

How Smart, Connected Manufacturers Run Their Business

5 THINGS THEY DO DIFFERENTLY



Manufacturing is evolving right before our eyes. It's being spurred by the need for better automation, visibility, and collaboration. Those manufacturers who have done their due diligence in finding the right system to support their business have discovered:



How to connect their machines, processes, and people.



What is really happening on their plant floor (even at multiple locations).



More insights into operational and business performance.

In the pages that follow, you'll see what smart, connected manufacturers do differently to run their business and how it has positioned them as leaders in today's economy.



They embrace cloud technology.

The advantages of the cloud for manufacturers are significant including flexibility in delivering IT resources at the cost and speed the business requires. Smart manufacturers are embracing cloud technology to reap the benefits.

15%

savings in IT spend

10%

more IT budget allocated
to innovation

8%

increase in profitability¹



Hausbeck Pickle Company



Pickle and pepper producer for major fast-food restaurants.



Challenge

Needed to improve production and inventory visibility.



Result

99.6% inventory accuracy—increased from 2015 at 70%



We needed to do this right. Plex kept rising to the top because it is 100% cloud-based and it fit our needs as a food and beverage manufacturer.”

—Tim Hausbeck, CEO, Hausbeck Pickle Company



Ralco Industries



Precision metal former specializing in welded assemblies, metal stamping, design, tooling, and prototyping.



Challenge

Too much scrap waste.



Result

60% reduction in scrap waste.



We get more advantage from Plex than we could with SAP or a similar system. This is the system of the future. Any company looking to outperform its competition and invest for the future will find its way to Plex.”

—Jim Piper, President, Ralco Industries

They connect the plant floor to the top floor.

Less than one percent of data collected on the shop floor is used but making this data accessible to everyone in the business is critical². Smart manufacturers know that connecting their plant floor to their top floor enables:

1

A single version of the truth.



Real-time visibility into operations.



Connected machines, devices, and processes.



Argent International



Manufacturer of adhesive and die-cut products—and a preferred 3M Converter.



Challenge:

Manual inventory processes time-consuming and error-prone.

100%

Results:

Achieves nearly 100% on-time delivery rates.



Every one of our employees is involved in the business from a financial standpoint—working towards lower costs, higher quality, and better performance—and the Plex Manufacturing Cloud® supports that.”

—Ryan Stefanski, IT Manager, Argent International



Shape Corporation



North America's top manufacturer of automotive bumpers.



Challenge

Separate systems for preventive maintenance, production, gages, problem controls, reporting, and more.

12

Results

12 systems replaced.



For us, Plex is by far the most impressive solution. It doesn't try to be all things to all men—it is designed for manufacturers with all the processes we'll probably ever require, built in.”

—Molly Hunting, IT Director, Shape Corporation

They use their data to make more-informed business decisions.

From measuring production throughput and plant schedule planning to support for demand management and forecasting, linking plant floor improvement to financial results is no longer a trend but a smart business strategy.

Manufacturers who use this strategy are getting more value from their data and becoming more agile.





Avon Machining



Large, complex, precision parts manufacturer for heavy equipment industries.



Challenge

Couldn't generate detailed data such as the cost, production time, and quantity produced.



Results

20% sustained annual growth.



We run the costing function to get the cost associated with each part and activity. We know where and how to utilize our resources efficiently... without Plex we would not have been able to manage our growth."

— Matt Korth, Engineering Manager, Avon Machining





American Axle & Manufacturing



Automotive parts manufacturer and tier one supplier of driveline and drivetrain systems.



Challenge
Lack of visibility into manufacturing operations.



Results
5-10% improvement on inventory turns.



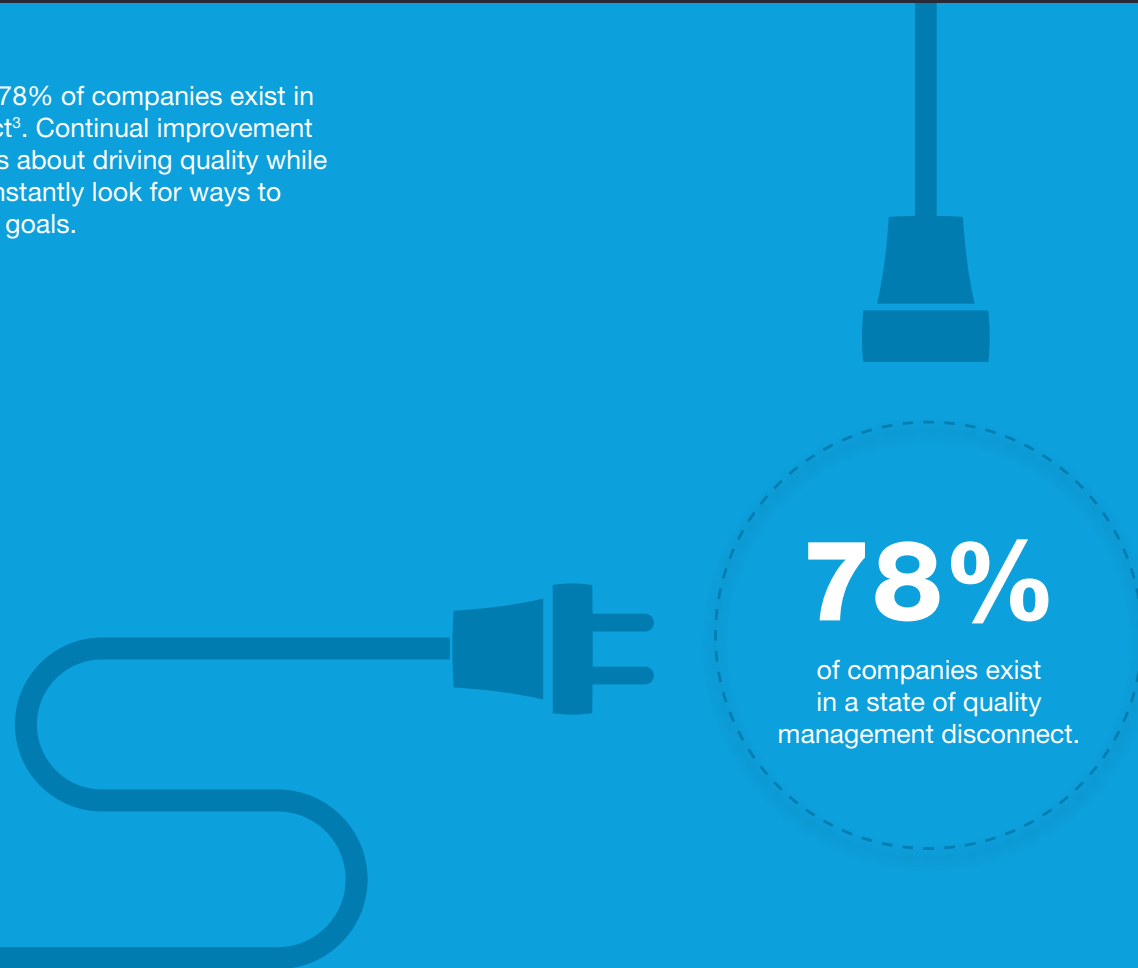
With Plex we can share vital information across the organization, use the activity manager to track processes in real time, and make the improvements that our data tells us we need. People are spending more time on analysis and less time on data collection—which makes for a more efficient and effective workforce.”

—Michael Trathen, Senior Manager Lean System, American Axle & Manufacturing



They focus on continual improvement.

A 2014 LNS Research survey found that 78% of companies exist in a state of quality management disconnect³. Continual improvement is not only about reducing inefficiency, it's about driving quality while reducing costs. Smart manufacturers constantly look for ways to improve processes that accomplish both goals.





Aaron Thomas Co.



Full-service contract packaging manufacturer and service provider focusing on customers in the food, nutraceuticals, and pharmaceutical industries.



Challenge
Needed to better manage waste and recalls while ensuring quality checks.



Results
7 minutes for a mock recall instead of several days.



Customer portals allow clients to manage their inventory offsite and do their ERP planning based on our inventories, production schedules and finished goods. They now have access [to] a majority of the information they would have once gotten from a sales rep directly through the system.”

—Aaron Bacon, Sales and Marketing Representative, Aaron Thomas Co.





Polamer Precision



Global aerospace manufacturing company specializing in complex aerospace engine components.



Challenge
Competing against much larger companies with highly sophisticated processes.



Results
Achieved sales growth of more than 300%



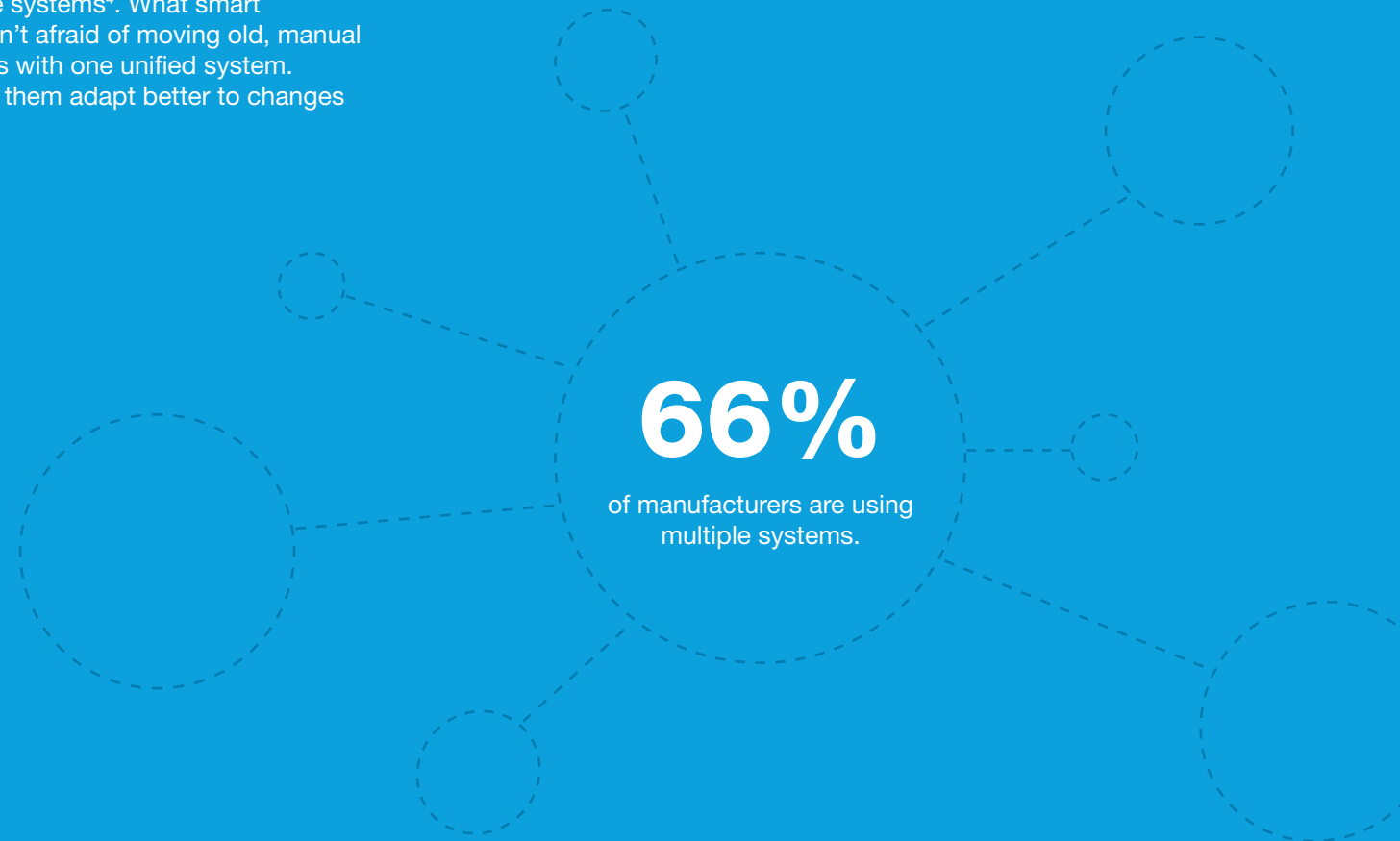
Having traceability and tracking, and being able to support the automation and robotics we're planning on implementing, was a must for any new solution. Plex is built on the whole concept of monitoring production quality."

—Chris Galik, President, Polamer Precision



They aren't afraid of change.

Only 24% of manufacturers using ERP report a high level of automation and 66% are using multiple systems⁴. What smart manufacturers do differently is they aren't afraid of moving old, manual processes to automated, best practices with one unified system. Ironically, embracing this change helps them adapt better to changes in their markets.





FloraCraft



Foam products manufacturer for the craft, floral, display, and special event industries.



Challenge

Shift of strategy to focus more on mass-market production, which tripled inventory and product lines.

60%

Result

60% increase in revenue with zero increase in labor hours.



[Plex] allowed us to tear up our old processes, get rid of old habits and start over. As we built up the layers of complexity by testing Plex across the business, from receipt of goods to shipping and invoicing, we often uncovered opportunities to enhance the way we work.”

—Jim Scatena, President and CEO, FloraCraft





Firstronic LLC



Electronics manufacturing services (EMS) provider serving automotive, aerospace, commercial, and industrial tier ones and OEMs.



Challenge

Re-evaluated its infrastructure and information system capabilities to support new product launches.

300%

Results

300% growth from re-shored contracts to the U.S.



Our differentiators have become better shop floor controls, advanced technology, speed-to-market, and flexibility—all things that Plex helps to make possible.”

Jim John Sammut, CEO, Firstronic LLC

Smart, connected manufacturers aren't happy with the status quo: always out-of-date legacy systems, manual processes, and a disconnected plant floor. They are doing things differently by relying on a manufacturing cloud ERP to run their business for more control, visibility, and collaboration.

You can too.

Let us show you the benefits of becoming a smart connected, manufacturing business.

www.plex.com

1. The Economic and Strategic Benefits of Cloud Computing, Computer Electronics, February 2014.
2. How Big Data Can Improve Manufacturing, McKinsey & Company, July 2014.
3. Close-Looped Quality Management: Connecting the Value Chain, LNS Research, April 2013.
4. Enterprise Resource Planning in a Manufacturing Environment, CIO, 2016.

