

# Scale technology with ease: an eBook for manufacturers

How to ensure your automation technologies are always on and always available





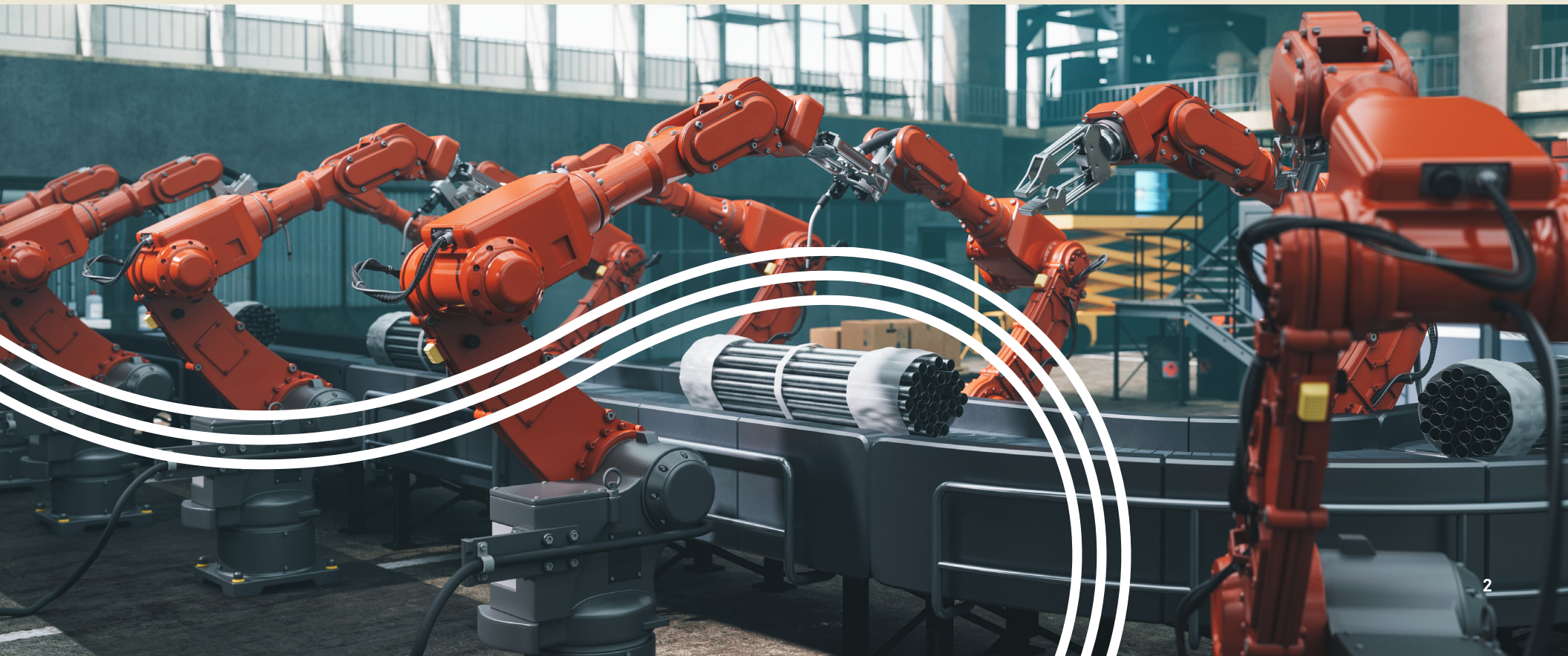
# Introduction

Today's manufacturers are up against numerous challenges. Due to reshoring trends and increasingly complex technology used in manufacturing, companies are continuously trying to fill talent gaps. Add in the need to drive efficiency, reduce downtime, lower production costs, and increase safety — staying ahead of the competition isn't easy.

One way to accomplish all of that is through strategic partnerships.

A tech partner brings specialized expertise, infrastructure, and deep knowledge to help scale, set up, and deploy your automation technology while also bridging skill gaps.

This eBook provides manufacturing professionals and decision-makers with a comprehensive guide to successfully navigating and harnessing the potential of partnership. Tech partnerships empower the seamless implementation of innovative technologies that keep you at the forefront of the competition.



# Labor challenges continue

As manufacturing professionals, you're dealing with difficulties hiring and retaining skilled labor and scaling technologies.

## How do you retain top talent?

Though labor shortages in America affect every industry, manufacturing is one of the top industries impacted. As of September 2023, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates a deficit of more than 620,000 manufacturing jobs waiting to be filled nationwide.

As older employees retire, the labor shortage has become a concern for manufacturers, employees, and investors, as it can impact productivity and growth. Retaining top talent and finding ways to entice new hires is crucial.

## Reshoring creates more jobs

As the reshoring trend brings many businesses closer to home, even more roles are opening. Research shows, that through the last 13 years, 1,675,000 jobs have returned from offshore.<sup>2</sup>

A tech partnership can empower you — from consultation and deployment to helping you reduce the strain on your teams, allowing them to focus more on innovation and less on execution. As you bring workers back onshore or near shore, a tech partner can ensure that your new facility and automation technology is ready to go the moment your employees are ready.



The workforce in manufacturing is one of the oldest workforces of any industry with nearly 50% of its workforce aged 45+.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor. Employed persons by detailed industry and age. 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Reshoring Initiative Data. Companies Reshoring. 2023.



# Scaling tech can be challenging

You rely on automation technologies for everything from robotic arms along your assembly lines to AGVs (Automated Guided Vehicles) transporting materials throughout your facility. When technology fails, operations can be derailed resulting in lost productivity, supply chain issues, and decreasing revenue. According to Forbes, unplanned downtime can cost manufacturing companies a whopping \$50 billion per year.<sup>4</sup>

Scaling and maintaining technology can be difficult for busy organizations, particularly when working with multiple OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers). Each OEM may have different protocols, standards, and procedures, making it challenging for you to keep track of everything. What's more, as technology advances, it's critical to ensure that systems are in place guaranteeing tech is interoperable with the latest innovations.

Servicing a national manufacturer can add complexity for OEMs. They must comply with numerous rules, work across varied time zones, and assist in multiple languages. A strategy to handle challenges that may occur in different regions is also essential to keeping pace with today's competition.

Nearly **40%** of organizations have suffered a major outage caused by human error over the past three years.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Network World. 10 things to know about data-center outages. 2023.

<sup>4</sup>Forbes. Unplanned Downtime Costs More Than You Think. 2022.

# Reduce downtime and increase uptime

Imagine you just signed your largest production order and it's time to ramp up. Don't let downtime derail production. When technology goes down, it affects your bottom line and your reputation. If this happens frequently, it can have a measurable impact on customer retention.

As the need for connected devices continues to accelerate within the manufacturing industry, so does the need for support which can exhaust resources and overwhelm team members.

Unexpected warehouse technical issues can be costly. According to research, 40% of enterprises said a single hour of downtime can cost between \$1 million and over \$5 million<sup>5</sup> — exclusive of any legal fees, fines, or penalties.

It's also inefficient for untrained employees to waste time trying to repair, fix, or deploy software and hardware during busy production times. Working closely with a third-party service partner can help alleviate this situation.



<sup>5</sup> ITIC. The 2022 Hourly Cost of Downtime. 2023.



# Finding the right tech partner

A service partner can provide the infrastructure, service, and support needed to sustain accelerated growth, allowing you to focus on growing your business.

Innovation in automation technology is an essential investment, and business managers understand that the cost of maintaining robots, cobots, drones, AGVs, and other high-tech equipment, shouldn't exceed their value. Finding the right tech partner can help maximize technology value, improve efficiency, and drive better employee experiences.

Whether you're looking to scale up or need support with new or existing technology, finding the right partner keeps you focused on your business and helps you:

- Access proven tech and automation solutions to scale for success
- Seamlessly integrate your tech
- Safeguard data with cybersecurity solutions
- Deliver full lifecycle support and service through a team of trained global experts

Consider choosing a vendor-agnostic tech partner, allowing for the implementation and integration of the right device without having to select from a narrow offering.

You deserve peace of mind that business won't be interrupted when technology such as robots/cobots, drones, or AGVs require attention.

That's what RICOH Service Advantage delivers.



# 3 reasons to tap into RICOH Service Advantage

1

## Avoid resource drain

Massive installations along with service and support at your different locations requires a talented, skilled workforce. Avoid overextending resources, and team up with a tech partner.

From deployments and dispatch services to service desk support and consultants, our highly trained and versatile tech teams provide all the necessary hardware maintenance and services you need.

2

## Focus on innovation instead of maintenance

By 2027, the number of automated manufacturing and warehouse facilities is expected to nearly double in North America.<sup>6</sup> As demand for production grows, ensuring your technology is properly functioning and ready for whatever the future brings is more important than ever.

Working with a service partner allows you to concentrate on innovation and growth while delivering an exceptional customer experience.

3

## Quickly scale your tech and services

With tech and innovation accelerating rapidly, the need for holistic lifecycle management programs continues to soar. Quickly expand your service as you grow into new markets and better facilitate change management.

A trustworthy tech partner can assist with reactive break/fix and proactive maintenance support, product updates, reporting, analytics, and more.

# Get customer-centric service you can rely on

Partnering with Service Advantage means you have one point of contact to help you manage it all. We offer you deep expertise and strategic consultation, reactive break/fix and proactive maintenance support, training for continued tech adoption and consistent, holistic lifecycle support for your equipment and technology.

Your customers put their trust in you — trust Ricoh to provide the customer-centric service they need to experience your brand at its best.

## Ricoh, a trusted manufacturing industry partner

At Ricoh, we're empowering our customers to respond to our changing world with actionable insights. We believe having access to the right information translates to better business agility, more human experiences, and the ability to thrive in today's age of hybrid and borderless work. Through our people, experience, and solutions, we create competitive advantage every day for over 1.4 million businesses around the globe. To us, there's no such thing as too much information.

### Explore and learn more

Partner with us and tap into our 85+ years of experience as a global innovation leader in technology and business solutions. Visit our [web page](#) to learn more.

**RICOH**  
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