

MEGATRENDS RESHAPING SERVICES

The investment implications of technological disruption



WINTER 2021

For professional investors only. All investments involve risk, including possible loss of capital.



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^{* &}quot;30 market cycles" represents PFI's asset management expertise through PGIM, its affiliates and its predecessors.

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FOREWORD

Over the past century, the global economy has transitioned from being dominated by agriculture and manufacturing to being powered primarily by services. Services now represent three-quarters of the workforce in developed markets and two-thirds of global GDP.¹

Since World War II, services have been transformed by shifting consumer and corporate preferences, technological change, and globalization. But after a 20-year period of relative stability, services are now once again at the cusp of a major disruption.

Advances in technologies such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence and machine learning are radically reshaping winners and losers across the service sector in both developed and emerging markets – and at an even faster pace after the COVID-19 pandemic.

This technology transformation will allow new entrants to disrupt key components of the services value chain. At the same time – and to a greater extent than in manufacturing and retail – a select group of technology-forward incumbents will benefit from some unique features of the services sector (such as client acquisition costs and regulatory complexity) to survive, and even thrive, during the process of creative destruction ahead of us.

To understand the investment implications of this next revolution in services, we have drawn on the insights of more than 70 investment professionals across PGIM's fixed income, equity, real estate, private credit, and alternatives managers – as well as leading academics, technologists, industry analysts and venture investors. We focus our investment lens on the three sectors that represent the vast majority of the services sector and 35% of the MSCI ACWI: financial services, healthcare, and transportation and logistics.² Our analysis reveals the hidden risks and emerging investment opportunities in services across public and private asset classes in both developed and emerging markets.

At PGIM, we believe investors who fully recognize the multiple pathways through which technology is transforming the global services sector will be best positioned to navigate the rapidly shifting investment landscape.



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CHAPTER 4 TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

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CHAPTER 4 TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS: THE FUTURE WILL BE GREENER AND MORE AUTONOMOUS

Transportation and logistics broadly refers to the movement of people and goods and includes passenger transport, trucking, freight, supply chains, distribution and warehousing. While logistics firms like DHL and Amazon employ cutting-edge technology and automation in their operations, overall, the sector is at an early stage of disruption. While highly transformative innovations like autonomous vehicles (AV) are on the horizon for transportation and promise to be a major part of the future, they are having little impact today as AV technology is in a trial phase.

In logistics, optimization and efficiency are the current focus and those firms that are quick to digitize their processes, leverage telematics devices and embrace renewable energy sources and cloud-enabled data analysis will gain an advantage and position themselves for enduring success.

Adoption of EV and AV will not evolve in the same way or at the same pace in all parts of the world.

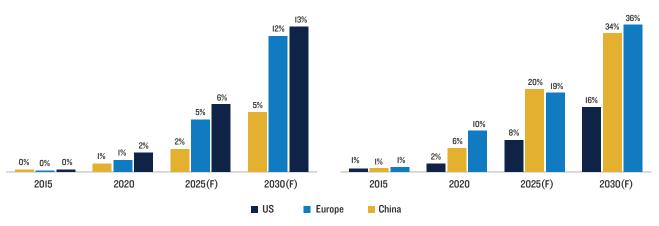
The Future State of Transportation and Logistics

Automobiles will be greener – and ultimately autonomous

The technology for electric vehicles (EV) exists today and will certainly be a growing part of the automotive landscape going forward. Indeed, EV sales in many parts of the world are growing rapidly. For example, nearly a million EVs were sold in China in the first half of 2021 – more than doubling in size from a

EV sales as a share of total annual car sales





EV cars as a share of total stock of cars

Source: Global EV Data Explorer, International Energy Agency, 2021.

similar period in 2019.⁴³ In Europe the total market share of EV is increasing sharply – albeit from a modest base. EV market share in Germany has grown from under 4% in June 2020 to nearly 11% in September 2021. The UK has also shown a significant rise in the share of EV over the same period, up from 4.7% to over 8%.⁴⁴

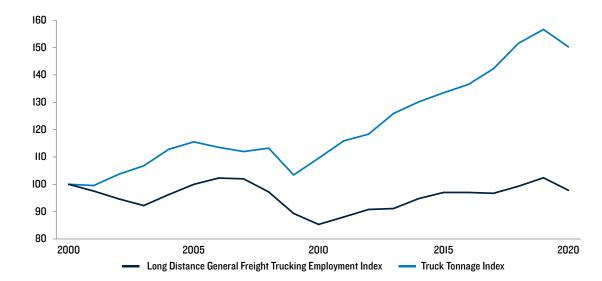
However, growth of EV will be uneven across different countries. Because of this, EV will not be displacing the global stock of internal combustion engines (ICE) for several decades. The global aggregate data make this point clear: In 2020, more than 95% of total new cars sold globally were powered by ICE (Exhibit 9). Even across the EU where carbon emission goals and other policies have boosted demand, only 1 in 10 new cars sold in 2020 were powered by electricity.

Despite the sharp growth of EV in some countries, the tremendous stock of ICE vehicles already in place will have a long sunset. Even under the International Energy Agency's (IEA) optimistic scenario, two out of three new cars sold in 2030 will still be ICE vehicles. In 2050, when EVs are projected to make up 60% of annual new car sales, the majority of vehicles on the road will still be fueled by gasoline.⁴⁵

With the proliferation of AV, individuals will find it less cost-effective to own their own car and the ride-sharing model currently disrupting taxis will be ubiquitous. Corporate business models focused solely on manufacturing autos or ride-sharing platforms will be challenged in an AV-dominant world. The future business model for automotive transport will likely revolve around providing fleets of autonomous ridesharing vehicles. Auto manufacturers and ride-sharing platforms will need to team up to achieve this – and promising partnerships are already forming.

Of course, the utility and cost-efficiency of AV or EV will not replace personal ownership of an ICE vehicle for all people in all places for several reasons. First, outside of major population centers ride-sharing is often not in great supply and may require a lengthy wait. Consumers in rural areas may opt for the convenience of owning their own car. Second, it will be hard to replace the primal appeal of owning and driving your own car. Automobiles have a prominent place in US culture, for example. Owning and driving the newest, fastest model of sports car or truck and feeling the rumbling of an ICE engine brings an irreplaceable joy to many Americans.

Importantly, adoption of EV and AV will not evolve in the same way or at the same pace in all parts of the world. Autonomous trucking is likely to emerge first in the US, which depends on long-haul trucking for distribution and transport of goods and where drivers make up roughly 40% of trucking costs.⁴⁶





Labor shortages also loom large for the industry and autonomous trucking could help freight trucking keep pace with the tremendous demand (Exhibit 10).⁴⁷

But other parts of the world are much more likely to lead the way when it comes to both electric and autonomous cars. European governments are increasingly taking measures to push EV adoption and their environmental commitments are reducing reliance on gasoline-powered cars and vans.⁴⁸ Meanwhile, in China, there are a growing number of urban roads designated for AV testing and fleets of autonomous robo-taxis are already roaming the streets of Beijing. These are poised to disrupt local taxi and minivan transport.⁴⁹

The new and ongoing demand for online deliveries has spawned interest in logistics and warehouses in places where online penetration had been exceptionally low.

Global shift to online shopping yields greener logistics

The pandemic has driven a surge in online shopping that is not likely to fully recede. Importantly, it surged in regions that had been previously resistant. Central and Eastern Europe, for example, saw retail e-commerce grow by almost 30% in 2020, China by 28% and Western Europe by 26%.⁵⁰ Even as the limitations of the pandemic ease, this tech adoption by consumers will remain. The new and ongoing demand for online deliveries has spawned interest in logistics and warehouses in places where online penetration had been exceptionally low – like Spain and Greece.

The logistics industry will continue to leverage AI, ML and other technologies to be even more efficient – and also more green. Technology to move goods along from sprawling distribution centers located far from city centers to smaller last-mile warehouses near cities is rapidly evolving and altering location dynamics of warehouses. Additionally, operations of these warehouses are increasingly integrating solar, hydrogen and other green energy sources.⁵¹ Solar panels on roofs provide power for the highly automated distribution centers where hydrogen fuel-cell powered forklifts and electric trucks operate through the night to replenish stock in last-mile warehouses for tomorrow's same-day delivery.

Investment Implications

Fragmented landscape for autonomous vehicles provides equity opportunities

The autonomous vehicle space provides a wealth of opportunities for global equity investors. The industry is in the very early stages of developing and testing the technology. Consequently, many partnerships between auto manufacturers and tech firms have been formed and there are likely to be some first-mover advantages. The landscape is evolving quickly, and it remains unclear which partnerships may produce a mass marketable autonomous platform first.

Despite the uncertainty, there are some characteristics of autonomous platforms and partnerships that equity investors should look out for. First, on the auto manufacturer side, there needs to be sufficient capital and commitment to support the lengthy processes of testing, regulatory approvals and production capability to mass produce successful models. On this front, the larger automakers can leverage their size and regulatory experience.

Second, rigorous and thorough testing under all kinds of circumstances is required. Countries like China that are supportive of AV testing on their roads and smart infrastructure will have an advantage.⁵² In fact, testing of robo-taxis and other vehicles is already underway in multiple densely trafficked cities like Beijing, Guangzhou and Wuhan.⁵³

Third, when it comes to the hardware associated with AV – all the cameras as well as the myriad of sensors – reducing size and weight is critical. Furthermore, integrating these inputs seamlessly with the operations

of the car are vital to make the best real-time decisions and ensure the safest rides.

Fourth, the algorithm that interprets all the input from cameras and sensors needs to be able to process all this data quickly and efficiently. For example, the first-generation AV algorithm used between 500 and 800 watts of power and required considerable ventilation and cooling. The most advanced AV algorithms today run much more efficiently, using less than 50 watts of power, and requiring far less cooling.⁵⁴

Based on these criteria, in the autonomous car and robo-taxi space, Chinese AV firms DeepRoute (partnered with Dong Feng), Pony (partnered with Toyota) and WeRide (partnered with Nissan) are examples of potential front-runners and are in the midst of testing autonomous platforms.

In the autonomous trucking space, Aurora's partnership with Volvo is currently testing in North America. Meanwhile, Daimler's partnership with Waymo and Navistar's partnership with TuSimple appear to be promising as well. Investors should also be aware that developments in autonomous trucking will have implications for logistics and warehouses.

Digital platforms to optimize supply chains, logistics and transport

While some parts of the logistics and delivery ecosystem like UPS, DHL and FedEx are very techsavvy, adoption of technology has been inconsistent. The less tech-forward portions of the logistics and supply chain sector provide a growth opportunity for software firms and investors alike. Cloud-based platforms to digitize supply chains provide many possibilities for freight forwarders, customs brokers, and other logistics players to increase efficiency. For public equity investors, leading players like Canada's Descartes Systems Group can be attractive growth opportunities. Descartes offers a supply chain management platform that optimizes logistics, operations and shipping routes as well as connects the different parts of the chain using real-time messaging and data.

In private equity, British tech firm Connexin specializes in the Internet-of-Things and offers an integrated transport and logistics platform for trucking and warehouses. They provide both the hardware – telematics devices and sensors – used to generate data as well as the software to integrate and analyze it for optimization of fleets, routes and warehouses.

Software platforms can offer attractive opportunities for debt investors as well. Their subscription models and essential function in businesses make for steady and reliable cash flows during all phases of the economic cycle. Software platforms for transportation and logistics offer some of the best examples. Spanish software maker Amadeus provides an operational platform for managing both airports and airlines. It can optimize runway and gate usage for airport operations as well as flight schedules, re-bookings and upgrades for airlines. The Convoy shipper platform is another example in logistics. It offers a digital freight network where tens of thousands of independent freight haulers in the US can find partial or full loads for their trucks.

Europe offers new opportunities and challenges in logistics real estate

With relatively low e-commerce penetration compared to other regions, Europe has lagged in online shopping. However, the pandemic has allowed it to catch up quickly. The surge in online shopping due to COVID-19 restrictions created tremendous growth in demand for distribution and logistics facilities. This has directly led to an increase in demand for remote distribution centers outside major cities like Berlin, Madrid, Paris, and Brussels, as well as smaller last-mile warehouses closer to population centers.⁵⁵

Aside from rising rental prices on existing facilities, there is considerable room for new development as well. In the UK, land outside big cities like London and Manchester that is close to major motorway junctions has become especially coveted as demand for same-day delivery soars.

However, European regulation and infrastructure also present some unique challenges for investors. European motorways and urban streets are generally narrower than other parts of the world and may not be able to easily support the volume of electric scooters, vans and trucks needed to sustain more e-commerce deliveries.

Also, policy initiatives that are designed to make societies greener and more socially responsible may have some unintended consequences for e-commerce and the logistics space broadly. For example, local efforts across the EU to reduce city traffic – like congestion pricing and low emission zones – are growing.⁵⁶ This poses a risk to delivery vehicles. Additionally, efforts in Germany to support sustainable supply chains will take effect in 2023 and its rippling impact up and down value chains remains very unclear.⁵⁷ With more scrutiny of global sourcing, closer-to-home sourcing of goods and materials will gain prominence and may shift demand for logistics and warehouses from import facilities to local manufacturing hubs.

Policy initiatives that are designed to make societies greener and more socially responsible may have unintended consequences for e-commerce and the logistics space broadly.

Green technology alters the locational analysis for warehouses in the US

In mature markets like the US, technology is altering the locational analysis for distribution centers. These are the sprawling, more remotely located facilities that replenish the stock of smaller last-mile warehouses closer to major cities. For example, autonomous trucking with an efficient transfer hub model or multiple trucks linked together to reduce drag may make it economically and logistically feasible to locate distribution centers further from last-mile facilities.⁵⁸

Other dynamics are also nudging distribution centers further away from urban centers. In the past, distribution centers needed access to major metropolitan areas and large electricity grids to meet their demand for ample labor and power. The proliferation of automation within the facilities augments labor and may diminish the need for access to large labor pools. Furthermore, renewable energy from solar panels on their expansive roofs and hydrogen fuel cells in major machinery play a growing role in powering distribution centers today. As a result of distribution centers becoming greener, proximity to a major power grid is less critical, though many choose to remain close to sell excess power to the grid and repurchase power as needs change.

Opportunities in the transition to greener and smarter infrastructure

Given new government-funded infrastructure plans in the US and Europe, it is important to recognize the investment opportunities around the transition to smart, green infrastructure. Rest stops and gas stations along major roadways have long been attractive infrastructure investments, for example. Going forward, investors will need to be mindful of the transition to EV. There will be a lengthy transition period where motorists will have a need for both EV charging as well as gasoline at highway rest stops. Investors can look at debt of highway service providers, like Autobahn Tank & Rast in Germany, who are tuned into the needs of local motorists and can switch the balance between refueling and recharging as local demand warrants.

Other examples lie in municipal infrastructure. As technology is increasingly being employed to make cities smarter, investors can find attractive opportunities in both the manufacturers of these systems as well as the public-private partnerships that enable smart cities. Chicago Parking Meters, for example, is a public-private partnership that operates street parking in parts of the city. Their user app has a predictive parking feature that leverages proprietary data and AI to help users find empty parking spaces today or in the future. They also use camera-enabled AI to determine whether cars are in compliance with local parking regulations and can issue tickets based on that information.⁵⁹

A very long road for EV presents ICE opportunities for debt investors

Electric vehicles are clearly part of the future, but it is also clear internal combustion engines will have a very long sunset. While auto manufacturers are being pushed by government emissions regulations to develop EV, not all consumers will opt for them given they are often more expensive than comparable ICE vehicles. The unpleasant reality is global auto manufacturers will be selling at least as many ICE as EV vehicles for the next 10 years – or more. It is clear gasoline-fueled autos will play a prominent role in the global landscape for decades to come – and perhaps even longer in places like the US. It is also clear the businesses and infrastructure that support it (e.g., parts makers, gas stations, etc.) will still be relevant and sources of reliable cash flows, even if their revenue growth slows. For debt investors, there is a compelling investment case to be made for auto parts distributors and retailers like NAPA in the US, which may be priced for more imminent obsolescence.

Logistics incumbents embracing cloud technology will thrive

While US trucking is likely to be disrupted by autonomous trucks and consolidate significantly, trucking companies that embrace new technologies and leverage the efficiency gains from it will most likely be part of the future. This type of tech-forward firm can offer resilient cash flows to debt investors. US trucking company Old Dominion provides a good example. It is investing heavily in technology to modernize its operations and reduce risk. The company utilizes telematics devices on its entire fleet to track and record basic data about each and every truck in the field, including speed, acceleration, and braking. The firm leverages this proprietary data using cloudbased analytic tools to optimize operations of vehicles, drivers, and routes.

Chapters 2-4 examined the significant investment opportunities and risks for specific asset classes (Table 4). CIOs also need to consider some of the hidden risks and implications of disruption across asset classes. The next chapter provides actionable recommendations to help CIOs navigate the tumultuous aspects of technology disruption in services across their entire portfolio.

	Public Equity	Public and Private Debt	Real Estate and Infrastructure	Venture Capital	Private Equity
Financial Services					
Global opportunities in the expanding fintech ecosystem (e.g., neobanks, payment and other platforms)	٠			٠	٠
Insurance firms that integrate advanced data analytics will succeed	٠	•			
Focus on targeted blockchain applications that solve specific problems today				•	٠
Incumbent banks leveraging new technology will thrive and widen their moats		٠			
Next generation payment systems allow tech-forward incumbents and select new entrants to thrive	٠	٠		٠	٠

Table 4: Investment Implications Summary

	Public Equity	Public and Private Debt	Real Estate and Infrastructure	Venture Capital	Private Equity
Healthcare					
Emerging markets offer new opportunities and risks for biotech and pharmaceuticals	٠			•	
Investing in small-cap US biotech firms requires an active approach	٠				
Care outside of the doctor's office, from an app				•	
Specialized healthcare platforms				•	•
Medical devices as a service offer stable cash flows for debt investors		•			
Lab testing and diagnostics offer steady cash flows for debt investors		•	•		
Senior housing remains attractive for real estate investors			•		
Transportation and Logistics					
Participating in fragmented AV landscape	•			•	٠
Digital platforms to optimize supply chains and logistics	٠	٠			
Europe offers new opportunities and challenges in logistics real estate					
Green technology alters the locational analysis for warehouses in the US					
Opportunities in the transition to greener and smarter infrastructure					
A very long road for EV presents ICE opportunities for debt investors		٠			
Logistics incumbents embracing cloud technology will thrive		٠			

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