

Post-pandemic industry: Just-in-time practices will help suppliers rebound

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Just-in-time practices could help industry and the economy be rebuilt as countries emerge from pandemic lockdown, according to research published in the *International Journal of Services Operations and*

Informatics.

As the potentially devastating effects of the rapid spread of COVID-19 early in 2020 and the subsequent pandemic became obvious, governments were forced to implement rules and regulations in an attempt to hinder the spread of the virus that causes the disease, SARS-CoV-2. These so-called lockdown measures involved shutting down parts of many industries, the hospitality sector, non-essential shopping, and limiting interpersonal contact through curfews and rules on social distancing. Unfortunately, various industries have been affected badly having been forced to halt the manufacture of countless products as demand plummeted and moreover people were limited in what they needed and could purchase.

Surbhi Singhal of the Department of Statistics at Vardhaman College in Bijnor, India, and colleagues have looked at how many suppliers will have remaining inventory to fulfill the renewed consumer demand for products after the lockdown as the [world economy](#) resurfaces. They explain how a just-in-time approach to supply could be the most effective way for industries to recover from the pandemic. Just-in-time has been an ephemeral concept for as long as companies have manufactured goods, if not longer.

The just-in-time idea was implemented widely after the Second World War to allow industry to rebuild more efficiently by only buying inventory, storing and transporting that inventory as it needed it. Moreover, it would manufacture and supply only what was needed when it was needed. The strategy was formalized and used to great effect in the 1960s and 1970s by Toyota. Singhal and colleagues now suggest that the time is right for JIT to be employed widely for the post-pandemic world. They have developed a new mathematical model of JIT that could reduce supply and demand problems with resources, make production more efficient, cut storage and transportation needs, and perhaps even

shift the notion of quality inspection to the customer.

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the conventional approaches to many aspects of life must change, at least for the time being. This could offer us a great opportunity if we can recover efficiently and not revert to old, wasteful approaches in industry. Having JIT models in place ahead of the next pandemic might also serve us well and make industry, and society, as a whole more resilient.

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More information: S.R. Singh et al. JIT: the best approach after lockdown in country, *International Journal of Services Operations and Informatics* (2021). [DOI: 10.1504/IJSOI.2021.114110](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSOI.2021.114110)

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