

# SMITH

**AUGMENTED  
MANUFACTURING:  
THE BIG SIX  
USE CASES**

**ARE B2B  
CUSTOMERS  
WILLING TO  
PAY MORE FOR  
A BETTER  
CUSTOMER  
EXPERIENCE?**

**CHANNEL CONFLICT,  
OR CONFLICTING  
CHANNELS?  
MASTER COMPLEX  
DISTRIBUTOR  
RELATIONSHIPS**

WHILE 10% OF US B2B PURCHASES ARE BEING  
MADE THROUGH WEB ECOMMERCE, ONLY 40% OF  
MANUFACTURERS HAVE AN ECOMMERCE  
PLATFORM. HAVE YOU MADE THE LEAP?



# INDUSTRY 4.0 REQUIRES TRANSFORMATION OF THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Industry 4.0 presents opportunities for radical re-imagination of manufacturing organizations for better products, new efficiencies, and more significant profits.

This transformation doesn't end where the assembly line does; it continues all the way to day-to-day engagement with customers, going so far as to predict their needs in advance.

How exactly does this new era impact your customer experience design, or the complexity of your relationships with distributors who might also be your competitors?

**THIS GUIDE PROVIDES A SNAPSHOT OF INSIGHTS  
AND BEST PRACTICES IN FOUR CATEGORIES  
THAT COMMONLY PRESENT CHALLENGES:**

- **CUSTOMERS:** Learn to adapt to evolving buyer expectations
- **SALES:** Master increasingly complex distribution channels
- **OPERATIONS:** Improve and integrate marketing operations
- **EMPLOYEES:** Enroll team members in the digital transformation

# IMAGINE YOUR BUSINESS DECIDED TO “SIT OUT” THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION?

From the Industrial Revolution to Ford's assembly line, manufacturing is no stranger to evolution. As we progress into the era of Industry 4.0, modern manufacturers are integrating extremely advanced levels of automation into their operations. Across plant and shop floors, technology is changing every type of manufacturing organization, from shoes and processed food, to microprocessors and complex machinery. The assembly line has gotten smarter, robots roam the floors collaboratively with humans creating a highly intelligent workforce powered by the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT), and processes are in place to connect it all with the customer.

Or, soon will be.

## IS YOUR BUYING EXPERIENCE A PAIN IN THE BUTT?

The rise of Amazon-sized customer expectations has shifted the Customer Experience (CX) focus towards how products are sold, how customers buy those products, and how the entire relationship between business and customer can be improved and managed through a range of services.

The customer experience and journey is increasingly becoming a point of competitive differentiation and added-value in B2B. In order to compete, manufacturers must focus not on the goods being manufactured, but on providing services that help deliver and support those goods.

Whether a distributor, building maintenance team, or a construction company, customers buy products as a means to reach their more deeply desired outcomes. A buyer of an electric floor polisher is really after clean floors every morning. A buyer of an industrial HVAC system is really after decades of comfortable building

temperatures. These scenarios illustrate rolling time-horizons of outcomes that lend themselves respectively to auto-replenishment of floor wax, and predictive maintenance using sensor systems or simply timed notifications for air filter replacements.





Customers buy from companies that make the process easy and enjoyable. They are savvy and expect exceptional customer service, including acceptable levels of response time and ease of order placement. They know that more than ever, their purchasing power is priceless if a business wants to thrive.

Commonly called the “Consumerization of B2B,” this trend is driven both by the generational shift of digital-savvy millennials moving into research,

buying, and executive roles, and the “global” bar-raising by consumer brands that impacts the expectations of all ecommerce buyers who are increasingly accustomed to advanced 24/7 self-service models.

For manufacturers, this means no longer relying only on traditional systems and processes for sales. Customers expect to be able to research when the need and time strikes them. Even if that means in the middle of the night, sitting

in an airport, and on their phone.

The further our hypothetical airport customer can make it towards a complete sale the better, which is where customer journey mapping becomes a critical strategic activity for eliminating friction and roadblocks, and creating value-added systems that make it as simple as possible for a buyer to get precisely what they need, and if possible, complete a transaction.

**80% of B2B customers tend to spend more with sellers who provide strong ecommerce services.**

*SMITH B2B BENCHMARKING STUDY 2016*

## **DIG DEEPER**

SMITH's B2B Benchmarking Study



**Key Trends Shaping B2B Commerce.**



**“By 2020, 50% of the G2000 will see most of their business depend on their ability to create digitally-enhanced products, services, and experiences.”**

**FRANK GENS,**  
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF  
ANALYST, IDC

## **57% OF B2B EXECUTIVES**

**Say their top technology need for investment is an ecommerce platform to enable self-service, making it the highest reported requirement for near-term change.**

B2B RETAILER 2017



Digital technology not only helps to satisfy customer expectations, but also addresses many of the other challenges manufacturers are facing today – including channel conflicts, an aging workforce, and the necessity for a competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

From the executive point of view, CX modernization increases the capacity to scale in lockstep with the operational improvements delivered by Industry 4.0, creates better forecasting capability, and makes the organization better able to consolidate and change with M&A activity.

## U.S. B2B ECOMMERCE WILL REACH \$1.2 TRILLION BY 2021.

- FORRESTER 2018

This continues the trend of increasing revenue from self-serve web channels from \$605 billion in 2012 to a projected \$954 billion for 2018. A focus on digital customer experience design provides manufacturers with the capacity to capture more revenue - that much is obvious.

Digitization also creates synchronicity between internal and external aspects of the organization. It is not unusual for B2B sellers to have areas of their operations that still operate on

pencil and paper notes that are passed to an administrative employee whose primary job is managing outdated digital systems.

Externally, the development of an omnichannel customer experience unifies the way businesses communicate value and execute transactions. Internally, the native systems provided by these platforms help organize and simplify operations both in communication and production, creating more organized data orchestration as leads become returning customers who offer clues about what they need next.

**CULTURE MATTERS. EMPLOYEES NEED TO EMBRACE DIGITIZATION FOR IT TO WORK.**



An IDC study exploring how businesses are moving to embrace new technologies found that significant roadblocks still exist before companies can get results. By 2018, IDC expects that just 30 percent of the manufacturers making investments in digital transformation will have maximized the outcome.

The problem – too many businesses are having innovation stifled by outdated business models and technological limitations that remain firmly entrenched not only in technology and processes, but in culture as well. Hence, the importance of enrolling employees into the benefits of change.

# 4 KEY AREAS OF TRANSFORMATION

In this guide, we identify four areas manufacturers can address with advances in unified customer experience design.



## MAKE YOUR PROBLEM OUR PROBLEM

Connect with one of our subject matter experts for a no-pressure discussion around your challenges, or go deeper on topics of interest.

### CUSTOMERS <sup>01</sup>

With demand for greater customization, personalization, and 24/7 research and transaction, customers are calling for more and improved self-service options. Modern commerce and content platforms, well designed and executed, allow not only the ability to anticipate and adapt to future customer needs, but to scale the kind of high-touch customer experiences that your best salespeople can deliver, minus golf games, which will never become an obsolete sales tool.

### SALES CHANNEL <sup>02</sup>

As B2B customers dive into digital, fear of channel conflict has created a reluctance in implementing solutions that provide transparency and access to the end customer. Market dynamics are different from sector to sector, but what is true across all is that empowering sales channels, including sales people, with modern digital tools and systems is the path to higher revenues, deeper customer relationships, and long-term business viability in a period of disruption.

### OPERATIONS <sup>03</sup>

Competitive advantage has long been built on efficiency gains within manufacturing facilities. Technologies like additive manufacturing and robotics allow manufacturers to shift towards a build-to-order methodology rather than build to stock, and lower the cost of operations. This further strengthens the demand for greater customization, speed to order, and agile delivery - and consequently, the overall customer experience. Within this operational evolution is the promise of IIoT data that can deliver actionable insights for both internal stakeholders and external channel partners and end-customers. Connected to modern customer experience design, the IIoT enables preventative and predictive maintenance, auto-replenishment, and the insights necessary for a salesperson to become a value-added consultant.

### EMPLOYEES <sup>04</sup>

Millennial workers have grown-up digital, and embrace modern tools. Demographic shifts are not limited to the buyer-side. An aging workforce is leaving many vacancies within manufacturing operations, and the knowledge gap left by employees who have held the tribal intelligence threatens the customer experience.

In sales specifically, the threat of digital commerce and content platforms can create resistance to change. Transformation is never an easy process. Ultimately, humans are the most important variable in this complex system, and involving employees throughout the process is critical for successful outcomes.

#### Customer are choosing to delay commercial conversations with suppliers

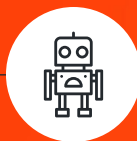
57%  
COMPLETE



CUSTOMER DUE  
DILIGENCE BEGINS

CUSTOMER'S FIRST  
SERIOUS ENGAGEMENT WITH SALES

PURCHASE



## CAN I SPEAK TO YOUR AI?

Natural Language Processing, the technology responsible for understanding and acting on how we speak, is the next frontier of computer interfaces. At SMITH, we refer to this as "the invisible interface." These interfaces will become the most natural way for humans to interact with computers – as they would a human.

The limitations of the technology are rapidly dissolving, creating opportunities for B2B sellers to push the envelope with expert-level artificial intelligence (AI) systems, or keep it simple with basic tools like order status questions and simple product information.

Between their low-price point, an adoption-curve on-par with smartphones, and capacity to be accessed anywhere in the "cloud," it is virtually inevitable that the next decade will reveal this to be one of the most transformational technologies in computing and customer experience.

## UNLEASH THE POWER OF INFORMATION ACROSS YOUR BUSINESS

"Changing competitive landscapes and consumerism are disrupting businesses and creating an imperative to invest in digital transformation, unleashing the power of information across the enterprise and thereby improving the customer experience, operational efficiencies, and optimizing the workforce. In 2017, global organizations spent \$1.2 trillion on digital transformation with discrete and process manufacturers contributing almost 30% of this spending."

**EILEEN SMITH,**  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, CUSTOMER INSIGHTS  
& ANALYSIS GROUP, IDC





# CUSTOMER 01

## YOUR B2B CUSTOMER SHOPS ON HIGHLY OPTIMIZED B2C SITES THAT ARE PERSONALIZED TO THEIR NEEDS.

The business buyer now demands the same levels of customization, convenience, and accessibility provided by consumer solutions. To meet these demands, manufacturers must have access to insights, data, and analytics on their customers. By leveraging this data, you can provide value back to the customer by creating self-service options and predicting their wants and needs.

In the economic pantheon of businesses, B2B organizations retain the mystique of the more serious, professional player when compared to B2C organizations.

Yet if you shop for yourself online frequently, even with primarily brick and mortar organizations, you'll notice – with the good ones – that the experience is slightly predictive, that your recently examined items are suddenly on the front page along with similar recommendations. Your email inbox slowly fills with reminders of the product you left unpurchased in your cart, with discounts on related products and services.

While the complexity of B2C product and service solutions is typically far, far lower than B2B, the power of their customer experience platforms is typically greater and more refined. As more and more tools, ranging from AI to WebGL for in-browser 3D customization and visualization, become mature, the challenge of B2B complexity is reduced. Meanwhile, the same foundational platforms, like SAP Hybris, that orchestrate complex B2C scenarios are fully adapted and tailored for B2B manufacturers.

## ***"I want what I want when I want it."***

Customer support no longer has hours of operation – your business must provide 24/7 communication channels with customers.

Alternative customer support channels, such as chatbots, social media customer care, and user forums, are gaining in popularity as customers learn how to use them more efficiently.

It's doubtful that the phone will ever disappear completely as a way for customers to connect with a company. Some difficult-to-solve problems require human-to-human interaction, but as a quick first line of support, alternative channels are becoming the norm rather than the exception.

FORBES

## FRICITIONLESS SELF-SERVICE IS THE ANSWER. THE CHALLENGE IS THE HOW.

Technological advances offer us convenience and time-savings from the grocery store to the burger joint. In grocery, Amazon GO allows shopping without a checkout, and dozens of companies compete to enable fast grocery delivery. Mobile and kiosk ordering with customization at SMITH's major QSR client have reduced lineups, aligned want and need, and sped up the entire delivery process. These shifts in "self-service" are also now occurring in B2B environments.



## SELF-SERVICE IN MANUFACTURING CAN MEAN:

- They can buy what they need when they need it. Providing the right level of data and information helps to make an informed decision without having to pick up a phone or scheduling a meeting with sales reps.
- Use connected devices and data to help gain insights into what's working, what needs maintenance, and what needs replacing before it breaks.
- Speed customization of products. Fix small issues with your design by modifying the configuration yourself. Easily tweak the model and even compare/contrast different solutions. The perfect fit is just a few clicks away.

## WHAT IS THE ROI OF SELF-SERVICE?

A large manufacturer quantified the cost of serving a customer at \$5-7 for each phone call.

Of the phone calls received, more than 80% were tied to very basic transactional inquiries that the everyday customer takes for granted—order look-up, shipping status, return status, or part identification.

***How much would you save if you eliminated 80% of your inbound call volume?***

## THE UBERIZATION OF B2B

The on-demand elegance of Uber is a trait few organizations would reject. In B2B, several disruptive start-ups are working to adapt aspects of their model into industrial applications ranging from supply chain and warehousing to construction material supplies.

In the latter example, Ottawa and Nashville-based GoFor.io combines medium-size truck drivers, construction supply companies, and a mobile ordering app to provide "instant" delivery of supplies to work sites.



The cascading effect of missing tools and unreplenished materials can derail the critical path of a project for hours, even days, resulting in a snowball effect of idle workers, production delays, and overtime to make up for it during crash development.

In a consumer scenario, Uber means ten more minutes watching TV or avoiding an angry spouse. In a business scenario, it can mean preventing tens of thousands of dollars in delays, breaking contract-locked timelines, and saving multi-million dollar customer relationships.

**Gartner Research predicts that by 2020, 85% of B2B transactions will occur without a human. But we aren't there yet.**

GARTNER



# SALES CHANNEL 02

## TRADITIONAL DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS ARE CHANGING. PROTECT YOURSELF WITH ACCESS TO END-CUSTOMERS.

Manufacturers must become more in tune with the needs of their end users. This task directly conflicts with the traditional distribution channel of wholesalers, dealers, and brokers, and has led many manufacturers to abandon plans for direct-to-customer sales. But digital solutions, including analytics, electronic product catalogs, and social media will not kill existing relationships with distributors, but instead, strengthen the entire sales channel with tools that provide value to the customer.

Historically, manufacturing sales channels have been controlled by the argument against digital programs to avoid channel disruption. However, traditional selling through only distribution channels no longer represents the complexities of modern-

day B2B business for organizations looking for growth.

Avoiding the direct-to-customer relationship model is no longer an option with the proliferation of distribution channels – traditional, digital only, and marketplaces (including Amazon Business going direct in many industries) – customers now have their choice of channels.

What was once channel conflict has become "conflicting channels," with some of these distribution channels white-labeling similar products that compete directly with the manufacturers.

This example is blindingly obvious to food manufacturers on a trip to the grocery store, which now stocks their

own products, at lower prices and similar "feature" profiles, next to those of their product suppliers.

One of their key strengths? Grocers have access to a complete view of all sales data from all competing food manufacturers, allowing them to find gaps in the market for their own products using data no manufacturer has access to. Every vertical is unique, but the drive to profit and customer control is universal.

Now more than ever, manufacturers need to (at minimum) start learning more about their end customer with a longer-term plan of selling directly to avoid further competitive disruption to their business. Several studies illustrate that customers would rather buy from the manufacturer and are even willing to pay (slightly) more to do so based on the confidence in the right product to serve their need.

**“[Digital Customer Experience] improvements can lower customer churn by 10 to 15 percent, increase the win rate of offers by 20 to 40 percent, and lower costs to serve by up to 50 percent.”**

MCKINSEY 2017



## MARKETPLACES ARE FORCING TRANSPARENCY

Amazon Business is the clearest example of how marketplaces are changing the game. Superseding the power of traditional distributors, they connect buyers and sellers – regardless of their role as distributor, wholesaler, or manufacturer of the actual product.

As distributors and wholesalers have little role in dictating product customization for more complex solutions, the threat is mainly to the existence of those parties, not manufacturers.

The threat to manufacturers is in price and reviews. Solutions exist next to one another with little branding, ripped from the context of the tradition of quality and value that you've worked to build against your competition.

As "unbiased" third parties, they host relatively unfiltered comments from buyers. All of us know the lopsided weighting that a single bad experience can carry versus a single good one.

## THE MIRACLE OF MIRAKL

SMITH's partner **MIRAKL** offers one solution to managing these complex relationships by providing manufacturers with tools that redirect customers from their digital platform to distributors and wholesalers where the transaction can take place, enabling the brand to build a customer channel while avoiding alienation of partners.

## MAKE MONEY WHILE YOU SLEEP WITH AUTOMATED REPLENISHMENT

Automated replenishment, where manufactured products are able to automatically reorder for themselves without end-user participation, is an emerging method for building long-term relationships and revenue. In SMITH's best practices research, Amazon DRS served as the underpinning technology and fulfillment mechanism for 11 of the 12 of the manufacturers who were examined.

The other used custom features in their own ecommerce platform, maintaining control over the total experience.

As Amazon Business continues to grow, DRS will naturally "click-in" to this offering for more and more B2B scenarios.

Automated replenishment requires strong CX and underlying digital maturity to be delivered without the use of Amazon. Underinvestment by most manufacturers, however, coupled with the strength of their market presence, has led early adopters to outsource this critical emerging service to Amazon.

## CONTROL YOUR BRAND VALUE

Imagine a world where marketplaces have replaced distributors and wholesalers. Your brand is now ubiquitous in the global B2B marketplaces relevant to your vertical.

The marketplace (even now, the distributor or wholesaler) gets a cut of any transaction, regardless of the product

or service, with little to no incentive to promote your particular solution.

Your responsibility now becomes ensuring that existing and potential customers understand not only your brand value – the points of differentiation you've worked so hard to build – but the deeper aspects of features and functionality that make you better than the other guys.

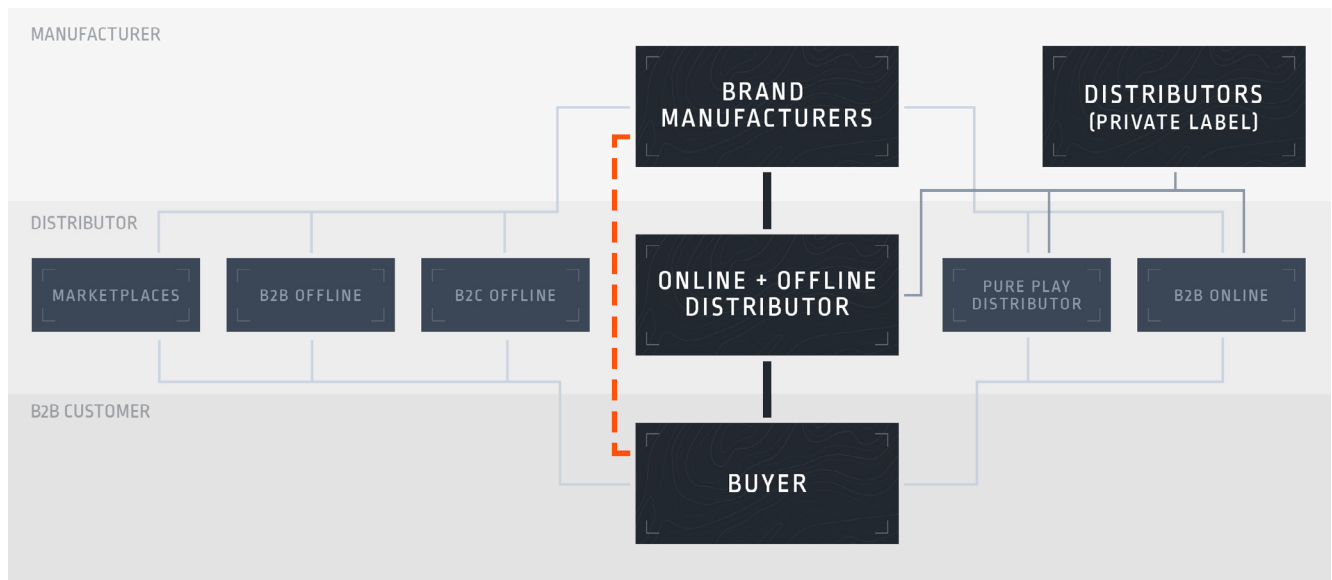
As your product evolves, taking advantage of the Industry 4.0 revolution, we enter a realm in which those downstream channels eventually just get in the way.

Aside from effectively acting as B2B advertising mediums, managing transactions, and perhaps extended warranties and maintenance services, what value are they adding that you can't?

Each niche is different. Industrial cleaning supplies are not the same as aircraft engines, nor aftermarket auto parts the same as blood analysis systems.

Unless you're competing purely on price – a race to the bottom – what remains universal is the importance of nurturing your brand. Not just in static communication, but in active interaction with your customers.

It's been said many times that a brand only exists in one place, and it's not in a PowerPoint deck or mission statement on a website. Your brand only truly exists in the mind of your customer. All else is hope and planning.



## B2B BUYER AND SELLER RELATIONSHIP COMPLEXITY

As a manufacturer, you rely on a highly sophisticated network of distributors, wholesalers, and direct sales to manage sales to the end customer. Depending on the industry and customer relationships, this might also include integration of Electronic Data Interchanges (EDIs) or even systems as ancient as fax orders.

Beyond white-label competition from downstream channels, risks in this ecosystem include:

### COMMODITIZATION

By relying on distributors and wholesalers for purchase, even when these relationships are highly symbiotic, the brand is excluded from direct

control over much of the purchase path and experience. As more and more distributors and wholesalers focus on ecommerce, the brand becomes more and more commoditized in the context of sitting aside multiple competitors, with customers focusing on things like prices and reviews.

### LOSS OF SERVICE AND DATA RELATIONSHIP

As marketplace, distributor, and wholesaler businesses evolve, in many cases, they are adding secondary services like maintenance, repair, and extended warranties. In the more advanced cases, like Amazon Business, auto-replenishment is an option. Brands like John Deere have mastered this with highly integrated service and data systems that create deep customer relationships and go beyond a single purchase to an ongoing symbiosis.

### DESIRABLE OUTCOME: DEEP AND DIRECT CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS POWERED BY DATA AND CONVENIENCE

Mastering this complex ecosystem for tomorrow requires a path that builds direct relationships with customers without alienating downstream partners in the sales channel. An ecommerce platform is the beginning of this relationship, providing not only transaction capability, but ongoing CRM and marketing automation activities, and evolving into predictive services.

Predictive services include everything from automated replenishment to predictive maintenance. This value-added layer of your brand's customer experience lets you solve your customer's problem before it turns into a pain they must address, which gives them a reason to reconsider your product.



## IOT: YOUR GREATEST SOURCE OF INSIGHTS INTO YOUR CUSTOMERS IS YOUR PRODUCT

The Internet of Things (IoT) is a network of physical devices – cars, smart meters, security cameras, heart monitors, phones, street lights, fridges – fitted with sensors connected to the Internet. This integration makes it possible for information to be shared with another, to send and receive data, share information and be monitored and controlled remotely.

Connected devices will give businesses the opportunity to do three things: attract new customers, reward loyal ones, and find out more about the behavior of people in and around their premises.

One of the most useful functions of internet-connected devices will be their ability to collect and analyze data, and then share that data with other devices. Meaning, if a machine is not working properly or needs a part replaced, or if levels of raw materials are running low and need topping up, you'll know instantly. They will be able to automatically order the items required without anyone else needing to get involved.

Read more about the Industrial Internet of Things here.

**70%** of enterprises invest in IoT to improve customer experiences.

FORBES



# OPERATIONS

03

## COMPLEXITY IS NO LONGER AN EXCUSE FOR NOT MOVING TOWARDS DIGITAL COMMERCE

Manufacturers consistently try to find ways to become more efficient. Especially in sales and support departments, significant efficiencies can be gained through digitization. In these departments, considerable time is spent processing traditional orders that come through phone, fax, and e-mail. But margins are getting smaller and becoming more efficient is a must.

B2BecNews (2018) research indicates that about 60% of US manufacturers don't have an ecommerce site for customer self-service. Those that have installed did so years ago and are challenged with issues such as:

- Limited-scale custom-built solutions
- Lack of omnichannel capability (i.e., mobile responsiveness in a world where smartphones are nearly as powerful as desktops)
- Lack of CX focus that places a burden of frustration on customers

- No interconnectivity between CX and operations data

Digital technology solutions can drive more efficient systems from the first to last mile, rapidly providing competitive gains and satisfying the need for an enhanced customer experience.



# AUGMENTED HMD'S

While consumers play with Apple ARKit and Google ARCore enhanced apps on their mobile devices, head mounted displays (HMDs) remain the preference, and target market, in the enterprise.

The Microsoft HoloLens is currently the only untethered augmented reality headset

that allows true interaction with 3D models integrated into the physical world. 2018 will see the developer release of Google-backed competitor Magic Leap, which will supplant their nearly-discontinued Google Glass eyewear heads-up display (HUD) that found success in B2B.





## 6

## AUGMENTED MANUFACTURING: THE BIG SIX USE CASES

### 01. INTEGRATING DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING:

Augmented Reality (AR) enables designers and manufacturers to collaborate to better integrate the design and manufacturing process, accelerating time to market.

### 02. TRAINING MANUFACTURING WORKERS:

Head mounted display (HMD) AR can help train key manufacturing workers, with some cases resulting in a four-fold decrease in training time.

- BOEING 2017

### 03. COMPLEX ASSEMBLY:

AR HMD's allow manufacturing companies to increase efficiency in assembly and maintenance/repair operations with HUD instructions and assistance.

### 04. SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE:

Field use of AR HMD's, made possible by their standalone form factor and hard helmet attachment, gives workers hands-free line-of-sight access to data, as well as remote holographic assistance from experts who can be located anywhere, with just a tablet.

### 05. COMPLEX SALES:

AR provides significant potential in helping customers visualize and tailor complex end-states during the sales process, allowing them to see customized solutions at-scale, in-situ final form before they've even been created.

### 06. EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT & DATA VISUALIZATION:

From exploring a future manufacturing facility to diving into live production capacity data, AR can provide the 100,000-foot view, with the option to dive deep with greater context.

INDUSTRY 4.0 ALLOWS MANUFACTURERS TO HAVE MORE FLEXIBLE MANUFACTURING PROCESSES THAT CAN BETTER REACT TO CUSTOMER DEMANDS.

## MYTH-BUSTING

Too many manufacturers believe that because no two orders are alike, orders can't be processed online. The belief is that price lists and catalogs are personalized by each customer, and the RFQ process just can't be handled online. It's not true.

But where did the myth come from? In the beginning, B2B sellers tried to use B2C eCommerce software to do the job. It was ill-prepared to handle the complexities of B2B commerce and required extensive and expensive customization. Today, B2B commerce platforms are built from the ground up for B2B transactions.



Learn more about  
AR-enabled  
manufacturing by



# EMPLOYEES 04

## DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY PRODUCES DATA THAT HELPS YOUR EMPLOYEES TO BE BETTER AT THEIR JOBS – AND FILLS IN THE GAPS FOR LOW-VALUE WORK

Robots and automation have already started to replace much of the low-value work that exists within a manufacturing facility. This momentum is making way for employees to focus on tasks more aligned with their high-value skills and training. Today, manufacturing employees are better educated, better paid, and producing more valuable products — including the technology that enables them to be so much more productive.

## TECHNOLOGY HELPS, RATHER THAN HURTS

"[This] is the natural dynamic by which market economies become richer as productivity improves. Improvements in agriculture productivity led to a wave of migration of farm workers to cities, where they provided the manpower for

an industrial economy that eventually became so productive that we could afford to buy more health care, education, and yes, government." We're in the midst of the same cycle right now.

WASHINGTON POST

## HOW DIGITAL CAN HELP TO REPLICATE TRIBAL KNOWLEDGE IN MANUFACTURING

As this demographic prepares to exit the workforce and enter retirement, businesses must think about what can be done to retain their knowledge. Most of this knowledge is not written down or stored within a computer. It's all in the employee's head. A lot of attention is paid to how this tribal knowledge will affect the production line, but what about those employees and the knowledge that exists in your back office to support customers?

Digital technology solutions can help transfer decades of accumulated know-how and knowledge, from the retiring generation of marketing, sales, and finance people to new hires. This ensures that the level of service your existing

customers are used to does not waver, and also ensures a consistent level of service exists for new customers.

**AN ESTIMATED 10,000 BABY BOOMERS TURN 65 YEARS OLD EACH DAY, MANY OF WHOM WORK IN MANUFACTURING RELATED POSITIONS.**

MANUFACTURING  
BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY



## RISE OF THE SUPER SELLER: SALES ENABLEMENT TOOLS

From product pricing configurators to augmented product demonstrations, and marketing automation to improved customer data, the tools of digital commerce help, rather than hurt the traditional sales representative.

With self-service tools reducing mundane and repetitive sales tasks, better selling tools can help with everything from improved lead quality to product demonstrations that leave your competitors looking like they're from the stone age.



The pillars of customer experience design

- FORRESTER

## SUMMARY

As we look at how product-focused companies have moved into a service-oriented culture, it comes back to the end-to-end experience of customers. How must a company adapt to engage a new generation of customers who can engage and buy on their own terms? The market now demands that companies rethink the status quo and reinvent ways to engage and drive brand loyalty. As you examine how your organization is set

up to support this inevitable change to multi-channel sales, try to identify who is best able to support this new strategy and engage with your customer across every touchpoint regardless of channel.

With the customer at the center of your engagement model, you will be able to provide an experience that keeps customers coming back. Not only is it easier to maintain a current

customer than find a new one, but loyal customers tend to spend more per transaction. To thrive in the Age of the Customer, manufacturers must meld the convenience of digital with the human touch.

# SMITH

## THE ARCHITECTS OF FUTURE COMMERCE

### WHATS NEXT?

SMITH is a digital transformation agency with a 20-year legacy of making B2B buying and selling awesome. From strategic planning to customer journey mapping, and commerce platform implementation to augmented reality, we can help.

#### SCHEDULE A 30 MINUTE DISCUSSION

1

We love complicated problems, they're often the most important ones to solve.

Send yours to [INSIGHT@SMITH.CO](mailto:INSIGHT@SMITH.CO) and we'll connect you with our team for a quick conversation to understand your challenges, and see how we can help.

#### DIGITAL MATURITY ASSESSMENT

– 2 Day Workshop

2

Understand your gaps, and how to bridge them, by taking the first step in digital transformation with this two-day workshop.

SMITH's Strategy, CX, and Technology teams will work with you and your key stakeholders to identify core strengths to leverage and weaknesses to overcome in strategy, technology, and capability and create a guiding vision for your path towards better outcomes.

#### VISIT SMITH'S FUTURE COMMERCE LAB

Ottawa-Gatineau, Canada

3

See how the Elements of Future Commerce combine to create better buying experiences in Manufacturing. SMITH's Labs Space demonstrates an interconnected customer and seller journey that illustrates how AI, Voice, Emotion Sensing, Facial Recognition, Virtual Reality, and Augmented Reality can be connected through the Internet of Things for better outcomes.

01  
**AR**

02  
**VR**

03  
**AI**

04  
**IoT**

05  
**CO**

06  
**ES**