Going small on big data
How can energy executives digitally transform their supply chain organization? The answer is one byte at a time by going little on big data.

Big Data and Analytics are the words on the street in today’s business management circles. Supply Chain executives of the most future-oriented companies have been launching Big Data programs to drive significant performance improvements.

Wireless sensors, cloud technologies and artificial intelligence are just a few of the many innovative technologies that are bringing step change in performance improvement across the business and especially in Supply Chain.

Their benefits are tangible. More accurate forecasting, profit focused planning decisions, faster reaction to unplanned events, and optimized inventories, just to name a few.

Not everyone and especially in our industry today can invest seven digit figures in Big Data Programs and initiate large data driven transformations.

What is the alternative? Our recommendation is to start small and create a self-funding cycle of advanced analytics initiatives. These can then spiral up into a more return-conscious digital transformation.

One of our clients had a challenge in how customers were supplied material. The Flow path decisions had never been optimized despite changing over time.

Questions like: Where is the material produced or purchased from? Which distribution center or yard should be used to serve each demand location? And which mode of transportation should be used to minimize costs and guarantee service levels without having to rush a significant percentage of orders?

We developed a custom linear optimization model using open source software in less than a month. With a total running time of a few hours, the model determined the optimal set of flow path decisions at the unit level for each demand point. The results were then visualized on interactive maps.

The project was completed in eight weeks at a small cost compared to deploying a full scale analytical solution.
Now our client is more confident to take a bigger step toward a steadier and integrated advanced analytics application.

Sometimes starting small is the right choice. And then you can go bigger on big data.