Manufacturing AI Logistics Conference 2026 in Hiroshima | Official Record & Contributed Messages

AI Logistics Begins with Trust.

Messages from 11 Leaders Shaping the Future of Manufacturing and Logistics

October 14, 2026 | Hiroshima International Conference Center

Introduction | The Question Raised by the Conference

Manufacturing and logistics are at a major turning point. Labor shortages, limited transport capacity, and increasingly complex supply chains are converging with rapid advances in AI. This raises fundamental questions about decisions that have long depended on human experience and coordination.

Held in Hiroshima on October 14, 2026, the Manufacturing AI Logistics Conference 2026 in Hiroshima was designed to explore this change not merely as technological progress, but as a challenge: how can AI be used safely in manufacturing and logistics operations, connect companies and people, and create lasting value?

At its heart is a clear question: Under what conditions can companies and frontline teams trust, adopt, and act on AI-generated decisions? How can they protect not only operational efficiency but also safety, quality, continuity of supply, fair relationships with business partners, and accountability for decisions?

Why We Are Publishing This Collection

We have compiled this publication to carry the perspectives shared at the conference beyond a single day and into real-world implementation. The 11 contributed messages capture the conditions for implementation that emerge precisely because their authors represent different organizations, roles, and approaches to AI.

This is neither a verbatim transcript of the presentations nor a record of additional interviews. It is an interview-style feature built around written messages contributed on a common theme, with chapter introductions and editorial commentary to guide readers. Each message represents its author's own views; the editorial notes reflect the organizer's interpretation.

The conference's achievements cannot be measured by attendance figures or the fact that it took place alone. Its deeper value lies in making the concerns of different organizations visible and carrying them into further dialogue, pilots, and collaboration. We hope this publication serves as a shared language for that work.

Five Implementation Challenges Emerging from the Conference

- Verifiability of decisions — Being able to confirm that AI proposals satisfy predefined conditions.
- Human–AI accountability — Clearly defining the boundary between decision support and final decision-making.
- Preserving frontline expertise — Turning tacit knowledge and the physical movement of goods into actionable information.
- Cross-company agreement — Collaborating in ways that reflect each company's objectives and constraints, not efficiency alone.
- Linking policy and practice — Translating public policy, rules, and technology into concrete operations.

Chapter 1 | How Do We Build Trustworthy AI?

Defining the conditions, verification methods, and responsibilities involved in accepting AI outputs is the starting point for integrating AI into business operations.

Masaya Higashi

President and CEO, ONZALINX Co., Ltd. / Representative, Hiroshima AI Assurance Council

Presentation: How Will AI Transform Logistics? — The End of a Century of Conventional Wisdom

Contributed Message

What matters most to me is making AI decisions verifiable. Companies in manufacturing and logistics have different objectives and constraints. This is precisely why trustworthy AI implementation requires a mechanism through which AI systems can translate those objectives and verify that an agreed decision does not unfairly disadvantage any particular company.

Editorial Note | Emphasizes the importance of verifying AI-mediated agreements against each company's objectives and constraints so that no participant bears an unfair disadvantage.

Hidemitsu Maeki

President and CEO, AI Assurance, Inc. / Developer of the Responsibility OS

Presentation: AI Is Changing the Rules of Competition in Manufacturing

Contributed Message

I believe the most important step in implementing the Hiroshima AI Process in real-world operations is not simply to "trust" AI decisions, but to define clear corporate rules specifying the conditions under which those decisions may be accepted and executed. By retaining verifiable records of decision grounds and acceptance criteria—and preventing decisions that fail to meet those criteria from being adopted or carried out—we can bring safe, secure, and trustworthy AI into actual workplaces.

Editorial Note | Calls for defining acceptance and execution criteria in advance and ensuring that decisions cannot proceed when those criteria are not met.

Katsuyuki Imai

Group Manager, Public Business Department, Industry Solutions Business Division, Solutions Segment, Computer Engineering & Consulting Ltd. (CEC)

Presentation: Truck Waiting Time Is Not Just an Operational Issue; It Is a Business Risk

Contributed Message

Manufacturing and logistics companies operate as part of a supply chain. Accordingly, deploying AI in their operations requires safety-by-design across the entire supply chain. I believe safe, secure, and trustworthy AI depends on incorporating risk assessment, bias testing, and explainability into the development process, while defining the scope and governance of data sharing, including with business partners.

Editorial Note | Advocates integrating risk assessment, bias testing, explainability, and data governance into systems from the development stage.

Chapter 2 | Designing the Roles of Humans and AI

Safety, quality, and reliable supply are values that frontline operations must protect. Effective AI use requires designing the relationship between decision-support technology and the people accountable for decisions.

Kensuke Hamada

Deputy General Manager, Production Control and Logistics Division, Mazda Motor Corporation

Panel Discussion: Can Hiroshima Become a Testbed for AI Logistics?

Contributed Message

I see AI not as a replacement for human judgment but as a means of supporting it. AI can analyze vast amounts of data and present insights and options, while people make the final decisions based on experience, values, and responsibility. This division of roles is vital. In logistics and manufacturing operations, we are responsible for protecting not only efficiency but also safety, quality, and stable supply. That is why people must remain responsible for final decisions. By combining the respective strengths of people and AI, we can use AI safely, securely, and with confidence.

Editorial Note | Stresses a clear division between the options proposed by AI and the responsibilities borne by people, while safeguarding frontline safety and quality.

Mizuki Kusaka

President and CEO, Ascend Co., Ltd.

Presentation: Why General-Purpose AI Alone Will Not Transform Logistics Operations

Contributed Message

To implement safe, secure, and trustworthy AI in logistics operations, we must do more than convert tacit frontline knowledge into data. We must also articulate the criteria for what constitutes a good decision. This means defining what AI may handle, when people must intervene, and who holds ultimate responsibility; documenting decision processes; and continuously improving based on frontline outcomes. Designing technology and operations together is what makes AI trustworthy and effective.

Editorial Note | Highlights the need to integrate decision criteria, human involvement, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Yasuyuki Okazaki

Investment Manager, MLC Ventures Co., Ltd. (Mitsubishi Logistics CVC)

Presentation: Where Major Logistics Companies Stand on Open Innovation and Digital Transformation

Contributed Message

Logistics supports the everyday functioning of society by delivering important goods safely and reliably. Going forward, the use of AI will directly affect corporate competitiveness, making its adoption on the ground unavoidable. That is why I believe two things matter equally: establishing rules for using AI safely and confidently, and fostering a mindset in which every employee actively seeks to make good use of it.

Editorial Note | Argues that both rules and changes in users' attitudes and behavior are essential to embedding AI in day-to-day operations.

Chapter 3 | Turning Frontline Knowledge into a Force for Change

From making physical flows visible through RFID to articulating tacit expertise, AI creates value when data is connected to real operational improvement.

Oho Matsuura

Director, Systems Development Department, K-WAYS Co., Ltd.

Presentation: Beyond the Movement of Goods — From Visibility to Operational Improvement

Contributed Message

Where goods move, data is created. RFID × AI can transform logistics operations. By turning the movement of goods on the ground into data, we can progress from “visibility” to “operational improvement.” This is the first step toward logistics DX in the AI era.

Editorial Note | Positions data on the physical movement of goods as the starting point for advancing from visualization to operational improvement.

Kohei Fujita

Head of Venture Investment Strategy, Investment Business Department, Mercuria Investment Co., Ltd.

Presentation: Where Major Logistics Companies Stand on Open Innovation and Digital Transformation

Contributed Message

I believe it is more important to start using AI than to keep debating it. Manufacturing and logistics possess a vast reservoir of tacit knowledge held only by experienced frontline professionals. If we can make that knowledge usable by AI and share it as organizational know-how, it will become a major competitive advantage. We have entered an era in which not using AI is itself a risk.

Editorial Note | Sees converting experienced workers’ tacit knowledge into shared organizational expertise as a source of competitiveness in the AI era.

Chapter 4 | Transforming Logistics Across Company Boundaries

No company can transform logistics alone. Shippers, warehouse operators, carriers, investors, and government must act on a foundation of trust and dialogue.

Takuya Saito

Consultant, Social Innovation Promotion Office, Social Infrastructure Business Division, LTS, Inc.

Presentation: Where Major Logistics Companies Stand on Open Innovation and Digital Transformation

Contributed Message

I believe the most important issue in spreading AI and DX throughout logistics is “co-creation.” Technology is evolving so rapidly that agreement among stakeholders often struggles to keep pace, raising the barriers to collaboration. Trusting relationships among people with different perspectives are the key to moving co-creation forward. I believe that, from this region associated with the Hiroshima AI Process, such trust can unlock new possibilities and help create a logistics region that leads the world.

Editorial Note | Explains why trust across different positions is a prerequisite for co-creation when consensus-building struggles to keep up with technological progress.

Koji Takajo

Director, Innovation Promotion Division, Regional Economy Department, Chugoku Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

Presentation: Can Hiroshima Become a Testbed for AI Logistics? — A Japan-Origin Logistics Innovation Vision from Government, Industry, and Academia

Contributed Message

Realizing safe, secure, and trustworthy AI logistics means rethinking logistics strategy as part of corporate strategy and building new relationships among shippers, warehouse operators, and transport providers through AI implementation. From the perspective of open innovation, this holds considerable potential to create new value

with logistics as its starting point. To turn logistics into a new frontier and engine of growth, it is important to deepen communication through both open and closed discussions aimed at mutual understanding and agreement among stakeholders.

Editorial Note | Highlights how treating logistics as a strategic management issue and redesigning relationships among companies can unlock new growth.

Yuji Kitamura

Assistant Director, Environment and Logistics Division, Transport Policy Department, Chugoku District Transport Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

Presentation: Where Is Logistics Policy Heading? Current Conditions and Challenges Facing Government

Contributed Message

Shortages in transport capacity are an urgent issue for logistics policy. Improving logistics efficiency and advancing logistics DX are necessary measures for maintaining essential logistics functions. The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism supports shippers and logistics operators through the Act on Advancement of Integration and Streamlining of Distribution Business and logistics-related subsidy programs, and examples of their use are accumulating. Obstacles to logistics efficiency—and ways to overcome them—vary by company, but I hope this presentation offers practical ideas for improvement.

Editorial Note | Frames transport capacity shortages as a policy challenge and logistics efficiency and DX as practical responses.

Conclusion | Turning Trust into Systems That Work on the Ground

These 11 messages do not repeat a single conclusion. Some speak of co-creation; others emphasize human decision-making or verifiable acceptance criteria. Yet they resonate around a common point: using AI safely in real operations requires us to design not only technology, but also processes, people's roles, rules, and relationships among companies.

Our ambition in Hiroshima is not simply to discuss what AI might make possible. It is to bring together shippers, manufacturers, logistics providers, technology companies, government, and researchers—respecting their different roles—to build small pilots, verify decision conditions and outcomes, and develop reproducible approaches.

We offer this collection not as a commemorative record of a past event, but as a starting point for the next actions. AI logistics begins with trust. The challenge of turning that trust into verifiable decisions and continuously improving operational systems starts here.

Publication Information

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