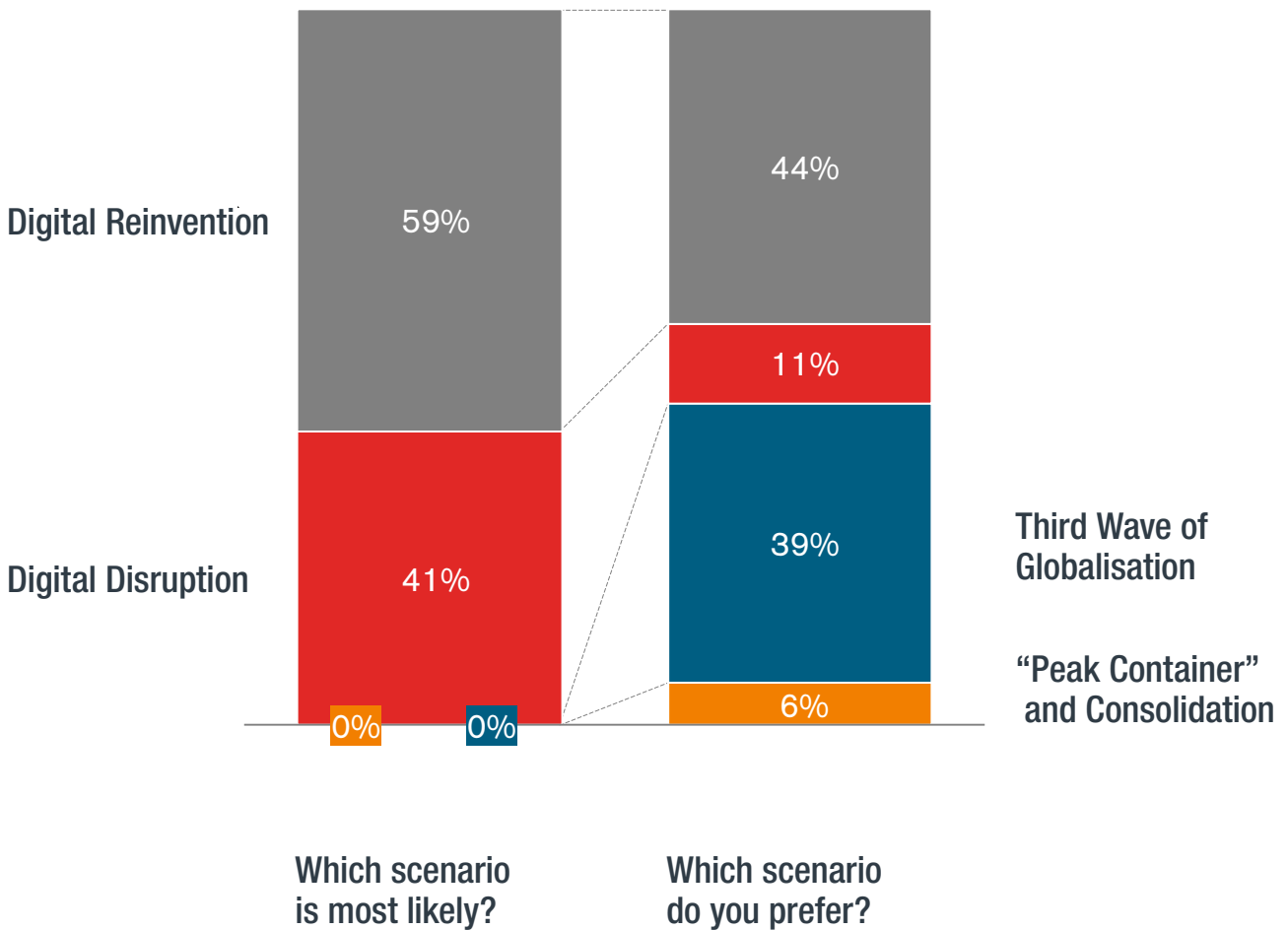


Brave new world? Preparing for the next 25 years

The future is digital
Responses of TT Club directors (8 November 2017)



There are a few things players in the container transport industry can do today to prepare for an uncertain future:

Focus on the real end-customer: the consumer

Our industry has historically focused on serving its immediate customers – beneficial cargo owners. But the real ‘customer’ – even if separated by last-mile distribution providers – is the everyday consumer, who increasingly enjoys the speed, flexibility, convenience and low cost associated with online shopping. One shift would be to measure success not only by how well or inexpensively players have delivered their own services, but also by how much they contribute towards optimising the end-to-end supply chain to the consumer’s benefit.

Monitor the “trigger points”

We’ve identified a number of ‘trigger points’ that a foresighted company might carefully monitor: infrastructure investment and unit-labour costs in major economies; the number of SMEs selling globally on e-commerce platforms; 3D printing adoption venture-capital funding for container transport start-ups; the latest order for the next-largest ship; and the speed of adoption of digital platforms, among many others. Stress-testing your company’s financials against a range of market and industry outcomes can help build resilience and ensure risks are appropriately mitigated.

Digitise radically

The potential for value-creation through digital data and analytics is enormous, and the costs of not doing anything at all are very high. The battle for the customer relationship should not be ceded lightly by any player. Use cases for step-changes in efficiency and performance should be piloted, refined, and quickly scaled. Predictive maintenance, ‘smart’ stowage, seamless document flow, and omniscient cargo tracking are some of the vital areas to be explored. Players should actively form partnerships to build the industry-standard platform and ecosystem.

Automate and innovate

Leading companies will continue to reduce their cost bases, improve productivity and enhance safety. Autonomous technologies available today and in the not-too-distant future are extremely promising for the industry. But challenges remain in adopting these technologies and maximising their value. Other innovations – including propulsion technologies, advanced materials, Internet of Things solutions and modularised shipping concepts – could change the game unexpectedly. The first-movers or fastest-followers are likely to be the biggest winners.

Get the full story: [Download ‘Preparing for the next 25 years’ from ttclub.com/tomorrow](https://ttclub.com/tomorrow)