

**5 REASONS WHY**

# **MANUFACTURERS NEED WORKFLOW AUTOMATION**



In an era where the pace of change is faster than ever, the manufacturing industry faces a unique set of challenges and opportunities.

**Global competition, complex supply chains, rapidly evolving technology, and increasing customer demands for quality and speed** all exert pressure on manufacturers to innovate, adapt, and excel. Amidst these dynamics, workflow automation emerges not just as a technological advantage but as a strategic imperative for survival and success.



Workflow automation, at its core, is about **optimizing the processes that drive manufacturing operations**. It's about replacing manual, error-prone tasks with automated, precise, and efficient workflows that **streamline production, enhance quality control, and improve overall operational visibility**. Also important to consider is how a workflow automation can integrate with your existing systems. A quality platform can effectively orchestrate **in parallel to, on top of, or tightly integrated with traditional ERPs**, even negating the need for them in certain situations.

But the value of workflow automation extends far beyond these operational efficiencies. It is a catalyst for transformation, enabling manufacturers to **leverage data, connect systems and processes, and make informed decisions** that drive growth and competitiveness.

How can automation help manufacturers achieve unprecedented levels of agility? How does it allow for quicker responses to market changes and customer needs? We'll cover all of that and more, highlighting the role of automation in **enhancing accuracy, reducing waste, and ensuring compliance** with increasingly stringent regulatory standards.

Task switching costs  
**40% of productivity**

The flow of work from the manufacturing floor to the back office can be automated, streamlining your productivity and alleviating stress for your staff

According to Harvard Business Review, poor data costs US businesses

**\$3 Trillion every year**

Join us on this journey to understand why adopting workflow automation is not just a smart move for manufacturing companies—it's essential to their future prosperity and competitive edge.



# 1.

## Achieving Agility

**Agility in manufacturing** is crucial for responding to market changes and customer demands quickly. Workflow automation allows for the **rapid prototyping, testing, and deployment of new processes**, reducing the time to market for new products and enabling manufacturers to stay competitive. For instance, organizations have reported a **50-75% reduction in time to market** after adopting workflow automation solutions.

Furthermore, automation streamlines communication and coordination across different departments and stages of the manufacturing process. **Real-time data sharing and process integration** ensure that changes in production plans or customer orders are instantly communicated, allowing for rapid adjustments and minimized delays. This interconnectedness supports a more **agile manufacturing operation**, where decision-making and production priorities are informed by up-to-the-minute information, enhancing the ability to pivot as needed.

Discrete or custom manufacturers often report that **ERPs lack the flexibility they need**



### How can you implement workflow automation?

- Automate procurement processes to ensure timely ordering of materials and **reduce production delays**
- Track machine maintenance schedules and predict and **prevent equipment failures**
- Automate QC processes to aid in the early detection of defects, **ensuring product consistency and compliance with industry standards**

Lastly, the **predictive analytics and reporting capabilities** of workflow automation systems offer insights that help manufacturers anticipate market trends and customer preferences. This foresight enables proactive adjustments to production strategies and resource allocation, further enhancing agility. By leveraging automation, manufacturers not only respond more quickly to the present but also **strategically prepare for the future**, ensuring sustained success and growth.

## 2. Operational Accuracy

**Errors in manufacturing** can be costly, leading to waste, rework, and decreased customer satisfaction. Workflow automation standardizes processes, ensuring that each step is performed consistently and accurately, regardless of the team member involved. This standardization helps in **maintaining quality control and reducing operational errors**, directly impacting the bottom line.

By automating data entry and processing tasks, manufacturers **minimize the risk of mistakes and inaccuracies** that can lead to defects, rework, and wasted resources. Automated systems also provide real-time monitoring and alerts for deviations from quality standards, allowing for immediate corrective actions. This precision not only improves product quality but also **enhances compliance with industry regulations**, ensuring audits get passed with ease.



For instance, in industries such as pharmaceuticals or automotive, **even minor inaccuracies in the manufacturing process can lead to significant issues**, including product recalls, legal liabilities, and harm to consumers. Accurate operations ensure that products meet strict regulatory standards and customer expectations, maintaining the manufacturer's reputation and market position. This highlights the importance of precision in production processes to **avoid costly errors and maintain trust in the brand**.

**Rise Ahead or  
Fall Behind**

**90%**

**of manufacturers are  
already in the process of  
implementing product and  
supply chain visualization  
tools\***

**49%**

**of top manufacturers said  
increasing product  
innovation was top priority\***

\*Forbes

# 3.

## Boosting Productivity

**Workflow automation's impact** on productivity is profound. By automating both routine and complex tasks, employees are free to focus on high-value activities, **increasing output without additional headcount**. These days, manufacturers are facing serious challenges with sourcing high quality talent across departments. By leveraging workflow automation to utilize existing staff to the fullest, companies have seen productivity gains of **30-50% in back-office functions, 20-25% in knowledge worker tasks, and 10-20% in skilled, experiential positions\***.

Workflow automation also ensures **smooth information flow and coordination between departments**, minimizing delays and errors. This integrated approach not only speeds up production cycles but also improves resource allocation and reduces bottlenecks, **significantly boosting productivity** at every level of the manufacturing process.



# 95%

of leaders struggle with workforce issues<sup>+</sup>



By automating the flow, execution, and real-time management of work, you **empower your staff to achieve more with less.**

Productivity is critical for meeting market demands and maintaining competitiveness. High productivity enables a manufacturer to **produce goods faster**, reducing lead times and costs, which can be passed on as savings to customers or reinvested for innovation, **creating competitive advantage**. It also allows for efficient use of resources, minimized waste and maximized output, improving profitability and strengthening your ability to respond to customer needs promptly, **ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty.**

\*Forbes

+ARC Advisory Group

# 4.

## Maximizing Efficiency

**In manufacturing, time is money.** Having the ability to identify bottlenecks and automate the flow of information between departments is essential to reducing waste and cutting costs. A study by SIS International Research found that **employees waste an average of 3.5 hours weekly waiting for information from coworkers**, a delay that workflow automation can significantly reduce.

Every step of your process that introduces manual intervention means you are **moving that much slower than your competitors**. Ensuring **seamless integration** of various manufacturing systems, **data accuracy**, and **real-time visibility** across operations leads to **faster production times**, **reduced operational costs**, and less time needed by leadership to evaluate market shifts and **make key decisions** to keep an organization running smoothly.



**The bottom line is this:** the manufacturing industry is more competitive than ever, and the ability to **drive sustainable efficiencies** is a key factor in a company's market share. Leveraging workflow automation means your organization can adapt to internal and external change, establish itself as a **leader in innovation and sustainability**, provide employees with the tools they need to achieve success, and ultimately **remain competitive** in today's dynamic market environment.

**Empower  
Your  
Team**

**7/10**

**workers believe adopting automation in their organization will create better opportunities for them in higher-skilled jobs\***

**86%**

**of employees surveyed believe that automation will help them do their work more efficiently to improve productivity and growth\***

\*McKinsey

# 5.

## Real-time Visibility

**Real-time visibility** in manufacturing allows for the immediate monitoring and management of production processes, engineering, quoting, and supply chain operations. This **instant insight** enables manufacturers to **make informed decisions quickly**, reducing downtime and addressing issues before they escalate. It also enhances coordination across departments, improving productivity and efficiency. Moreover, real-time data helps in forecasting and planning, ensuring **resources are allocated optimally** and **production schedules are met**, which is essential for meeting customer demands and maintaining a competitive edge in the market.

Leveraging a quality workflow automation platform that offers **real-time dashboards and analytics** that provide insights into the status of various processes, from production lines to supply chain management, enables managers to **quickly identify and address issues**, improving overall operational effectiveness.



### Put Workflow to Work for You

According to McKinsey, the world can save an estimated

**\$749 Billion**

in working hours by automating

**64%**

of day-to-day tasks in the manufacturing industry.

In the ever-evolving landscape of manufacturing, where every second counts and every decision impacts the bottom line, **real-time visibility is not just an advantage—it's a necessity**. The ability to see, understand, and act on data instantly is the cornerstone of modern manufacturing success. **Embrace the future of manufacturing** with workflow automation and turn real-time insights into strategic advantage, ensuring your place at the **forefront of industry innovation and resilience**.



For manufacturing companies, the journey toward digital transformation is fraught with challenges. However, the adoption of **workflow automation** offers a clear path to overcoming these obstacles, **enhancing agility, accuracy, productivity, efficiency, and visibility** across operations. As the industry continues to evolve, the manufacturers who embrace these technologies will find themselves well-positioned to thrive in the competitive global market.

Let us show how you can leverage HighGear to **pioneer the future of manufacturing**

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