

# The Arrival of the New-Age Consumer-Centric Distribution Network

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The Bricz logo features the word "bricz" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. A blue line with two circular nodes at the end is positioned above the letter 'i', extending from the left and curving upwards.

# The Arrival of the New-Age Consumer- Centric Distribution Network

**RAM GOPALAKRISHNAN**, CEO and Founder at Bricz, says a focus on innovation and forming strategic partnerships are key to building the supply chain of tomorrow.



Bricz is a next-generation supply chain solutions provider, helping customers explore opportunities and generate value in every brick used to build their supply chain. Founded in January 2014 with The Home Depot as its first customer, Bricz's initial focus was on technology enablement around Manhattan Associates solutions. Today, Bricz has diversified to work with multiple supply chain providers including Körber, Blue Yonder,

Manhattan Associates, and other leading robotics and supply chain technology providers.

Ram Gopalakrishnan, CEO and Founder at Bricz, remembers, "As we started enabling different technologies, customers asked us to help them select the right technology. This led to people coming to us early on in their transformation journey to assist

them in building a business case for modernisation. So, we started positioning ourselves as connectors of the dots between people, process and technology in supply chain. We created a lot of the data analytics capabilities, becoming a full lifecycle solutions provider for supply chain, encompassing network optimisation planning, distribution enablement, and omnichannel capabilities."

Bricz now has over 85 people working across three regions – the US, the UK and India – and is considered by Gartner to be a niche provider with the most advanced capabilities for robotics assessment and enablement. Ram says, "We help people transform from a traditional set-up to a more modern distribution landscape. When we think about our primary value proposition today, we realise





“We are building technology that will do continuous network optimisation and predictive inventory placement”

**Ram Gopalakrishnan,**  
CEO and Founder

central stand and deployed one when a customer asked for it, walked up to one, or got lucky waving for one. But today, we do not have to. We can get a ride at a moment’s notice. That is convenience. It’s that same convenience we are creating with our continuous optimisation and predictive placement, so retailers can delight their omnichannel customer.”

Being a niche provider that is not tied to one single software vendor, Bricz offers customers an unbiased perspective on the available technology. Ram continues, “Because of our exposure to a variety of supply chain solutions, we are able to bring these cost

there is a big shift in commerce, and people are evolving from a regular brick-and-mortar set-up to more of an omnichannel set-up. In that journey, we can provide the process, data and technology solutions that will enable them to be successful. These days, our customer list is a who’s who in retail and third-party logistics providers. At any point in time, we service over 25 active customer project engagements.”

Over the last few years, the focus of Bricz has expanded from consulting services to being a partner for retailers in supply chain technology enablement and optimisation. In addition to enabling partner technologies, Bricz is building complementary technology that will assist retailers migrate from traditional logistics-centric networks to creating more powerful, consumer demand-driven network and inventory placement for the omnichannel customer. The Bricz

INFO (Inventory Network Fulfillment Optimisation) platform is being built from the ground up to power the urban fulfilment network.

Ram adds, “We are building technology that will do continuous network optimisation and predictive inventory placement. In the past, inventory placement has always been constrained around static infrastructure. Today, we live in a flexible, sharing economy. Years ago, you parked taxis in a



"We partnered with Bricz for our Labor Management implementation and WMS upgrade. Their value proposition is in the quality of work they do. The analytical skillset and experience of Bricz team members helped us successfully complete key implementations and meet our business goals."

**Senior Manager, The Home Depot**



learnings to many of our customers. We provide very tailored solutions with our one-size-fits-one approach, which makes us very unique in the market. Through our product focus, we also bring a lot of thought leadership to building more modern and sustainable supply chains for our customers."

So, how is Bricz continuing to innovate within supply chain? Ram says you must first consider the supply chain technology landscape. He explains, "In the 70s and 80s, we took the first steps towards organisation, which lead to ERP technology. In the 90s, people then started asking how they could make the process more efficient, with warehouse management solutions being the star of the late 90s and early 2000s. At that point, ecommerce started becoming prominent, and automated distribution management came in in the late 2000s. Ecommerce then evolved to create a necessity for more efficient last-mile deliveries, so for the last eight years, many providers have been focused on last-mile technology."

Ram continues, "When you think about the evolution of distribution, for a long time, the distribution layout has remained logistic-centric. With the shift in commerce, a lot of commerce that was 95 per cent brick-and-mortar and 5 per cent

ecommerce is now up to 30-40 per cent ecommerce. A lot of retailers are muscling through the shift in commerce with existing networks. But, in the future, many will move towards more consumer-centric networks. Such a transformation may mean six distribution centres, 14 micro-fulfilment centres, and 20 super-fulfilling stores, comprising pop-up distribution and third-party logistics. To create that consumer-centric network, you must be tightly aligned with the location of your consumers, so

should locate their micro-fulfilment centres based on demand clusters and anticipated demand in different regions for ecommerce. Ram explains, “With smaller micro-fulfilment centres, the customer may be unsure what to run in terms of WMS. We help to identify and enable the right solutions, as well as advising on the robotics capabilities within those. We become the central architect of the supply chain journey to consumer-centric networks, determining the

“Together with the flexibility that **Körber** can offer, we are able to tailor solutions for a lot of businesses”

you can offer better service levels. “And to migrate from traditional to more modern networks, you need to call on a provider that brings a range of solutions, intelligence, data analytics, and a deep understanding of the technology enablement capabilities. This is where Bricz can step in to help customers on their journey to create these new-age consumer-centric distribution networks.”

Bricz is able to advise customers at every step of their journey, providing analytical answers to establishing where customers

capacity of the micro-fulfilment centre, the specific product subsets, and the quantities needed in each location. Our AI/ML platform continuously learns and adapts to provide these recommendations.”

Given Bricz’s thought leadership offering, customers are able to relate to the value proposition. Ram continues, “We had a Körber engagement where the customer was shipping chocolates and we helped them determine how many ice packs were needed to be stored in each shipping container.



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“Being able to collectively deliver for the customer and share the success is great. The more transparency a partner brings, the more opportunities the partnership will create. It has got to be a complementary relationship”

**Ram Gopalakrishnan**, CEO and Founder



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“Together with the flexibility that Körber can offer, we are able to tailor solutions for a lot of businesses. Collectively, we are providing compelling value to our customers, particularly in cases where there is uncertainty.”

Bricz has partnered with Verte for its holistic supply chain platform. Ram says, “Many organisations

chain journey. It is exciting to be working with them!”

Collaborating with organisations such as Körber and Verte produces powerful capabilities for Bricz’s customers, which Ram believes is one of the keys to the company’s success. He explains, “Supply chain is vast, and people have mastered specific areas over long periods of time. There is a need for a central provider that can architect a lot of the moving parts, and at the same time, with

“**Verte** has built technology from the ground up to address the full lifecycle of the distribution supply chain journey. It is exciting to be working with them!”

are looking for a single platform that will tie everything together and make the whole supply chain process interconnected, as well as a solution that is quick and easy to implement. They are looking for one solutions provider offering a unified platform that gives visibility throughout the whole order lifecycle, enabling technology through each of the different steps on the way to getting the product in the hands of the consumer. Verte has built technology from the ground up to address the full lifecycle of the distribution supply

well-established solutions, there isn’t the need to reinvent the wheel. Where that is the case, it definitely makes sense to form strategic partnerships, so you can create collective value for the customer.”

Ram highlights that partnerships must be a two-way street in order to be successful. He adds, “Being able to collectively deliver for the customer and share the success is great. The more transparency a partner brings, the more opportunities the

partnership will create. It has got to be a complementary relationship.”

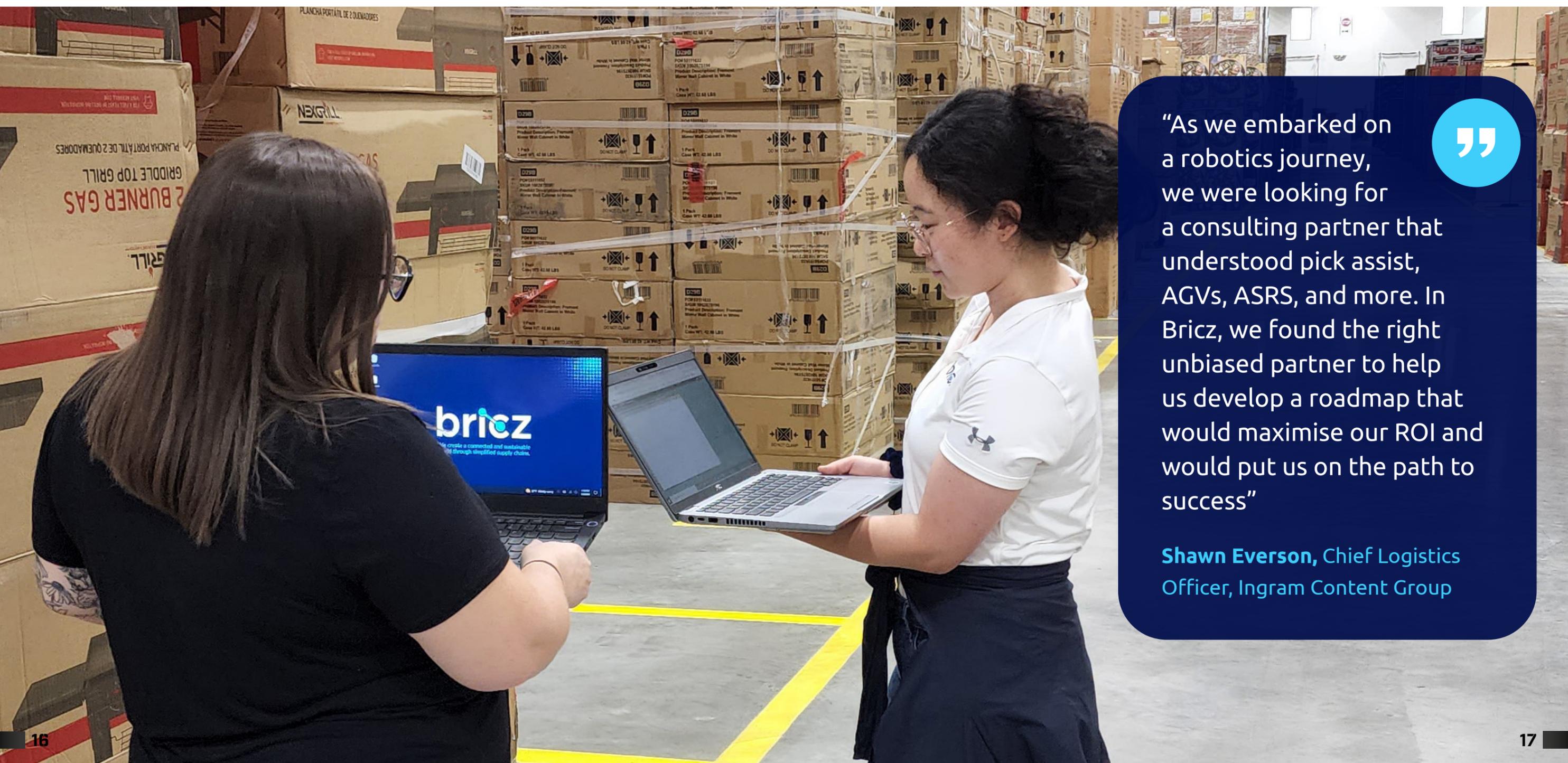
Having grown from a team of 34 to 85 people, Ram says there are no plans to slow down Bricz’s expansion. He elaborates, “The type of customers we have signed in the recent past includes the likes of Chanel, Adidas and Martin Brower, among other powerhouse brand and operations. We are

currently on a very rapid growth phase. Our focus is to make sure over the course of the next two to three years that we fully transform into the provider that can enable our own technology, whilst helping customers on their holistic journey from logistic-centric to consumer-centric networks. As part of that process, year on year for the last few years, we have been on a 60+

per cent growth rate, and I expect it to go even higher. It is about being at the right place at the right time, and with the pandemic, it accelerated the need for a solution like ours in the marketplace.”

In the near future, Ram anticipates that the new-age supply chain will see the arrival of giant vending machines. He explains, “People will

place an order from their phone, and without human interaction, they will go to a place to collect it, or alternatively, it will be automatically delivered by a last-mile provider. There is technology that exists for quickly ramping up that location tracking inventory. We are positioning ourselves to offer the technology that will do this. We see ourselves as an unbiased



“As we embarked on a robotics journey, we were looking for a consulting partner that understood pick assist, AGVs, ASRS, and more. In Bricz, we found the right unbiased partner to help us develop a roadmap that would maximise our ROI and would put us on the path to success”

**Shawn Everson**, Chief Logistics Officer, Ingram Content Group



“Great vision and product that bridges gaps for online in traditional retail systems”

**VP Supply Chain Transformation,**  
Luxury Lifestyle Brand

advisor partner that can take our customers on this journey.”

Recent years have highlighted the opportunities and challenges in supply chain. Ram concludes, “Many organisations are going through transformations and are in the process of rethinking and reimagining supply chain and distribution. It definitely takes a change in mindset, which the pandemic created. It provided a platform for us to come in and help people going through their transformation journey, always with people, process and technology in mind.”

For further information on Bricz, visit [www.bricz.com](http://www.bricz.com)

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