

## Sustainable, Value-Adding Business Processes in Times of Crisis

**Roland Lesch**

4Handling GmbH, Germany

[rl@4handling.de](mailto:rl@4handling.de)

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### Abstract

*The research examines the operational workflows and business processes of medium-sized small companies with regard to their sustainability and resilience against disruptive internal and external influences. In this context, the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on the company's processes and supply chains are presented and examined. Based on the research question of how supply shortages that occurred during this pandemic situation affect the value-adding processes of small businesses, in a first step, the empirically gained data (expert interviews) of some selected value-adding processes are used to show which sustainable adjustments have been made or are planned in response to the recent crises. In the second step, measures that are suitable for existing workflows and processes are evaluated, such as using possible economies of scale within production and being more cost-efficient. An additional focus is placed on redesigning and adapting the production steps within manufacturing in order to make them resource-saving, flexible, modular and, therefore, more competitive. Results quote the necessity for every company to individually secure its important business processes and be able to react appropriately and prudently to further external or internal crises that may arise at any time through active precautionary measures. Furthermore, recommendations on how small businesses can proceed sensibly and what instruments and tools are available were elaborated by using a practical example.*

**Keywords:** business processes, value chains, risk management, crisis management, SMEs, medium-sized companies, production, sustainability