

Supply Chain Industry Leaders: Embrace AI or Get Left Behind

Technology, Energy and Logistics Leaders Gathered for GROUNDBREAKERS 2023

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 27, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- [Prologis](#), Inc. (NYSE: PLD), the global leader in logistics real estate, today hosted its annual GROUNDBREAKERS thought leadership forum featuring leaders in technology, global commerce, energy and supply chain transformation at the company's global headquarters in San Francisco.

Prologis Co-founder, Chairman and CEO Hamid R. Moghadam and The Home Depot Chair, President and CEO Ted Decker kicked off the day with a conversation focused how AI is impacting industry, particularly the global supply chain.

"I think AI is a big, fast-moving train. You better get on it or you're going to get run over by it," said Moghadam. "But before you can engage with AI and get value out of it, you have to have data and you have to have data digitized."

Decker agreed, saying: "Every company has to be a technology company, a data company and increasingly a data science company."

The Home Depot CEO reflected on how AI is helping their company adjust their consumer strategy: "We've always been an anonymous mass retailer. What we are increasingly being known for is that we will be mass personalization."

Data Impacts HR Strategy

The need for innovation and ways to develop and upskill talent for sustainable career paths has never been greater – and data is a difference maker. That was the shared perspective of Alison Caplan, chief people officer for CBRE; Aaron Demerson, commissioner, Texas Workforce Commission; Christina Hall, Instacart's CHRO and Scott Marshall, Prologis' chief customer officer, in a discussion about the expectations employers are facing in a post-pandemic labor market.

"We've done a lot of work around understanding the employee experience. Where do our employees value what we do? How do we pull those levers and give them more of those own experiences? Where are the experiences that we need to improve?" asked Caplan. "By really shoring up that employee experience, you're going to ultimately have higher engagement, lower turnover."

The Shift Toward Clean Energy

A panel of experts explored how quickly companies are evolving their mobility strategies – and the challenges they are facing. In a conversation moderated by FreightWaves Founder and CEO Craig Fuller, Stella Li, EVP at BYD Company Ltd. and CEO, BYD Americas; Dave Merrill, co-founder and CEO, Elroy Aviation; and Laura Renger, executive director at California Electric Transportation Coalition, discussed where change is happening and how quickly.

Li said, "We think the first area is last mile logistics; all the light-duty and even heavy-duty trucks that operate at a port can be electrified very quickly in next maybe three to five years."

Prologis' Chief Energy and Sustainability Officer Susan Uthayakumar spoke with Martin Adams, general manager and chief engineer at Los Angeles Department of Water and Power; Alice Jackson, senior vice president of System Strategy and chief planning officer at Xcel Energy; and Carla Peterman, executive vice president, corporate affairs and chief sustainability officer at PG&E about how their organizations are pivoting to cleaner, more efficient energy solutions and sources.

"Power has to match demand. When you have variable inputs coming in, it's a challenge," said Adams. "We're making our grid a lot smarter than it used to be, and we're investing in the smart grid to use better intelligence and invest in a smarter system."

"Will ChatGPT take my job?"

Brad Stone, author and senior executive editor Bloomberg Technology, explored how AI is impacting all aspects of the global economy with Azita Martin, vice president and general manager of AI for Retail, CPG and QSR, NVIDIA and Warren Packard, operating partner at AI Fund.

"I think the best way I would describe AI is that AI is your assistant. In fact, someone asked the question, 'Will ChatGPT take my job?' No, but someone using ChatGPT will take your job," said Martin. "That's really important because AI can crunch a lot of data and give you a lot of information that would take several people and weeks

to put together."

Packard commented on how sector expertise will matter: "Supply chain is one of these verticals where it requires subject matter expertise. It's not going to be OpenAI, it's not going to be Anthropic, it's not going to be Microsoft or Amazon who come out and innovate in those spaces. They're going to help...but it's going to be the entrepreneurs who understand those verticals that are able to create these really game-changing companies in these different verticals."

Early-Stage Innovation

Prologis' Chief Technology Officer Sineesh Keshav interviewed several [Prologis Ventures](#) partners: Kyle Bernhardt, chief product officer, TestFit; Gina Chung, vice president, Corporate Development, Locus Robotics; Layla Shaikley, Wise Systems co-founder and head of product; and Evan Smith, Altana Technologies co-founder and CEO. Each of these companies has an innovative solution that is actively impacting the logistics industry.

"In our largest installations, we have over 700 robots operating, picking orders every single day, every single minute. We wouldn't be able to do that without AI," said Chung of her company's robots. "The biggest benefit that we provide to our customers is this lift in productivity."

Hundreds gathered in-person, and thousands virtually, for the forum, which included additional LinkedIn Live half-time and post-show commentary. The keynote and panel discussions for GROUNDBREAKERS 2023 can be viewed on demand [here](#).

GROUNDBREAKERS 2024 will be held on October 2, 2024 in London.

About Prologis

As of June 30, 2023, the company owned or had investments in, on a wholly owned basis or through co-investment ventures, properties and development projects expected to total approximately 1.2 billion square feet (114 million square meters) in 19 countries. Prologis leases modern logistics facilities to a diverse base of approximately 6,700 customers principally across two major categories: business-to-business and retail/online fulfillment.

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