

Workplace 2025: Manufacturing

How are business and technology leaders in the manufacturing sector laying the foundations for the future digital workplace?

A REVOLUTION IS COMING TO THE WORKPLACE

The manufacturing sector faces a major challenge in reinventing the workplace environment to meet the rapidly changing demands of the business and employees. By 2025, millennials will represent more than 50% of the workforce, and will redefine corporate culture around flexible working, a more open approach to collaboration, and a focus on data as the lifeblood of the business.

To better understand how organizations are preparing for these future changes, PAC partnered with Fujitsu to interview 1,278 senior decision makers at commercial and public sector organizations in Europe, ANZ and the US. This report highlights key findings from the **manufacturing** section of the study¹ and provides insight into how CXOs in the sector are planning to bridge the gap between their current workplace environment and a strategy that will support the demands of the business in 2025.

TODAY'S WORKPLACE IS FALLING SHORT

Manufacturers admit that their current workplace approach is failing to deliver, and in many areas, it is technology that is proving to be a barrier to productivity. An overwhelming **90%** state that the complexity of their workplace technology is slowing workers down, while **84%** view interoperability with out-dated technology as a challenge to productivity. Current approaches to cybersecurity are also preventing employees from doing their job effectively, with almost two thirds (**64%**) saying that their identity and access management systems have a negative impact. For a sector that is driven by innovation, it is worrying to see that almost a quarter (**22%**) state that their workplace has a negative impact on their ability to accelerate the time-to-market for new products.



90%

say that the complexity of current workplace technology is a barrier to productivity



84%

say that interoperability with outdated technology is slowing down their workforce



64%

admit current cybersecurity approaches have a negative impact on productivity

¹ The manufacturing survey is based on CATI responses from senior decision-makers at 216 large and medium-sized organizations, with respondents split equally between business and IT leaders.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Manufacturers are responding to current workplace challenges and preparing for the future by making some important changes to processes, policies and technology. The ability to harness innovation from both inside and outside the organization will be crucial to the future success of manufacturers and **44%** are changing current policies to provide access to the right tools and platforms to help create and share innovation with a wider ecosystem. Almost a quarter (**24%**) have already implemented open innovation/crowdsourcing and hackathons as a means to engage and collaborate with external partners, and this level will significantly increase with an additional **36%** planning to invest in this area in the next 12 months.

Manufacturers are second only to retailers in terms of the proportion planning investment in robotic process automation (RPA) in the next two years (**42%**), and in a sector where advanced automation is already starting to have a major impact, manufacturers lead the way in looking to engage with external partners to accelerate their adoption (**55%**). Securing this external collaboration will be crucial, with **96%** of participants already citing providing location-based access as a major security concern. The majority are in the process of overhauling their current approach to identity and access management, with almost two thirds (**64%**) having implemented or planning to deploy biometric, behavioral analytics and single sign-on technology.



64%

have deployed or are planning to implement biometric, user analytics and single sign-on security technology



55%

are looking for external help in accelerating their adoption of advanced automation across the business



42%

plan to invest in robotic process automation to support workplace modernization in the next two years

THE REVOLUTION STARTS NOW

The study identified many shortcomings in manufacturers' current workplace strategies that urgently need to be addressed. For many, technology is a barrier rather than an enabler when it comes to productivity, with cumbersome layers of cybersecurity systems and processes proving to be a particular challenge. Manufacturers are responding by implementing strategic new policies to support new approaches to innovation and collaboration, and to create an improved workplace experience. They also clearly need to accelerate in areas such as enabling better knowledge sharing and flexible working models across the organization. The **long-term survival of the business is at stake**, and the future needs to be addressed now before the pace of change becomes unmanageable.

For the full results of the study, and recommendations on how to get your workplace future-ready, please visit: <https://digitalworkplace.global.fujitsu.com/workplace-2025-cxo-view/>