

Report On
Supply Chain Management Practices at Thought 360 Limited: A BTL Event
Activation Firm in Bangladesh

By

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An internship report submitted to the BRAC Institute of Governance & Development (BIGD), BRAC University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of ‘Masters in Procurement & Supply Management’

BRAC Institute of Governance & Development
Brac University
July 2025

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my own original work while completing my degree at Brac University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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THOUGHT 360 Limited

Letter of Transmittal

Mahbub Ahmed Chowdhury, FCIPS
Senior Vice President & Head of Procurement
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Faculty at BRAC University
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Subject: Submission of PSM-665: Supply Chain Management in Practice-Report/Practicum.

Dear Sir / Madam,

I would like to request the opportunity to present my internship report titled "Supply Chain Management Practices at Thought 360 Limited: A BTL Event Activation Firm in Bangladesh" as a partial requirement to fulfillment of my master's degree in Procurement and Supply Management (MPSM), BIGD, BRAC University.

I have devoted my utmost effort to compile the report, ensuring it contains all necessary information and proposed recommendations in a highly crucial, concise, and comprehensive manner. I am confident that this report meets the standards expected of an academic report.

Sincerely yours,

Most. Tisha
Student ID: 23282021
BRAC Institute of Governance & Development (BIGD)
BRAC University
Date: July 18, 2025

Non-Disclosure Agreement

This agreement has been made and entered into by and between THOUGHT 360 Limited as the First Party and the undersigned student at BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University as the Second Party. The First Party has allowed the Second Party to prepare a report on the Supply Chain Management practice in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's of Procurement and Supply Management. The Second Party will have the opportunity to work closely with the officials of the organization and have access to official data and information. Based on work experience, data, and information collected, the Second Party will prepare a report.

The Second Party will use all sorts of data and information for academic purposes and will not disclose to any party against the interests of the First Party.

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Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Almighty, the most merciful, for His unwavering blessings. I also extend my profound appreciation to my beloved parents, who have consistently served as my primary source of inspiration and motivation throughout my journey towards earning a Master's in Procurement and Supply Management (MPSM). Their unwavering support has been instrumental in my successful completion of this report and practicum.

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Executive Summary

This report examines the supply chain management (SCM) practices of Thought 360 Limited, a leading Below-the-Line (BTL) event activation firm in Bangladesh. BTL marketing demands agile and efficient supply chains to deliver high-impact, time-sensitive campaigns. Using a qualitative case study approach, this research combines primary data from interviews, observations, and participation in live events with secondary data from event plans, vendor contracts, and inventory records. The study examines the structure, flow, and challenges of SCM in a service-based context, focusing on procurement, logistics, and vendor coordination. Findings reveal that Thought 360's SCM is characterized by flexibility and adaptability but faces challenges such as time constraints, vendor reliability, and inventory inefficiencies. Recommendations include adopting digital inventory systems, enhancing vendor development programs, and integrating technology for real-time coordination. This research contributes to the academic understanding of service-based SCM and provides practical insights for BTL firms.

Keywords: BTL, ATL, SCM,

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List of Acronyms

PO	Purchase Order
WO	Work Order
RFQ	Request for Quotation
BOQ	Bill of Quantity
CIPS	The Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply
SCM	Supply chain management
BTL	Below the Line
ATL	After the Line

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of THOUGHT 360 LIMITED

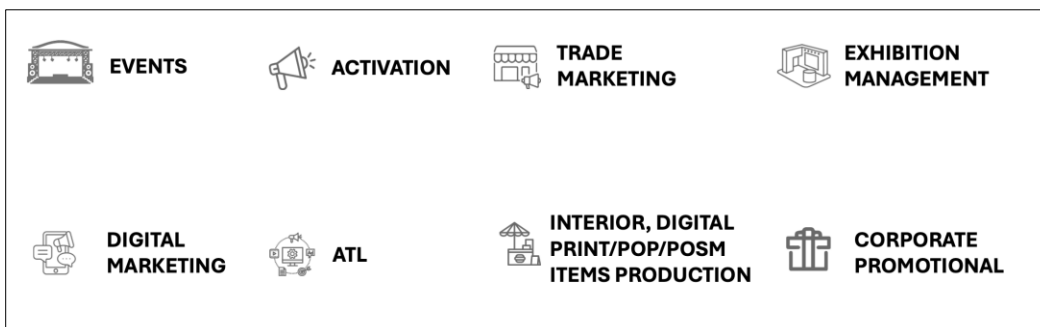
THOUGHT 360 LIMITED is a leading experiential marketing agency based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Established in 2018, the company has rapidly evolved into a dynamic force in the advertising and branding industry, specializing in creating immersive and result-driven campaigns. From conceptualization to execution, THOUGHT 360 delivers end-to-end marketing and promotional solutions tailored to diverse business needs.

- **Vision:** To create integrated, sustainable, and result-oriented marketing experiences that redefine the industry standards and help clients achieve their business goals.
- **Mission:** To deliver unique, engaging, and impactful experiential marketing solutions through innovative strategies, creative storytelling, and flawless execution.

1.2 Core Services

THOUGHT 360 offers a comprehensive suite of services under the umbrella of branding and promotional marketing:

- Event Management & Activation
- Trade Marketing
- Exhibition Management
- ATL/BTL & Digital Marketing
- Interior Design & Digital Printing
- Corporate Promotional Production



1.3 Major Clients

THOUGHT 360 LIMITED has worked with numerous prestigious clients, including:



Their work spans across major industries such as FMCG, telecom, banking, education, real estate, and retail.

1.4 Key Projects

Some of the notable projects include:

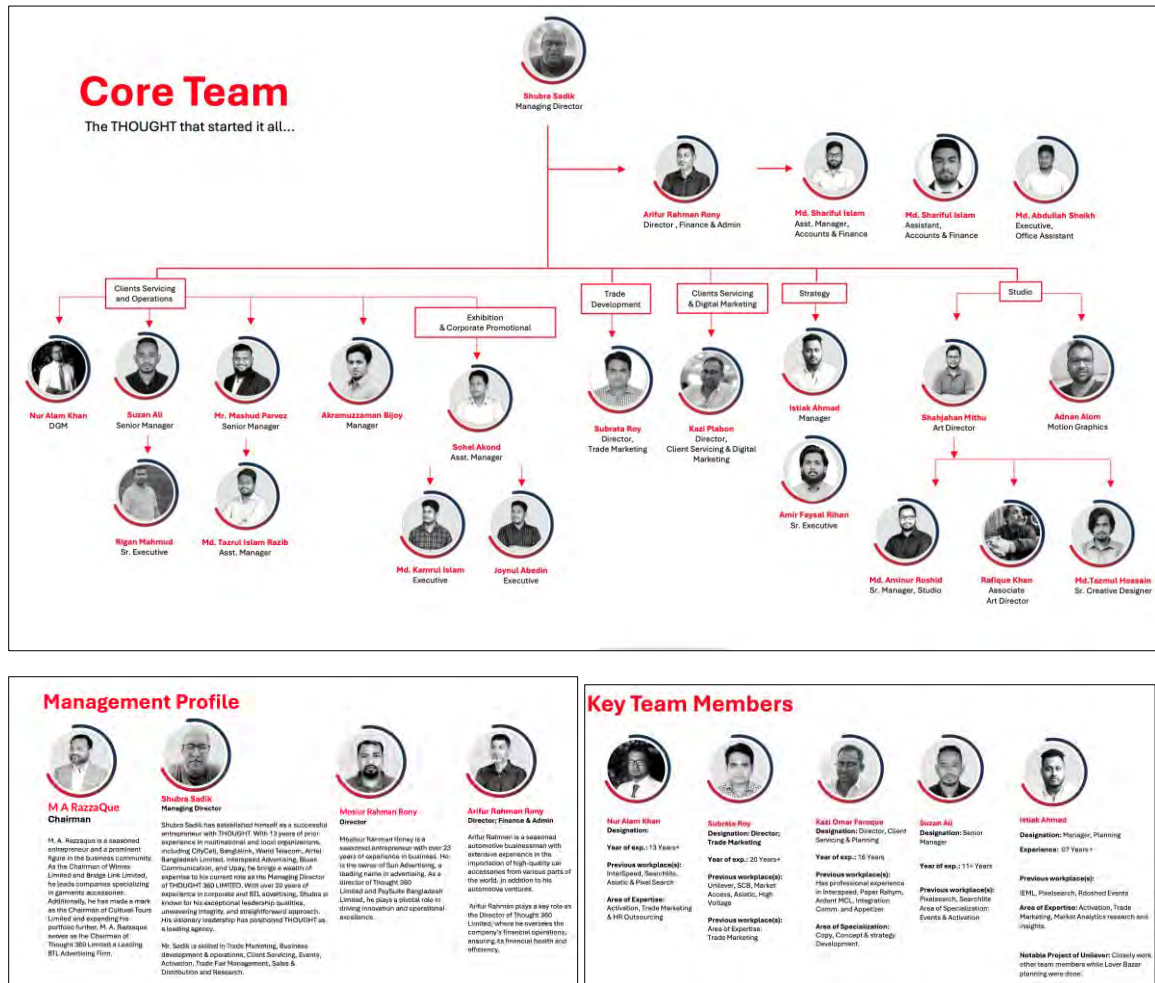
1. ICC World Cup Trophy Tour Bangladesh
2. Mountain Dew Grip Bottle Launch Event
3. Prime Bank Townhall & Iftar Events
4. bKash Signing Ceremonies & Caravan Activations
5. ULAB and BUFT Convocations
6. Shikho SSC Success Celebrations
7. Events for Sri Lankan Embassy and Club

Their portfolio demonstrates a robust capability to handle national and international-scale campaigns.

1.5 Organizational Structure

THOUGHT 360 LIMITED is led by a highly experienced and diverse team. Despite being established a few years ago, the organization hypothetically brings over 100 years of collective experience to the table. The company has succeeded in creating something special and aims to pass on its knowledge to the next generation of professionals.

THOUGHT 360 is led by a highly experienced and diverse team:



1.6 Human Resource and Network

- **Core Team:** 20 members
- **Contractual Staff:** 6 employees
- **Promoter Pool:** 3,000+ brand promoters nationwide
- **Field Coordinators:** 230 across 64 districts
- **International Presence:** Strategic associates in the UK, Middle East (Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Qatar, Oman & etc.), and India

Chapter 2

2.1 Background of the Study

Below-the-Line (BTL) marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for brands to engage directly with consumers through experiential activations. In Bangladesh, the BTL industry has grown significantly, with firms like Thought 360 Limited leading the market in event execution. The success of these activations heavily depends on efficient supply chain management (SCM), which encompasses procurement, logistics, vendor coordination, and resource planning.

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of Thought 360 Limited's SCM practices, identifying key operational challenges and proposing actionable recommendations. The study combines primary data from field observations and interviews with secondary data from company records and industry reports.

The findings aim to contribute to academic research on service-based SCM while offering practical insights for BTL firms seeking to optimize their supply chain operations.

2.2 The Rise of BTL Marketing in Bangladesh

BTL marketing has gained prominence due to its ability to create personalized consumer experiences. Unlike traditional Above-the-Line (ATL) advertising, BTL activations involve direct interaction with target audiences through events, roadshows, and experiential campaigns.

2.3 Unique SCM Challenges in BTL Events

BTL event logistics differ significantly from service supply chains. Key characteristics include:

- **Time Sensitivity:** Events operate on strict deadlines.
- **Dynamic Requirements:** Last-minute client changes are common.
- **Resource Mobilization:** Requires rapid procurement and deployment of materials and manpower.

Thought 360 Limited operates in this high-pressure environment, making its SCM practices a critical area of study.

2.4 Problem Statement

Despite the growing importance of BTL marketing in Bangladesh, there is limited academic research on how firms manage their supply chains under tight deadlines and dynamic conditions. This study addresses the following questions:

1. How does Thought 360 Limited structure its supply chain for event execution?
2. What are the key challenges in procurement, logistics, and vendor management?
3. How can SCM efficiency be improved in BTL firms?

Despite the growing importance of BTL marketing in Bangladesh, academic research on the SCM practices of BTL firms remains scarce. These firms operate in high-pressure environments where short deadlines and client-specific requirements demand exceptional supply chain agility. The existing literature on SCM predominantly focuses on the manufacturing and retail sectors, leaving a gap in understanding service-based supply chains, particularly in the context of event management. This study addresses this gap by examining the SCM practices of Thought 360 Limited, providing insights into operational strategies and challenges in a B2B (Business-to-Business) context.

2.5 Objectives of the Study

1. To understand the structure and flow of supply chain operations at Thought 360 Limited.
2. To analyze vendor management, logistics, and procurement strategies in event execution.
3. To identify key operational challenges in supply chain coordination.
4. To recommend strategies for improving SCM efficiency in BTL firms.

2.6 Research Questions

1. How is the supply chain structured at Thought 360 Limited to support BTL event execution?
2. What strategies are employed for vendor management, logistics, and procurement in BTL campaigns?
3. What are the primary challenges faced in coordinating supply chain activities?
4. How can SCM efficiency be improved in BTL firms like Thought 360 Limited?

2.7 Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on Thought 360 Limited, a single BTL firm in Bangladesh, limiting its generalizability to other firms or regions. Data collection was constrained by the duration of the internship, which may not capture seasonal variations in SCM practices. Additionally, access to sensitive financial data was restricted, limiting the analysis of cost-related aspects.

2.8 Challenges in BTL Supply Chains

BTL supply chains face unique challenges, including short planning horizons, fluctuating material requirements, and dependence on third-party vendors. Infrastructural constraints, such as unreliable transportation networks, further complicate logistics in developing countries like Bangladesh. Additionally, the lack of standardized processes in BTL firms can lead to inefficiencies in resource allocation and inventory management.

2.9 Methodology

2.9.1 Research Design:

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach to explore SCM practices at Thought 360 Limited. The case study method is ideal for in-depth analysis of complex organizational processes within their real-world context. By focusing on a single firm, the study provides a detailed understanding of SCM dynamics in a BTL environment.

2.9.2 Data Collection

(i) Primary Data: Observations and participation during live event projects.

- a) Direct observations during live event projects, including setup, execution, and debriefing phases.
- b) Participation in event planning, reviewing and monitoring activities.
- c) Semi-structured interviews with five supply chain personnel and three event managers at Thought 360 Limited.

(ii) Secondary Data: Review of event plans, vendor contracts, and inventory records

- a) Event plans and schedules for 10 BTL campaigns.
- b) Vendor contracts and performance records.
- c) Inventory logs and procurement reports.

2.9.3 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive and thematic analysis techniques. Interview transcripts and field notes were coded to identify themes related to SCM structure, vendor management, logistics, and challenges. Secondary data were used to triangulate findings, ensuring reliability and validity. The analysis focused on identifying patterns, operational bottlenecks, and effective practices.

Chapter 3

3.0 Literature Review

This section reviews academic literature on SCM in service industries, focusing on:

3.1 Theoretical Aspect of Supply Chain Management in Service Industries

Supply Chain Management (SCM) in service-based industries differs significantly from traditional manufacturing SCM due to its focus on intangible outputs, real-time coordination, and customer-centric operations (Ellram et al., 2004). The following theoretical frameworks are particularly relevant to BTL event activation firms like Thought 360 Limited:

3.1.1 Agile Supply Chain Theory (Christopher & Towill, 2001)

Agility in SCM emphasizes flexibility, rapid response to changes, and lean operations. For BTL firms, agility is critical due to:

- **Short lead times** (events often have 1-2 weeks of planning).
- **Unpredictable client demands** (last-minute changes in event scope).
- **Dynamic resource allocation** (manpower and materials must be adjusted quickly).

3.1.2 Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004)

This theory posits that value is co-created through interactions between service providers and clients. In BTL marketing:

- **Vendor partnerships** are crucial for seamless execution.
- **Customer experience** is the primary output, requiring tight SCM coordination.

3.1.3 Lean Principles in Service SCM (Womack & Jones, 2003)

Lean thinking focuses on eliminating waste (e.g., excess inventory, delays). For Thought 360 Limited:

- **Just-in-Time (JIT) procurement** reduces storage costs.
- **Efficient manpower deployment** avoids overstaffing.

3.1.4 SCM in Event Management: Key Studies

3.1.4.1 Event Logistics and Operational Challenges (Wagen & White, 2018)

A study on large-scale event management identified:

- **Logistics bottlenecks** (e.g., transportation delays, material shortages).
- **Vendor dependency risks** (e.g., unreliable suppliers causing disruptions).

3.1.4.2 Procurement Strategies for Short-Deadline Events (Monczka et al., 2015)

Findings from global event firms suggest:

- **Strategic supplier partnerships** reduce procurement lead times.
- **Dynamic contracting** (flexible terms for last-minute changes) improves adaptability.

3.1.4.3 Technology Integration in Event SCM (Gartner, 2020)

- **Digital procurement tools** (e.g., e-sourcing platforms) enhance transparency.
- **Real-time tracking systems** (e.g., RFID, GPS) improve logistics visibility.

3.1.4.4 Strategic Relationships in Event SCM (CIPS Relationship Spectrum 2023)

This concept emphasizes that strong supplier relationships create smooth and successful event operations. For Thought 360 Limited:

- Strong supplier partnerships enhance reliability during high-pressure events.
- Working closely with trusted suppliers ensures events are delivered on time and to high standards.
- Good relationships encourage suppliers to share creative ideas that enhance event experiences.
- Trust and mutual understanding make it easier to handle unexpected changes or urgent needs.
- Treating suppliers as strategic partners rather than transactional vendors increases loyalty and support for last-minute needs.
- Overall, these partnerships help Thought 360 provide reliable, flexible, and high-quality services to its clients.

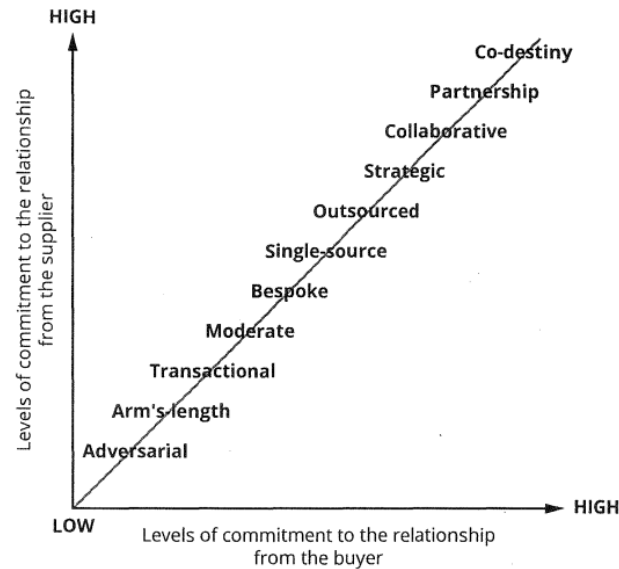


Figure 1.1 The CIPS Relationship Spectrum (Copyright © CIPS 2023. All Rights Reserved)

3.2 Porter's Five Forces Applied to Event Management SCM

Applying Porter's Five Forces to Thought 360 Limited's supply chain reveals:

- Threat of New Entrants: HIGH**
 Entry barriers in the events industry are low, increasing competition. Differentiation through premium experiences, exclusive vendor partnerships, and unique event concepts is essential.
- Bargaining Power of Companies (Suppliers): LOW**
 Due to numerous suppliers and vendors, their bargaining power is generally low. However, Thought 360 Limited maintains strategic supplier relationships to ensure quality and reliability.
- Bargaining Power of Clients: HIGH**
 Clients have many options and can easily switch providers. Thus, exceptional service, innovative event solutions, and strong client relationships are crucial for retention.
- Threat of Substitute Services: LOW to MODERATE**
 While alternative marketing channels (e.g., digital campaigns) may substitute for

physical events in some cases, customized, experiential events remain irreplaceable for engagement and branding objectives.

- **Competitive Rivalry: HIGH**

Competition is intense, with numerous firms vying for market share. Continuous innovation, superior execution, and strategic partnerships help maintain Thought 360 Limited's competitive advantage.



3.3 Kraljic Matrix in Event SCM

This tool helps firms manage procurement risks and supplier importance. In event management:

- Classifies items into four categories: non-critical, leverage, bottleneck, and strategic.
- Thought 360 Limited uses it to prioritise resources – for example, venue bookings as strategic items needing strong relationships.
- Bottleneck items like specialist AV equipment require risk management to avoid delays.
- Applying this matrix ensures balanced procurement decisions for cost efficiency and event reliability

3.4 Supply Preferencing Model in Event SCM

This model helps firms understand how suppliers view them as customers. In event management:

- Suppliers categorise clients based on attractiveness and business volume.
- Thought 360 Limited can become a preferred client by offering fair terms and long-term opportunities.
- Being a preferred customer ensures priority service, better pricing, and stronger support during peak periods.
- Strategic use of this model helps build reliable supplier relationships for smooth event delivery.

3.5 Empirical Research on BTL Marketing Supply Chains

3.5.1 Case Study: BTL Activation Firms in India (Kumar & Sharma, 2019)

A study of Indian BTL agencies found:

- **Top Challenges:**
 - 68% faced delays due to vendor issues.
 - 45% reported budget overruns from last-minute procurement.
- **Best Practices:**
 - Centralized logistics hubs reduced costs by 20%.
 - Automated inventory tracking improved material availability.

3.5.2 Bangladesh Context: SCM in Experiential Marketing (Rahman, 2021)

A local study highlighted:

- Fragmented vendor networks increase coordination costs.
- Limited digital adoption in procurement (only 15% of firms use e-procurement).

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Supply Chain Management Practices at Thought 360 Limited

Thought 360 Limited's SCM operations are organized into three core components: procurement, logistics, and vendor management. Procurement involves sourcing materials such as banners, props, and promotional items, often tailored to client specifications. Logistics encompasses transportation, storage, and on-site setup, requiring coordination across multiple locations in Bangladesh. Vendor management includes selecting and monitoring third-party suppliers for services like printing, fabrication, and manpower. The supply chain flow begins with client briefings, followed by resource planning, vendor allocation, and logistics execution. A typical campaign involves 10–15 vendors, 50–100 material items, and 20–50 personnel, coordinated within a 7–14-day timeline. The process is highly iterative, with frequent adjustments to accommodate client feedback and external constraints.

4.2 Structure and Flow of Supply Chain Operations

The supply chain of an event management company encompasses planning, sourcing, delivery, and execution of events. Key components include:

- **Planning and Design:** Defining event requirements (e.g., venue, catering, decor, audio-visual equipment).
- **Sourcing:** Procuring materials and services from vendors.
- **Logistics:** Transporting resources to event locations.
- **Execution:** Coordinating on-site setup and delivery.
- **Post-Event:** Managing returns, waste, and vendor payments.

4.3 Flow of Operations

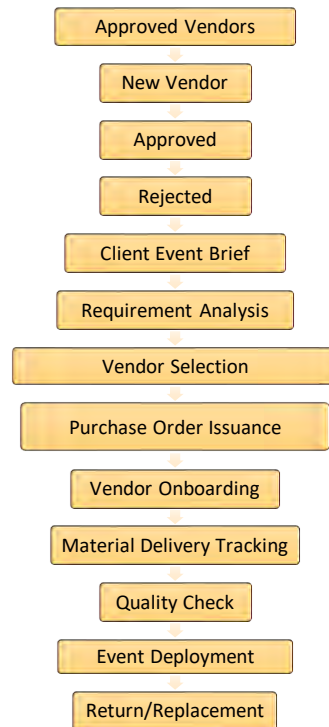
1. **Client Brief:** The process begins with a client brief outlining event scope, budget, and requirements.
2. **Resource Identification:** The company identifies required materials (e.g., stage equipment, catering supplies) and services (e.g., performers, security).
3. **Vendor Coordination:** Vendors are selected based on cost, reliability, and quality.
4. **Logistics Planning:** Transport and delivery schedules are established.
5. **Event Execution:** Resources are deployed, and services are executed on-site.
6. **Post-Event Operations:** Equipment is returned, invoices are settled, and feedback is collected.

The flow is cyclical, with feedback from each event informing future planning.

4.4 Procurement Process

Procurement involves sourcing materials and services, typically through:

Flowchart 1: Procurement Workflow



4.5 Strategies and Tools Applied to Event Management

- **Supplier Diversification:** Engaging multiple suppliers to mitigate risks.
- **Long-Term Contracts:** Locking in prices and ensuring priority service.
- **Sustainability Focus:** Prioritizing eco-friendly vendors to align with client preferences.

4.6 Vendor Relationship Management

Understanding **how suppliers view Thought 360** enables effective negotiation and relationship management:

- For AV or venue suppliers where Thought 360 brings significant annual business (high value, high attractiveness), it will be treated as a **core customer** with priority support.
- For niche creative freelancers (low volume, low profitability), Thought 360 may be treated as a **nuisance customer**, requiring relationship nurturing to ensure service commitment.

This knowledge informs procurement strategy to **improve supplier engagement and secure preferential terms.**

- **Contracts:** Formal agreements outline deliverables, timelines, and penalties for non-compliance.
- **Communication:** Regular updates via meetings or digital platforms ensure alignment.
- **Performance Evaluation:** Post-event reviews assess vendor performance for future engagements.

Key Steps:

1. **Vendor Selection:** 80% of procurement uses pre-approved vendors (Table 1).
2. **Quality Checks:** 15% of materials require replacements due to defects.

Table 1: Vendor Procurement Metrics

Metric	Performance	Industry Benchmark
On-time delivery rate	78%	85%
Cost compliance	92%	90%
Quality rejection rate	15%	10%

Table 2: Vendor Performance Scorecard

Vendor	On-Time Delivery	Cost Accuracy	Quality Score	Overall Rating
Vendor A	85%	90%	88%	★★★★☆
Vendor B	70%	95%	75%	★★★★☆
Vendor C	92%	88%	91%	★★★★★

Scoring Criteria:

- ★★★★★ = 90-100% compliance
- ★★★★☆ = 80-89%
- ★★★☆☆ = 70-79%

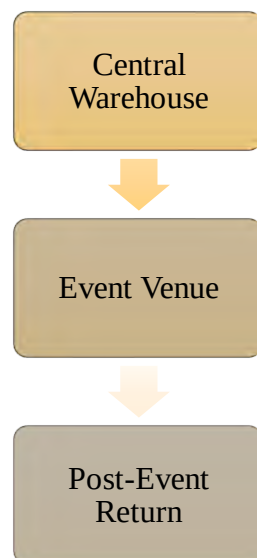
4.7 Logistics and Material Mobilization

Logistics operations involve transporting materials to event venues, often across urban and rural areas. Challenges include traffic congestion, unreliable transportation networks, and last-minute client changes. Procurement is complicated by the need for customized items, such as branded merchandise, which requires close coordination with suppliers. Thought 360 uses a just-in-time (JIT) approach to minimize inventory costs, but this increases dependency on timely supplier deliveries.

Logistics involves transporting equipment, materials, and personnel to event venues. Key aspects include:

- **Transportation:** Use of third-party logistics providers or in-house vehicles.
- **Scheduling:** Aligning delivery timelines with event schedules.
- **Storage:** Temporary warehousing for equipment and materials.

Chart 1: Material Flow Diagram



Challenges Identified:

- **Delays:** Traffic, weather, or vendor issues can disrupt schedules.
- **Cost Overruns:** Unexpected fuel price hikes or expedited shipping costs.
- **Coordination Complexity:** Managing multiple vendors and delivery points.
- **Last-mile delays:** 30% of events face 1-2 day delays
- **Damage in transit:** 8% of materials require replacements.

4.8 Case Studies of BTL Campaigns

To illustrate SCM practices, two campaigns were analyzed:

- **Campaign A:** Urban Product Launch: A multinational brand's product launch in Dhaka required 12 vendors, 80 material items, and a 10-day timeline. Challenges included delayed material deliveries due to traffic congestion and last-minute client changes, resolved through backup vendors and overtime work.
- **Campaign B:** Rural Promotional Event: A community engagement event in a rural area involved 8 vendors and 50 personnel. Logistics challenges included poor road conditions, requiring alternative transportation routes.

4.9 Key Operational Challenges

1. **Vendor Reliability:** Inconsistent vendor performance disrupts event timelines.
2. **Inventory Management:** Overstocking or understocking materials leads to inefficiencies.
3. **Cost Management:** Fluctuating costs and unexpected expenses strain budgets.
4. **Coordination Complexity:** Managing multiple stakeholders increases the risk of miscommunication.
5. **Sustainability Pressures:** Growing demand for eco-friendly practices requires supply chain adjustments.

Chapter 5

5.0 Recommendations for Improving Supply Chain Efficiency

Based on the findings, the following strategies are proposed to improve SCM efficiency at Thought 360 Limited:

1. Centralized Inventory System:

Implement a cloud-based inventory management system to track materials in real-time, reducing overstocking and shortages. Software like Odoo or Zoho Inventory could streamline procurement processes.

2. Vendor Development Programs:

Establish training workshops and certification programs to improve vendor reliability and service quality. Regular performance audits can ensure accountability.

3. Contingency Planning:

Develop standardized contingency plans for common disruptions, such as vendor delays or logistics failures. Backup vendors and alternative transportation routes should be pre-identified.

4. Technology Integration:

Adopt supply chain management software (e.g., SAP Event Management) for real-time tracking of resources and vendor performance. Mobile apps for field staff can improve communication during event execution.

5. Localized Logistics Hubs:

Establish regional storage facilities to reduce transportation delays for rural events, addressing Bangladesh's infrastructural constraints.

6. Enhance Procurement Processes:

- Implement automated procurement systems to streamline RFPs and order tracking.
- Negotiate bulk discounts and maintain a diversified supplier base to mitigate risks.

7. Focus on Sustainability:

- Source from vendors with sustainable practices (e.g., reusable decor, biodegradable materials).
- Train staff on eco-friendly event management practices.

8. Improve Inventory Management:

- Adopt just-in-time inventory systems to minimize storage costs.
- Use predictive analytics to forecast material needs based on event scale and type.

Chapter 6

6.0 Conclusion

The supply chain of an event management company is a complex but critical component of delivering successful events. By addressing challenges such as vendor reliability, logistics inefficiencies, and procurement delays, the company can enhance operational performance. Implementing technology-driven solutions, fostering strong vendor relationships, and prioritizing sustainability will drive efficiency and client satisfaction. These recommendations provide a roadmap for optimizing the supply chain, ensuring seamless event execution and long-term success.

Chapter 7

7.1 References

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7.2 Appendix: Interview Guide

- 1) How is the supply chain structured at Thought 360 Limited to support BTL campaigns?
- 2) What strategies are used to select and manage vendors for event execution?
- 3) What are the main challenges in coordinating logistics for time-sensitive campaigns?
- 4) How are procurement processes tailored to meet client-specific requirements?
- 5) What technologies or tools are currently used to manage SCM operations?