing research in this research arena. If you require further clarification or information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,

Henry Lau, Dilupa Nakandala, Paul Shum