

# The Journal of Commerce

Annual Review & Outlook

## Calmer waters, but challenges persist

Shippers turn attention  
to landside pinch points,  
lack of visibility, and  
human resources



**18th Annual TPM Conference:** March 4-7, Long Beach, California

#### **CARRIERS GAIN LEVERAGE**

US importers cautioned  
on tougher contract talks

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#### **DRIVER RULES NEXT?**

Mandated ELDs could spark  
review of work rules

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#### **CAPACITY REIGNS**

Capacity tight on roads,  
rails, ports, and DCs

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#### **AIR CARGO'S ASCENT**

E-commerce, tech shipments  
driving growth in demand

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## Alison Leavitt, Managing Director, Wine & Spirits Shippers Association

JOC · Maritime News

2017 was a tumultuous year in logistics. My expectation is that 2018 will also be volatile, but for different reasons. First of all, we are now accustomed to the complete shift in shipping line alliances, routings, and vessel-sharing agreements. While there are further consolidations coming down the pike with the integration of OOCL within Cosco and Hamburg Sud within Maersk, the paradigm shift toward consolidation and resultant decrease in carriers is complete. While I cannot predict that the current alliances and carriers will be here forever, the industry has changed, and we have adapted.



For the upcoming year(s), I expect to see major shifts in visibility, use of Internet of Things, and connectivity between all parties in the supply chain. The low freight rates that continue to exist in the market will either drive more companies out of business or will drive the creation of greater efficiency, whether through the use of blockchain technology for booking processes, or the use of technologies such as BlackBerry Radar to track the location of transportation assets. As a shipper's association, WSSA is keeping an eye on all of the new technologies in addition to our usual work of negotiating contracts and vying for the most competitive rates and service options for our members. The carriers, both international and domestic, who embrace new technologies and are able to increase their level of service will have an edge.

We are all ready to stop talking about finding solutions for congestion at the ports, rolled cargo because of overbookings, and lack of visibility in the supply chain. The technology is out there to create a major change in the supply chain, and I believe this change is coming. It is time to stop adapting to poor circumstances in the industry and start working with our asset-based partners to implement improvements.

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