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Change Up - A blog about doing well and doing good

Peeking behind the curtain – The green way to get products from there to here

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Isn't the heart of green supply chain strategies asking whether the ends justify the means?

For instance, is buying California-grown organic salad a poor environmental choice because of the pollution from diesel truck fuel used to transport it to the East Coast? Would that be offset if the salad packaging was made with wind energy instead of fossil fuels?

Most often the supply chain is invisible to the end consumer who won't know about the natural gas powered truck fleet, the solar powered warehouses and newly constructed depots, all designed with environmental conservation in mind, as well as reducing waste and cutting costs.

The June issue of the supply chain industry trade magazine [Inbound Logistics](#) highlights [75 green supply chain partners](#) as measured in three areas: participation in public-private partnerships; corporate sustainability initiatives; and collaborative customer-driven projects.

Here are some of the companies that are investing in innovations that are changing what's happening behind the scenes whenever and however products get from source to shelf:

- [A. Duie Pyle](#) - yes it's hard to believe that a trucking company is on the list, but trucking is still the predominant means of getting goods from one place to another in this country. Industry leaders acknowledge the need to step up sustainability if they will win business from customers that are increasingly measuring every single ripple of their supply chain choices for best green standards. A. Duie Pyle earned recognition for its megawatt solar installation for its 570,000-squarefoot warehousing and distribution facility in Pennsylvania, supplying 100 percent of its electricity needs. Other environmental measures include fuel-efficient equipment and engine idling controls, recycling and waste.

- Trays and pallets may sound arcane, but millions of them are used every day to move product. [Intelligent Global Pooling Systems](#) rents plastic pallets that are embedded with RFID tags, kind of like LoJack for your car so that at any time someone can track a shipment and make adjustments if necessary. The pallets are lightweight, requiring less energy, and thus less cost, to transport them, allowing more focus on the product. According to their greenhouse gas calculator on their website, the switch to plastic pallets from wood ones have saved over 1.5 million trees, nearly 1.5 million gallons of fuel and averted more than 32 million pounds of greenhouse gases. Who'd have think that you could make that sort of an impact with a pallet?



The Port of Tacoma sets a green standard.

[The Port of Tacoma](#) in Washington State was singled out for its efforts to reduce seaport-related air emissions through the [Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy](#), clean up contaminated land and return it to productive use, and find innovative solutions to manage storm water runoff. Their leadership is important, as their mandates are tripping a domino effect of sustainable change among shippers and the community alike.

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About the Author



President and Founder of Giving Strong, Inc. Christen is an experienced Social Responsibility professional, who loves making a difference, and has fun doing it. She's developed impactful, strategic giving and advocacy programs for organizations as diverse as public companies, family foundations and small start ups. A former journalist and Public Relations executive, she enjoys persuading and influencing others to make change for the better.