GROWING TRENDS IN MANUFACTURING

A MANAGERS GUIDE

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Integrated Marking Systems

5 steps to overcoming manufacturing inefficiencies:

Increased costs across the supply chain

Sustainability

Labour and skill shortages

Traceability

Automated Future

Growing trends in manufacturing

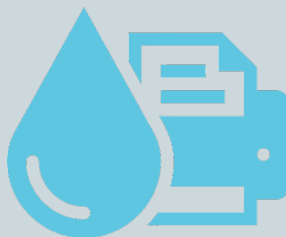# Downtime Costs UK Businesses £4300* per year

*on average

62% of manufacturers anticipate further price rises over the next two months.

How Manufacturers respond to mitigate price rises and downtime costs

Building Strong Supplier Relationships

Over 80% of manufacturers have experienced heavy price disruptions in 2022. Those manufacturers who forecast stock requirements, anticipating the consumable needs in their production, heavily reduce the risk of short notice inflated costs.

Notifying suppliers far in advance and committing to forward orders ensures stock is purchased before further price rises, prevents shipment delays and avoids expensive production shutdowns due to a lack of consumables.

Using OEM Consumables

What's the real cost of using perceivably cheaper consumables?

Manufactures who use OEM consumables save between £535–£620 on annual servicing costs. By taking advantage of these consumables manufacturers preserve the life of valuable assets, reduce lengthy breakdowns, and thus avoid the rising costs associated with downtime such as punitive fines and costly repair bills.

Preventative Maintenance

Manufactures who practice preventative maintenance i.e. scheduling annual services of physical assets, avoid unexpected and expensive repair bills. Annual servicing ensures equipment is running optimally and replaces key components damaged through wear and tear over the year. Scheduled servicing avoids extended disruption to the production line.

17% of the energy demand in the UK comes from the manufacturing sector.

Manufacturers across the industry who are reducing their environmental impact have the following strategies:

Introducing recycled materials into their production and their supply chains aligning with the ISO 14001 accreditation, gaining competitive advantage and stakeholder trust in a crowded marketplace.

Reducing excess waste in their production; end line customers want to be associated with brands that are reducing plastic and energy in their operations.

Using UK suppliers which not only reduces their carbon footprint but brings extensive cost saving in logistics as consumables arrive quicker and cheaper from within the UK.

There is NO energy price cap for businesses. Over the last 9 months gas prices have risen on average by 180%. Therefore manufacturers who decrease their energy consumption with modern and efficient production line technology benefit from a reduced impact of rising energy costs.

Shockingly 1/3 of UK manufacturers do not have targets to reduce energy consumption

95,000 job roles are currently left unfilled in the UK manufacturing industry

This costs the UK £7 billion in lost economic output and effects manufacturing costs exponentially.

Combatting the skills shortage is key for successful manufacturers. Those who invest in automated equipment generate huge cost savings when you consider the cost of physical assets over a production lifetime.

Reducing costly errors is another benefit of automated equipment. The average recall due to a coding error costs manufacturers £8 million.

Manufacturers who ensure that employees are professionally trained especially when adopting new technologies in production also reduce these expensive errors. This brings confidence to employees who are then more likely to be retained reducing staff turnover.

One-way manufacturers ensure that effective training is in place is by having one supplier for all their needs in production reducing the burden on teams of learning different technologies. They benefit further from having an effective supplier relationships in regard to technical support.

Traceability enhancements result in net profit increases of 3-7%

Traceability should be part of every manufacturers processes as customer confidence in your product is the most important currency in the manufacturing sector. Manufacturers who utilise traceability software in monitoring product quality, defend against counterfeit products, dramatically increase operational efficiency and meet stringent compliance mandates.

Manufacturers who develop modern ERP/MRP systems are enabled with better traceability. They can control inventory through lot and serial tracking, expiry or best before date tracking, barcoding, and quality inspection management. Software can generate reports on production efficiency (saving important costs when operating with narrow margins), supplier performance and inventory movements. This provides manufacturers with an infinitely better picture of their overall operational efficiencies.

Manufacturers who utilise this, avoid time-consuming and wasteful paper and digital spreadsheets and are more likely to have efficiencies actioned by production operatives.

Those manufacturers who utilise proper ERP/MRP systems also have a real time overview of supplier performance, preventing scenarios such as third-party logistics incorrectly handling product after it leaves production and being sent faulty components.

Every product and its action should leave a trace so it can be quickly identified, which is of particular importance when identifying where something has gone wrong in the event of recalls.

An automated future

97 percent of leaders in the industry say digital transformation will impact the future of manufacturing.

Manufacturers face dramatically increased costs if they do not implement automation into their production lines. When technology is implemented by manufacturers linking all areas of production (design, production, servicing) they produce a digital trace they can analyse. This enables huge cost savings and creates actionable SMART targets across their operation.

Those manufacturers without integrated systems, experience higher production line errors due to lost or misinterpreted data. With digital technology, decisions can be made quickly at the production line to stop inefficient or error ridden performance.

Manufacturers need to implement automation today to ensure sustained competitive advantage.

Cloud technology in manufacturing is on the rise. For ease, the cloud is a network that allows you to manage your data, files and software over the internet rather than with company hardware. Manufacturers who enable the cloud have on demand data availability with extended analytics so data can be acted on in real time. Without this technology relevant information is stored in isolated data silos bringing inefficiencies into production.

Cloud technology works with a manufacturers supply chain to ease collaboration and reduces the need for expensive on site IT infrastructure, freeing up valuable production space.

Simulation in the manufacturing sector is being used as tool to find design aspects that do not work as intended. It allows for the early detection of critical mistakes in machine applications and the layout so it is not too costly to fix them.

Often when a mistake is engrained within production, the cost to fix becomes so great, highly inept constraints or errors become accepted parts of the operation.

Simulation technology is applied in a variety of ways across the manufacturing sector, from predicting the life of product, managing whole factories and conducting what–if analyses.

One example is the 'Digital twin'. When commissioning new equipment, the machine operation is tested virtually before implementation to fault find and provides an opportunity to train operatives beforehand.

What is the length of warranty for your equipment?

A warranty ensures that, in the event of any issue with the asset, the repair will be covered. Therefore exploring the quality of the warranty offered on any expensive assets is a vital step in preventing unexpected prolonged delays to production and thus the heavy costs associated with downtime.

i-mark offer an industry first 7 year warranty showcasing the reliability of our equipment upholding our commitment to keep your production line up and running.

Do you offer next day delivery for all of my consumable needs?

Fast delivery is another important feature of quality suppliers. If there are unexpected spikes in production or miscalculation of consumable usage, then suppliers who can deliver next day or even same day consumables can be a real asset to improving the efficiency of your production line.

i-mark offers same day despatch of in stock consumables for all your equipment on site from our Midlands logistics hub.

Do you offer flexible leasing programs for your equipment?

Leasing could be a viable, cost-effective solution for your production line. It allows you to gain access to cutting edge printing technology quickly whilst being cost effective.

At i-mark we work with you to find the best solution for your budget and to help you finance the acquisition of new assets to improve the overall efficiency of your production. No downpayment, deductible against corporation tax and fixed interest rates mean that there has never been a better time to explore leasing options with i-mark.
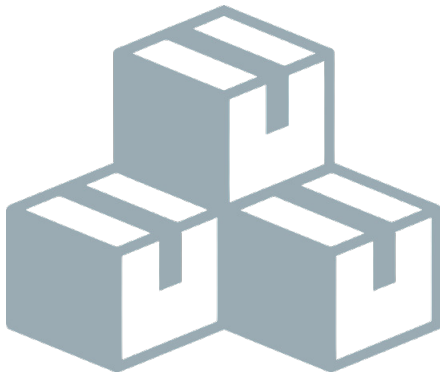
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Do you have ISO14001 accreditation?

It has never been more important to ensure that your supply chain upholds a sustainability ethos due to the cost saving benefits and the negative brand repercussions noncompliance results in. Looking for suppliers that have ISO14001 accreditation means that you can be assured of their meeting of statutory requirements, that the strategic aims of the organisation correspond to the solving of environmental issues, and that they are encouraging their own supply chain to improve their environmental performance.

i-mark has achieved ISO14001 accreditation- the only national privately owned marking and coding distributer within the UK.

Are your consumables approved OEM?

Naturally cost is a factor when choosing a supplier for your consumables however the aforementioned detriments of perceivably cheaper products often result in increased maintenance and repair costs for your assets. Therefore, it is vital to understand whether the consumables you are purchasing are approved by the manufacturer for use on your equipment.

i-mark Printhead Saver ribbons extend the life of your printheads so not only don't cause damage but preserves the life of your printhead resulting in cost savings of up to £450.

What is your service response timeframe?

Choosing a supplier that can support the requirements of your production line is paramount. Working around your production timeframes can ensure that downtime is minimised thus lowering the cost to your production output exponentially. Suppliers that can respond to unexpected issues same or next day prevent the extended periods of downtime saving you thousands.

i-mark have a nationwide network of qualified service technicians. Fully backed by a technical help desk, local field service team and a dedicated customer service account team to ensure that your production line is kept running *. There is the added benefit of quarterly payments allowing you to spread the cost of servicing and schedule the best time for your production which heavily reduces downtime.

*applicable to customers with service level agreements

How can you support production operatives with the equipment to prevent misuse?

Supplier support for the optimum use of your expensive production assets is a vital consideration when choosing your supplier of choice. This can prevent costly errors in equipment misuse and ensure that employees have the skills to feel confident in their performance – vital for tackling the skills shortage.

Our premium CIJ printer, the UX-2, has integrated tutorials, saving precious time in training the production team and means that machine knowledge comes straight from the product experts. Also available with our new Hitachi UX-2, is an innovative self-cleaning printhead station - freeing up the production team for more valuable tasks than the manual cleaning of printheads.

We also provide telephone support contracts which can aid your team if a technical issue with equipment occurs.

How are you ensuring continuing innovation in the automation of production lines?

Our technology integrates seamlessly with market leader Nice Label, its an easy-to-use system for managing message creation. Nice Label Cloud means that there is no need to purchase IT infrastructure and automatically updates software in your production. Any computer on the network can design, store and deploy messages to production runs, which can then be integrated with your product data. Overall manufacturers can control the entire message management process and also extend access to their messages across their supply chain. This saves invaluable production time and brings huge cost savings.

Important questions to ask potential suppliers so you can realise the steps towards the manufacturing ideal

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