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By Maura Maxwell

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CH Robinson unveils US\$1bn investment plan



CEO Bob Biesterfeld announces company's largest investment in innovation and technology

CH Robinson has announced a major investment programme as it seeks to shape the future of the logistics ecosystem.

The company will invest US\$1bn over the next five years, doubling the US\$1bn it has invested in technology over the last 10 years.

A key part of the expansion will involve strengthening its team of data scientists, engineers and developers, which already numbers more than 1,000.

"We are a platform-driven solutions company with technology built by and for supply chain experts, powered by our information advantage," said president and CEO Bob Biesterfeld.

"It's when these tools are leveraged by the smartest and most relentless experts—who really understand and are committed to our

customers' business—that we create extreme value in the supply chain for our clients' benefit."

Speaking at the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals EDGE conference Anaheim, California, Biesterfeld explained how big data and digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, machine learning and predictive analytics, are having a profound impact on the supply chain marketplace.

Only those who leverage both technology and talent would be able to compete and win on supply chain in the future, Biesterfeld explained.

"CH Robinson solves logistics problems for companies across the globe and across industries, from the simple to the most complex," he said.

"We put the customer at the centre of everything we do – listening, understanding their needs and using our expertise to solve their most complex logistics challenges."

Biesterfeld also shared specific feedback from a study of more than 3,000 shippers, both domestic and international, highlighting their evolving priorities and needs.

The research found that 88 per cent of shippers who contract to purchase freight believed that technology is extremely or very important when choosing a logistics provider.

The study also found that visibility and predictive tools are external logistics providers' most important assets, with 65 per cent of customers saying they either have or are planning on implementing real-time visibility and insight tools in the next two years.

Customers also believe that local

new tools and technologies, people

a partner with a global network of

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experience is key, with 83 per cent of shippers saying that having a logistics partner with local and global expertise is essential to their business needs.

“The results from the customer research demonstrate how important new capabilities, visibility into supply chains and deep expertise in local and global needs are,” Biesterfeld said.

Biesterfeld also highlighted the findings and identified trends in the industry to demonstrate how CH Robinson would continue to invest in innovation to help their customers win.

These revealed that despite

will become more important to the supply chains of the future. CH Robinson’s research showed how shippers value local expertise, and as technology accelerates and global sourcing grows, the ability to connect them and understand how supply chains really function will be critical.

“Furthermore, as the world becomes more connected, businesses are accessing the global market like never before—and they need the kind of global expertise and experience that CH Robinson provides,” the company said.

“The kind of complexity that global commerce creates is very challenging. Having

local experts who can act as an extension of a customer’s team is a significant competitive advantage.”

“We’re excited about the future and look forward to continuing to innovate,” Biesterfeld said.

“We are leading the way forward in logistics, addressing customer needs and laying the foundation for the next generation of tools and processes that will change not only how supply chains function, but ultimately change how our world is connected.”