



# Smarter Factory Blueprint

## Transforming Manufacturing for the Digital Age



### A Five-Step Journey to Mastering Industry 4.0

Unlock the full potential of your manufacturing operations with this practical and insightful guide to digital transformation. Journey through five key steps to transform your processes and embrace the power of smart manufacturing.





# Navigating Your Digital Journey With Ease

The road to digital transformation in manufacturing doesn't have to be intimidating. While the potential of technology is vast, your starting point simply requires clarity and focus.

## Tailored Transformation

Our guide demystifies the digital transformation process, offering a step-by-step journey to modernize your manufacturing operations. Each phase is a move away from manual processes to an integrated, automated and data-driven environment. You'll discover how to smoothly transition from the tangible to the technological, ensuring every change is a building block for a more efficient and innovative future. And the best part? You set the rhythm—this isn't a race. Our guide is here to accompany you through every stage, ensuring a seamless transition into the next era of manufacturing.

## Navigating Pitfalls: Mastering Manufacturing Modernization

In alliance with McKinsey and Company's insights<sup>1</sup>, we spotlight five critical missteps to sidestep on your path to modernization:



### Integrated Transformation

Steer clear of isolated initiatives; aim for a cohesive strategy.



### Agile Mindset

Embrace adaptability; the only constant in technology is change.



### Decisive Action

Avoid getting mired in over-analysis; actionable insights are critical.



### Value-Driven Tech

Select technologies for their business value, not just their novelty.



### Practical Perfection

Pursue excellence without being hindered by the pursuit of perfection.

Remember, each step you take toward modernization is a step away from these common pitfalls, **guiding you toward a future where your operations are efficient and exemplary.**



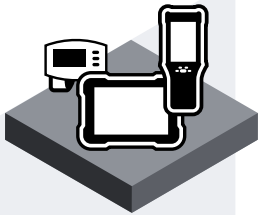
This e-Book is designed to be your trusted guide, offering a sensible and personalized path to harnessing the power of Industry 4.0. It's all about enhancing your operations smartly and smoothly, with the reassurance that you can progress at a pace that's right for you and your business.

# Charting the Course for Manufacturing Excellence

Dive into a five-step operational blueprint tailored for the modern manufacturing landscape. This strategic plan enhances your ability to swiftly navigate market shifts and harness data for deeper insights. It's about empowering your teams and cultivating a proactive culture where informed decisions drive meaningful advancements. Embark on this transformative path to redefine manufacturing operations and excel in a dynamic industrial marketplace.

## Elevate, Integrate, Innovate: A Five-Step Journey to Manufacturing Modernization

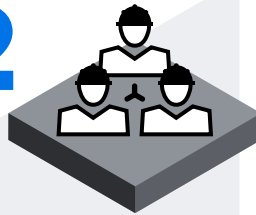
STEP 1



### Advancing Precision and Efficiency

Equip your workforce with state-of-the-art tools that optimize workflows and increase accuracy. Deploy mobile and wearable devices to maintain an agile and informed workforce.

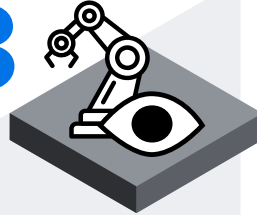
STEP 2



### Enabling Cohesive Collaboration

Strengthen team dynamics with modern communication tools and streamlined task management systems. Boost efficiency and flexibility with user-friendly technology solutions.

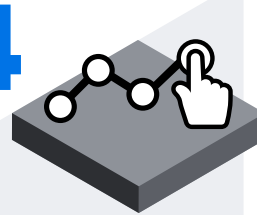
STEP 3



### Achieving Operational Visibility

Gain comprehensive oversight of assets and inventory with real-time tracking and analytics. Use these insights to inform decision-making that enhances your manufacturing operations.

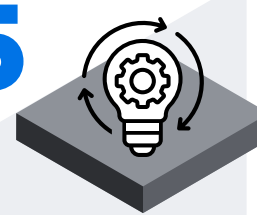
STEP 4



### Executing Proactive Strategies

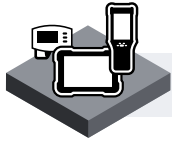
Harness operational data to anticipate market trends and adapt in real time. Transform insights into decisive actions that secure your competitive edge.

STEP 5



### Driving Continuous Innovation

Build an environment that thrives on consistent improvement and technological advancement. Apply analytical tools to streamline operations, eliminate inefficiencies and bolster supply chain transparency.



## Paving Digital Pathways: Setting the Stage for Manufacturing Innovation

The digital transformation of the production floor is the cornerstone of modern manufacturing. For small to medium-sized enterprises, this shift is pivotal to customizing processes and achieving specific operational goals. Digitalization addresses common inefficiencies, bringing a transparent, end-to-end perspective to the production lifecycle and enabling rapid, informed decision-making. This enhanced clarity propels productivity to new heights and becomes instrumental in minimizing waste, optimizing resource use and increasing accuracy across your operations.

Consider this initial move to modernization as integrating a network of digital sentinels across your operations. These sentinels serve as vigilant data collectors, offering continuous, real-time insights into every facet of your operations. The aim is to equip your workforce with the tools to capture and leverage production intelligence, eliminating the sluggishness and disconnections inherent in manual procedures and standalone systems.

### Reaping the Benefits of Digital Integration

By adopting a digital-centric stance, you stand to gain:

- An uplift in productivity across all levels of your manufacturing operations.
- Decreased delays due to manual processes or obsolete, siloed systems.
- On-demand access to essential manufacturing data, enhancing worker decision-making.
- Faster assessment of production, inventory and equipment statuses.

### Charting the Digital Course

To navigate this transition effectively, consider the following:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of your current workflows.
- Locate any blind spots in production and asset tracking.
- Define clear strategic goals for your modernization journey.
- Evaluate and upgrade your data-gathering practices.
- Streamline operational systems to facilitate adoption.
- Emphasize cybersecurity to safeguard your digital ecosystem.
- Verify that your IT infrastructure is equipped to support modernization.



Old Ways  
Die Slowly

**79%**

of factory workers still rely on paper-based documentation and checklists to track work and communicate with their team.<sup>2</sup>



## Supercharging Team Productivity

As we advance to the next step in manufacturing modernization, the landscape becomes increasingly complex with rising production volumes and expanding product lines. This intricate environment demands a heightened level of coordination and robust tracking systems to manage these additional operational layers. The introduction of specialized tasks such as kitting, light assembly and sortation adds further intricacy to workflows. These elements, combined with more complex outbound freight schedules, call for a more orchestrated approach, often spanning across various facilities and work shifts and accommodating an expanding workforce.

The keystone of this phase is bolstering team collaboration and productivity. The approach revolves around the strategic utilization of mobile technology to enhance the precision and efficiency of everyday tasks. By optimizing workflows and assigning priorities, the goal extends beyond enhancing individual roles to quickening the pace of the entire operation. This stage is pivotal in fostering a manufacturing environment where cohesive teamwork and workflow precision are paramount.

### The Surge in Productivity

Moving through Step 2, manufacturers can anticipate a host of improvements, such as:

- Enhanced collaborative productivity within teams.
- More uniform and precise workflow execution.
- Improved worker ergonomics, fostering greater efficiency and comfort.
- Streamlined communication across teams, enabling managers to be more agile and responsive.
- Accelerated onboarding processes, allowing new team members to reach optimal productivity faster.
- Simplified remote IT management, improving system oversight and control.

### Tactical Technology: Engineering Smarter Workflows

To fully leverage mobile technology in boosting team productivity:

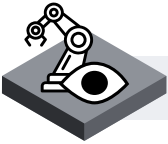
- Target processes for enhanced consistency and precision in data capture.
- Identify tasks where ergonomics may affect performance or present safety concerns.
- Determine where improved communication can further streamline productivity and efficiency.
- Simplify and combine repetitive or labor-intensive tasks to streamline operations and lighten workloads.



**Tech-Savvy Transition:  
The New Face of  
Manufacturing Muscle**

**72%**

of today's frontline manufacturing workers are ready to embrace digital tools.<sup>3</sup>



## Enhancing Manufacturing Performance With Predictive Insights

In the manufacturing domain, Step 3 elevates clarity to a strategic advantage. By integrating advanced tracking systems, you will go beyond mere monitoring to a state where the flow from receiving to the final product is mapped with precision and efficiency. This phase sharpens your operational focus, using real-time tracking and automated data capture to smooth out bottlenecks, minimize errors and accelerate productivity. It's about ensuring transparency and equipping your business to adapt rapidly to new demands with foresight and agility.

Embracing this fusion of human expertise and machine intelligence transforms visibility into actionable insight, empowering swift, informed decision-making. This isn't just a boost in clarity, it's a leap to operational excellence. With these tools, you can anticipate needs, adapt in the moment and set new industry standards, refining your processes to make every decision accurate and every action impactful.

### Harvesting the Benefits of Enhanced Insight

The advancements in Step 3 offer considerable operational advantages:

- Speeding up processes with automated data capture and streamlined material movement.
- Refining data capture accuracy to fully support and align with business requirements.
- Expanding asset visibility at key operational points.
- Utilizing key data insights to enhance compliance with physical processes, ensuring operations are consistent with best practices.

### Charting the Course for Enhanced Operational Visibility

For a successful transition into Step 3, the following strategies can help guide the process:

- Assess and identify processes lacking in visibility to target them for improvements.
- Automate data capture and material movement in targeted areas and functions.
- Give priority to workflow compliance at points that are critical to the operation's success.
- Employ a management-by-exception approach to mitigate delays and alleviate congestion.
- Ensure that sensing and location technologies are precisely matched to address specific challenges.



### Manufacturing's Digital Makeover

# 86%

of manufacturing professionals are moving forward with digital transformation.<sup>4</sup>

# STEP 4



## Executing Proactive Strategies

### Real-Time Insights for Smarter Manufacturing

At this advanced phase of modernizing manufacturing, operations are fine-tuned with mobility optimization, setting a benchmark for industry excellence. Workers are now equipped with advanced tools that inform their decisions, reflecting a high-caliber approach to workforce mobility. The complexity of managing inventory and assets has grown, demanding comprehensive solutions that can manage these intricacies with ease. An expansion in the deployment of real-time visibility tools is critical to markedly improve asset visibility and utilization.

Step 4 is dedicated to establishing broad-scale real-time visibility, aiming to automate and refine the efficiency and accuracy of manufacturing processes. This stage is characterized by a concerted effort to optimize material flow with real-time location systems meticulously tracking items from arrival to dispatch. The fusion of ongoing data streams with operational guidelines is calibrated to trigger alerts and refine processes. The result is a production workforce that is informed and agile, with operations running smoothly with the intelligent use of real-time data.

#### Workflow Wisdom

Embracing Step 4 leads to a multitude of benefits that collectively elevate the entire manufacturing operation:

- Attain a panoramic view of activities, from workforce coordination to robotic operations, for total operational command.
- Validate and verify process accuracy, fostering a culture of precision across all manufacturing tiers.
- Optimize workflows that provide clear direction for immediate and impactful actions.
- Witness marked improvements in throughput, driving your manufacturing capabilities to new levels of speed and scale.

#### Blueprint for Success

To triumph in Stage 4, consider these key strategies:

- Evaluate which processes are ripe for automation.
- Craft workflows aimed at reducing costs, increasing velocity and boosting overall productivity.
- Integrate systems to ensure fluid communications across your operations.
- Arm workers with detailed knowledge of inventory and equipment to tackle distinct operational challenges effectively.
- Synchronize all tracked assets for cohesive and streamlined functionality.



#### Forecasting With Finesse: The Tech Advantage

Technology-enabled forecasting tools enhance the accuracy of demand predictions and service-level operations by over 13% and **can eliminate over half of all forecasting errors.**<sup>5</sup>



## Elevating Performance: The Power of Predictive and Adaptive Operations

You are at the forefront of continuous innovation, steering your operations with strategic, real-time location data to enhance workforce mobility. This invaluable data has become integral to daily operations, synergizing with business applications to maintain a proactive and informed team. The ongoing task is to refine this data into clear, actionable insights for all team members. The integration of robotic automation signifies a transformative leap toward more advanced automation techniques.

In Step 5, your goal is to expand the reach of real-time sensing technology, improving the synchronization and cooperation among personnel, assets, robots and materials. The focus is on facilitating seamless human-robot collaboration and crafting systems that are not merely reactive but adaptively predictive, harnessing machine learning and AI to anticipate and align with business dynamics. The strategy involves utilizing sophisticated algorithms to merge data streams, providing precise guidance and creating a fertile ground for automated decision-making.

### Integrating Intelligence

The advancement into Step 5 heralds a host of substantial benefits:

- Optimization of automation investments, yielding sophisticated, real-time decision-making capabilities that refine and error-proof processes.
- Unparalleled operational transparency, illuminating every facet and extending traceability throughout the supply chain.
- Substantial reduction in waste, errors and bottlenecks, facilitating a surge in operational flexibility.

### Fusing AI With Human Expertise

For the successful activation of Step 5, embrace these strategies:

- Pursue an integrated approach where physical operations harmonize with enterprise and planning systems.
- Develop an automation strategy that leverages technology and amplifies human capabilities, allowing the workforce to concentrate on high-value activities.
- Capture and utilize real-time data beyond the plant floor, extending to the entire operational ecosystem.
- Apply artificial intelligence and machine learning to perpetually refine workflows, resource allocation, labor planning and facility layouts.



**Embracing AI:  
The New Automation  
Ally in Manufacturing**

# 38%

of manufacturers expect to adopt artificial intelligence by 2025 and say it is critical for production and process automation.<sup>6</sup>

## Embracing Industry 4.0: A Vision for Future Manufacturing

As this exploration of Industry 4.0 concludes, we reflect on a transformative blueprint for manufacturing excellence that melds the precision of real-time data with the agility of adaptive operations. This journey has unveiled the pivotal role of strategic integration, predictive analytics and intelligent automation in sculpting a manufacturing landscape that is efficient, responsive and innovative. With these pillars, businesses stand ready to leap beyond current capabilities, fostering an environment where continuous improvement propels them to lead in a dynamic, data-driven marketplace. The future is not only about adopting new technologies but about creating a synergy between them and human expertise to redefine the essence of manufacturing.

### About Zebra

Zebra empowers organizations to thrive in the on-demand economy by making every front-line worker and asset at the edge visible, connected and fully optimized. With an ecosystem of more than 10,000 partners across more than 100 countries, Zebra serves customers of all sizes—including 94% of the Fortune 100—with an award-winning portfolio of hardware, software, services and solutions that digitize and automate workflows. Zebra recently expanded its industrial automation portfolio with its Fetch Robotics acquisition and increased its machine vision and AI software capabilities with the acquisitions of Adaptive Vision, Matrox Imaging and Antuit.ai.

### Embrace automation. Elevate your operations.

#### SOURCES:

<sup>1</sup> McKinsey & Company, "Capturing the true value of Industry 4.0," April 13, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Parsable, "Paperless Manufacturing: The Hidden ROI," September 14, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Parsable, "The State of Digitization and Connected Work on Manufacturing Frontlines," 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Smart Industry, "New research sees buy-in for digital transformation growing among manufacturing stakeholders," November 9, 2023.

<sup>5,6</sup> Fortune Business Insights, "Artificial Intelligence in Manufacturing Market Size, Share & Industry Analysis, By Offering," May 2020.

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