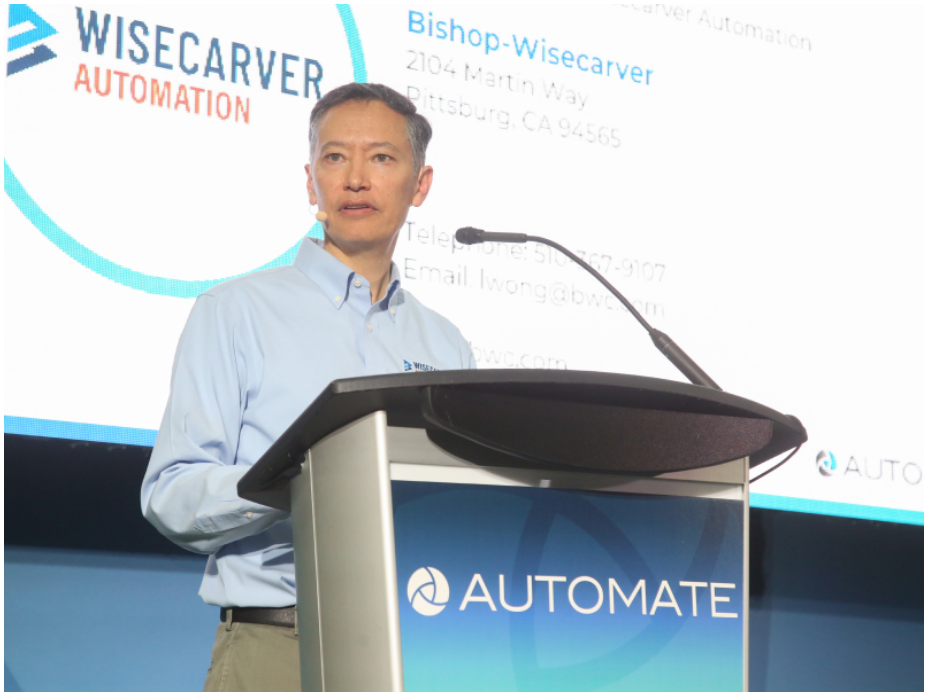
Automate Show 2026 Automate Innovation Stage Agenda

WITNESS THE FUTURE, TODAY.

Experience the forefront of automation with groundbreaking technologies and ingenious solutions poised to redefine industries and shape the future. Leading companies will show off their boldest ideas and revolutionary concepts on the Automate Innovation Stage, providing a dynamic platform for professionals and enthusiasts alike to stay ahead of the curve and collaborate on the future of innovation.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS



WANT TO TAKE THE STAGE?

Secure a 30-minute spotlight in our Innovation Stage to showcase your latest technology, products, or solutions. Your talk will be promoted across our website, mobile app, and marketing.

Please note: Innovation Stage speakers must be from an exhibiting company to participate

BECOME A SPEAKER

Monday, June 22, 2026

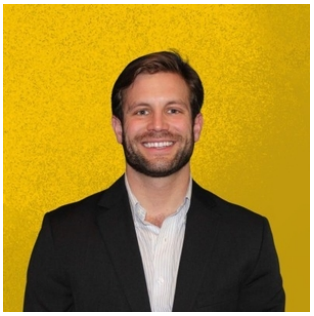
11:00 AM - 11:45 AM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Vision System Design Innovators Awards

Aaron Maassen, Associate Publisher, Visions Systems Design/EndeavorB2B

Sharon Spielman, Head of Content, Vision Systems Design/EndeavorB2B

Editor-in-Chief Sharon Spielman and Associate Publisher Aaron Maassen recognize the 2026 Vision Systems Design Innovators Awards honorees.



Aaron Maassen
Associate Publisher
Visions Systems Design/EndeavorB2B

Sharon Spielman
Head of Content
Vision Systems Design/EndeavorB2B

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

The Augmented Operator: Driving Productivity with Machine Vision and Mobile Intelligence

Charlie Long, VP & GM Machine Vision and Fixed Industrial Scanning, Zebra Technologies

The next leap in productivity won't come from replacing workers — it will come from empowering them.

This session explores how machine vision and mobile computing are transforming frontline roles through real-time validation, instant data access, and guided workflows. Vision systems prevent errors before they happen, while connected mobile devices deliver the right information at the right moment.

Harnessing AI for Intelligent Decision-making leads to fewer mistakes, faster decisions, and a smarter, more confident workforce.

Charlie Long
VP & GM Machine Vision and Fixed Industrial Scanning
Zebra Technologies

12:45 PM - 1:15 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Tech-Powered, People-Driven: The New Industrial Advantage

Greg Magdanz, Vice President, OEM Sales, Schneider Electric

What if the biggest risk facing American industry isn't technology or competition, but our own assumptions about how work should be done? Millions of critical manufacturing jobs may go unfilled by 2030. The question is not whether industry will change, but who will be ready to lead that change

Manufacturers across North America face rising customer expectations, market volatility, and a widening talent gap. At the same time, automation, AI, and advanced digital tools are expanding what is possible on the plant floor and throughout the value chain.

This session explores a powerful idea: technology and talent are not opposing forces, but the foundation of a more competitive and resilient industrial future. You will hear how leaders are using automation, electrification, and data-driven decision-making to boost productivity, accelerate innovation, and empower a new generation of workers.

We will look at how organizations can move faster, close skills gaps, reshape perceptions of industrial careers, and build a future-ready workforce. Join us to discover what it takes to compete and win in a transformed industrial landscape.

Greg Magdanz
Vice President, OEM Sales
Schneider Electric

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

To Automate or Not to Automate

Greg Meyne, VP, Consulting, enVista

Automation is critical to tackle labor?challenges and increase throughput to improve speed to market. In this session, learn how organizations are leveraging automated solutions including goods to person systems, autonomous mobile robotics and other automation solutions to improve fulfillment?efficiencies and throughput. Our automation and?facility design experts will help you determine if automation is right for your operations and the key ways automation can benefit your company.?

Key Takeaways:?

- When and where automation should be implemented?
- How to develop the economic payback analysis and return on investment to justify automation?
- How to determine and implement the optimal mix of automation and labor productivity solutions?
- The steps to optimally assess, justify and implement automation solutions?

Greg Meyne
VP, Consulting
enVista

2:15 PM - 2:45 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Open Up the Future

Eben Shelton, Sales Specialist, Motion Control and CNC Systems, Siemens

Kevin Wu, Portfolio Sales Enablement Manager for Motion Controllers, I/Os, and Roboti, Siemens

Machine builders are facing unprecedented challenges: rising machine complexity, increasing demands for flexibility and automation, stricter regulations — from sustainability to cybersecurity and safety—and ever-shorter time-to-market. Traditional, siloed engineering approaches are no longer sufficient to stay competitive.

In this session, we share how Siemens addresses these challenges with Advanced Machine Engineering, a holistic, end-to-end approach powered by three strategic levers: Seamless Engineering, Best Value Automation, and Digital Business Boost. By connecting engineering disciplines through a consistent digital backbone, enabling modular and scalable automation, and unlocking data-driven services and AI-based use cases, complexity can be transformed into a true competitive advantage.

Discover how machine builders can simplify engineering, increase flexibility, and future-proof their machines — turning today's challenges into tomorrow's opportunities.

Eben Shelton
Sales Specialist, Motion Control and CNC Systems
Siemens

Kevin Wu
Portfolio Sales Enablement Manager for Motion Controllers, I/Os, and Roboti
Siemens

3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Physical AI at Production Scale: FANUC's New Open Interfaces Enable Real Time AI-Driven Robot Motion

David Bruce, Engineering Manager, FANUC America

AI in manufacturing is accelerating rapidly, but real progress depends on giving AI systems precise, safe, real time control over physical robots. In this session, FANUC reveals its new generation of open interfaces: Python on the robot controller, ROS 2 connectivity and high frequency (1 kHz) streaming motion that dramatically expand what developers can build with FANUC robots. These new capabilities bridge the gap between digital intelligence and physical action by enabling sensor guided motion, AI driven decision-making and real time motion adjustments with minimal delay. Attendees will learn how mainstream developers can now program FANUC robots using familiar tools such as Python, Microsoft's Visual Studio Code and modern open source frameworks. The session includes demonstrations of AI guided motion, integrations with 3D vision systems and examples of how customers are applying these tools today. Whether you build automation, integrate AI systems or develop robotic applications, this session provides a practical blueprint for turning AI insights into safe, production ready robot behavior.

David Bruce
Engineering Manager
FANUC America

3:45 PM - 4:15 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

AI-Enhanced Virtual Twins for Automotive Production Lines

Luciano Mancini, World Wide DELMIA Industry Process Senior Expert, Dassault Systèmes

Virtual twins of automotive production lines have long supported the design and validation of robotic manufacturing systems. Built on the 3DEXPERIENCE platform with DELMIA Robotics, these virtual twins

provide a connected digital thread and single source of truth, enabling teams to capture and reuse manufacturing knowledge and know-how while improving consistency across programs.

Recent advances in artificial intelligence are expanding these capabilities through automatic robot path planning, optimized robot placement, real-time visualization, and interpretation of point cloud scans. With Dassault Systèmes' Generation 7 vision, 3D UNIV+RSES, virtual twins are evolving into experience-driven environments that further connect data, processes, and expertise.

Attendees will learn how artificial intelligence is being leveraged to enhance virtual twins of production lines and support more efficient design and validation of automotive manufacturing systems.

Luciano Mancini
World Wide DELMIA Industry Process Senior Expert
Dassault Systèmes

4:30 PM - 5:00 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Start with Standard

Maik Peters, CEO, PITCO Engineering

SMB Manufacturers feel the need to automate, but many don't know where to start. Hardware and software standardization will lead to faster, better, and more cost-efficient automation solutions. In this presentation, we will demonstrate how our new Standard Framework and AI-powered Engineering Solution will significantly reduce engineering costs and, consequently, the cost of custom automation solutions.

Maik Peters
CEO
PITCO Engineering

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Transforming Simulation at the Speed of AI: From Generative Design to Operations

Martin Husek, Lead Applied AI Engineer, Ansys, part of Synopsys

The Ansys part of Synopsys will explore how simulation is evolving in the era of physical AI to support the next generation of robotics and automation systems.

Robotics and automation systems integrate mechanics, actuation, controls, power electronics, sensing, and software, often operating under tight real-time and safety constraints. Understanding the interactions across these domains is essential, yet high-fidelity simulation has traditionally been too costly and slow to support rapid iteration during design, tuning, and deployment. This session explores how Ansys is extending physics-based simulation with AI to create a continuous, end-to-end engineering capability that enables faster, more informed decisions across robotics, motion, and control systems.

Rather than replacing established solvers, AI augments physics-based workflows across the engineering life cycle. Models trained on validated simulation and test data can accurately predict system behavior within defined operating envelopes, enabling rapid evaluation of design variants, controller parameters, and operating conditions. Recent advances in generative and optimization-driven AI extend this further by proposing new geometries, configurations, and control strategies that respect learned physical constraints and performance targets expanding exploration well beyond traditional parameter sweeps.

At the system level, physically accurate digital twins play a central role in connecting design, verification, and operation. Built on high-fidelity Multiphysics foundations and deployed within platforms such as NVIDIA Omniverse™, these digital twins provide a shared, synchronized representation of robots, automation cells, and their operating environments. They allow mechanical, electrical, and controls teams to collaborate on a consistent source of truth while continuously validating behavior against real-world physics. This alignment enables closed-loop workflows where simulation, AI models, and operational data reinforce each other throughout the product lifecycle.

High-fidelity solvers remain the foundation of this approach. Accelerated execution on HPC and GPU architectures enables systematic generation of synthetic data across load cases, trajectories, and failure modes. This data supports reduced-order models, system-level representations, hybrid digital twins, and AI-accelerated predictions that retain physical meaning. For robotics and automation, these capabilities enable virtual commissioning, controller- and hardware-in-the-loop testing, and performance analysis under real-world variability, before physical systems are deployed.

These capabilities are delivered across the full Ansys technology stack and integrated within the broader Synopsys ecosystem. Engineers can access AI-accelerated predictions through SaaS-based workflows or desktop environments, run fast local evaluations, and integrate results directly into existing CAD, controls, and verification loops. At the same time, cloud-scale simulation and Omniverse-based digital twin environments enable multi-disciplinary collaboration, large-scale scenario exploration, and continuous validation as systems evolve.

Finally, embedded AI assistance within engineering tools reduces time spent on model setup, troubleshooting, and information retrieval. By providing contextual guidance on physics, modeling assumptions, solver choices, and workflow best practices, this assistance improves productivity while keeping engineering judgment and responsibility firmly in the loop.

Martin Husek
Lead Applied AI Engineer
Ansys, part of Synopsys

11:15 AM - 11:45 AM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Drive to Motor: Connectivity Guidance

Raj Desai, Global Product Manger - Drives, Lapp

The session aims to deliver practical, on-the-floor guidance for installing connectivity between drives and motors. It will address common challenges associated with using VFD and SERVO drives, along with effective solutions to overcome these issues. The discussion will focus on Pulse Width Modulation (PWM), highlighting its advantages and limitations. Additionally, the session will provide cable and installation recommendations to minimize downtime and ensure system reliability. LAPP's innovative automation solutions will also be presented to support seamless connectivity and optimized performance.

Raj Desai
Global Product Manger - Drives
Lapp

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

From Tribal Knowledge to AI-Guided Execution: The Future of Manufacturing Operations

Rutherford Wilson, Chief Product Officer, MachineMetrics

You've invested in automation. Your machines are generating more data than ever. So why are operators still guessing, planners still firefighting, and production still falling short of its potential?

The missing piece isn't more automation. It's execution intelligence. In this session, MachineMetrics will demonstrate Max AI, a new class of manufacturing AI that transforms real-time machine and operator data into guided action on the shop floor. Unlike traditional monitoring tools, Max AI doesn't just surface what went wrong. It tells your team what to do next, and learns from every interaction.

Through a live demo, attendees will see how AI-guided workflows are helping discrete manufacturers close the gap between what their automation can do and what their operations actually deliver. Demo highlights include the Alarm Resolution Assistant, which guides operators through troubleshooting in real time using feedback loop data to continuously improve; Knowledge Hub, a self-building repository that captures tribal knowledge and delivers it on-demand at the point of work; Shift Handover Intelligence, which automates context-aware shift summaries to eliminate information loss between crews; and Tool Life Management, which tells operators exactly when to change tools to maximize uptime and enable lights-out operations.

Whether you're running a lights-out cell or managing a 3-shift operation, Max AI makes every person on your floor more effective and every automation investment work harder.

Rutherford Wilson
Chief Product Officer
MachineMetrics

12:45 PM - 1:15 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

The Future of Sortation: Flexible, Reconfigurable Systems That Reduce CapEx and Operating Costs While Increasing Throughput

Nate Rosier, Chief Customer Officer, enVista

As warehouses face rising throughput demands and increasingly dynamic order profiles, traditional, rigid sortation systems are no longer meeting expectations. In this session, enVista's warehousing experts will explore why legacy, fixed-path sorters limit growth and how emerging Autonomous Magnetic Platform (AMP) technology is adapting to warehouse environments with rapid operational change.

AMP's shift toward software-defined sortation enables operations to reconfigure pathways, destinations and throughput dynamically without the capital constraints of traditional mechanical sorters.

Session attendees will learn what AMP is, how it works, why it represents a breakthrough in sortation and how it positions organizations for scalable, high-performance fulfillment in the years ahead.

Nate Rosier
Chief Customer Officer
enVista

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Safety & Security Innovations for Drive Systems in Motion Control Applications

Craig Nelson, Portfolio Sales Enablement Manager, High-Performance Drive Systems, Siemens

Drive systems are widespread in automation, robotics, and industrial manufacturing, where safety and security are increasingly becoming critical components. Recent innovations focus on advanced protection of both operators and equipment while ensuring uninterrupted production from threats.

Functional Safety standards such as IEC 61508 and ISO 13849 have driven the integration of safety features directly into drive systems, resulting in numerous benefits. Drive safety integrated functions like Safe Torque Off (STO), Safe Stop, and Safe Limited Speed prevent unintended motion and reduce hazards during maintenance or emergency stops. These features minimize downtime while safeguarding personnel as well as increasing productivity.

On the security front, the rise of Industry 4.0 and connected devices introduces cyber risks. Drive systems now incorporate secure communication protocols, encryption, and authentication mechanisms to prevent unauthorized access and data breaches. Firmware integrity checks and secure boot processes ensure that only trusted software runs on the hardware.

Additionally, predictive diagnostics and real-time monitoring enhance protection by detecting anomalies as early as possible. Combined with incident reporting and fail-safe designs, these innovations create a robust framework for operational Safety & Security.

By merging functional safety with cybersecurity, modern drive systems deliver high availability without compromising protection — essential for smart factories and critical applications.

Craig Nelson

Portfolio Sales Enablement Manager, High-Performance Drive Systems
Siemens

2:15 PM - 2:45 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Accelerate Everything: Open, Software-Defined Automation

Fabrice Meunier, VP, Industrial End Users and System Integrators, Schneider Electric

The next breakthroughs in industrial operations are being driven not by hardware, but by software. This

session will show how shifting from closed, hardware-bound systems to open, software-defined automation unlocks a level of speed, flexibility, and innovation that was simply not possible before.

You will see how modern control architectures make integration dramatically easier, connecting automation with IT systems, tools, and data in ways that empower teams and shorten engineering cycles. We will demonstrate how digital twins, AI, and real-time analytics can plug directly into control applications to optimize processes, reduce downtime, and support more autonomous operations.

Through real-world examples, we will explore how software-defined automation helps manufacturers modernize brownfield plants with less disruption, electrify processes more easily, and give their teams greater freedom to experiment, adapt, and improve.

Whether you build machines, integrate systems, or run production lines, this session will help you see how software-defined automation is reshaping what is possible and transforming speed, flexibility, and integration across industrial operations.

Fabrice Meunier
VP, Industrial End Users and System Integrators
Schneider Electric

3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Introducing ZeroMag: Your First Electrostatic Motor

Matt Maroon, CEO, C-Motive Technologies

C-Motive, located near Madison, Wisconsin, originated from research conducted at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The company's co-founders based their foundational research on Benjamin Franklin's early work with electrostatic motors, a technology that existed nearly 75 years before electromagnetic motors. Today marks the official launch of C-Motive's first product, ZeroMag - these motors achieve high efficiency while maintaining a compact, modular design with high torque density. ZeroMag motors remove the need for conventional cooling systems or gearboxes, reducing efficiency losses and minimizing maintenance requirements.

The presenter will explain how these motors save 30% in total cost of ownership, eliminate heat generation, and simplify operations in a wide variety of industrial applications. Case studies will be provided of ZeroMag motors in air handling and material conveyance systems with additional information on future applications. A high-level technical overview on electrostatic machines will be provided with details on construction, manufacturability, and scientific breakthroughs that have led to this product launch. As this is a new technology, there will be plenty of time for Q&A as well as opportunities to visit C-Motive's booth throughout the show.

Matt Maroon
CEO
C-Motive Technologies

3:45 PM - 4:15 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

From Smart Cameras to Scalable AI Vision: Unlocking the Future of Industrial Inspection

Michael Chee, Senior Manager, Vision Products, Cognex

AI is transforming manufacturing by making automation smarter, more adaptive and easier to scale. This presentation explorers how Cognex Edge AI brings intelligence directly to the point of inspection, allowing users to train powerful models from a small set of example images without specialized expertise. Then, building on this foundation, Cognex Advanced AI with OneVision enables manufactures to tackle more sophiscated challenges and scale vision scross global operations - resulting in faster deployment, consistent quality and a connected, scalable vision infrastructure.

Michael Chee
Senior Manager, Vision Products
Cognex

4:30 PM - 5:00 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Beyond the Algorithm: Standardized Manufacturing Data Models as the Foundation for Scalable Industrial AI

John Rinaldi, CEO, Real Time Automation

Artificial Intelligence is often heralded as the "brain" of the modern factory, promising breakthroughs in predictive maintenance, quality control, and autonomous robotics. However, a brain is only as good as the neural pathways that feed it. Most manufacturers inherit decades of implicit tag naming, inconsistent units, and undocumented context that cause AI models to drift, misinterpret values, or fail at scale.

In this session, expert solution architect John Rinaldi moves past the AI hype to address the fundamental missing link: Standardized Manufacturing Data Models Drive AI Insight. Using real-world examples, the speaker will demonstrate how metadata, schemas, naming conventions, and standard APIs (OpenAPI/AsyncAPI) work together to eliminate ambiguity, simplify integration, and accelerate time-to-insight.

Attendees will receive 10 proven recommendations for designing, storing, and governing data models that support scalable AI and Smart Manufacturing strategies. You'll walk away with a clear path for transforming inconsistent operational data into structured, contextualized, AI-ready information—deployable across lines, plants, and entire enterprises.

John Rinaldi
CEO
Real Time Automation

Wednesday, June 24, 2026

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

The Fast Automation Roadmap: Scaling with Standardized Cobot Solutions

Jerry Perez, Business Development Manager, FANUC America

In the race to automate, the "custom-built" trap is the primary speed bump. While bespoke engineering has its place, the future of competitive manufacturing lies in standardization. For customers, integrators, and OEMs alike, the transition from "one-off" projects to repeatable, modular cobot solutions is the secret to slashing deployment timelines and maximizing ROI.

This session provides a high-level strategic roadmap for navigating the shift toward standardized collaborative automation. We will break down how the ecosystem is evolving to support "plug-and-play" simplicity without sacrificing the flexibility cobots are known for.

Jerry Perez
Business Development Manager
FANUC America

11:15 AM - 11:45 AM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Enhanced Manufacturing Efficiency Powered by Hybrid Digital Twins

Vitor Lopes Pereira, Manager - Digital Twins, Ansys, part of Synopsys

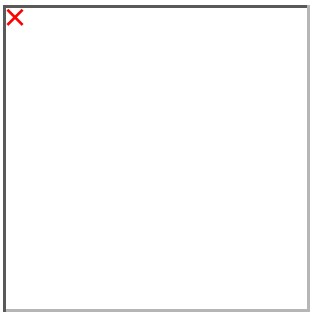
Most companies in the manufacturing industry are undergoing some level of transformational initiatives to increase operational efficiencies and streamline sustainability targets. Given the exponential advancements in digital technologies in the past decade, most companies have kicked-off digital transformation initiatives as a key strategic pillar to revamp the industry and address current and future market needs. This includes developing, evaluating, defining, modifying, training, and executing new operational practices. Digital Twins have emerged as a key enabling technology to fulfill these goals.

Digital Twins are focused on connecting real assets (like a robot) to their digital counterparts and back at a desired frequency and fidelity. The goal is to keep them synchronized and collect additional insights on how these assets are operating at the manufacturing floor to augment operator decision making. Digital Twins offer a pivotal way to gain competitive advantage in the market by affecting both top line with increased yields and bottom line with internal efficiency gains.

Many applications in the manufacturing sector involve environments where placing physical sensors at desired locations is challenging or not possible at all. At the same time, these are the very same environments where the final product quality is tightly coupled to the manufacturing process and detailed system monitoring is a must to reduce scrap towards quality goals, increase process/energy efficiency, safety and avoid downtime.

The holy grail of Digital Twining today is Hybrid Digital Twins (HDT) that combine physics simulations, telemetry and AI/ML. Physics works to bring explainability manifested as online “virtual sensors” while AI works to bring adaptation to each asset’s reality informed by operational telemetry.

The presentation will cover Ansys HDT technology, the benefits and challenges of connecting HDT to the manufacturing plants to enhance automation, the path to HDT with tangible industry examples, the Digital Twin use case assessment to help rank and select applications of more immediate ROI, as well as existing resources available to jump start exploration.



Vitor Lopes Pereira
Manager - Digital Twins
Ansys, part of Synopsys

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Digitizing the Floor: How Data Drives Better Dough Production

Paul Galeski, CEO, GrayMatter

Billy Taylor, Sr. Director, Engineering & Technical Procurement, Papa Johns

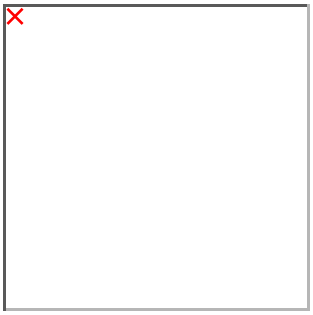
Critical manufacturing data is too often recorded manually, on paper.

This session explores how a leading national food manufacturer digitized more than 30 daily paper-based checklists and logs in its dough production centers, enabling real-time visibility, improved quality control and better decision-making.

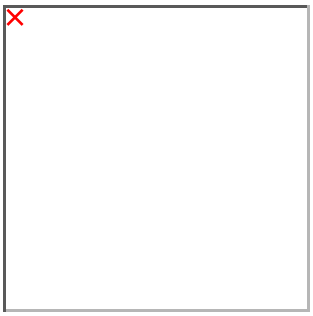
Despite using modern control systems, the manufacturer lacked insight into a key metric: dough production variance. While ingredient usage and outbound shipments were well-tracked, the causes of yield loss, waste and rework remained unclear because operators used handwritten batch records and quality checks.

A new approach allows the manufacturer to capture production data directly from the plant floor and integrate it with its ERP and WMS systems. The result is a digital foundation for operational excellence across pilot sites, with an eye toward scaling to additional locations.

This case highlights practical strategies for replacing paper with structured digital systems, overcoming "wouldn't-it-be-nice-if" feature creep and creating a sustainable path toward production intelligence in food manufacturing.



Paul Galeski
CEO
GrayMatter



Billy Taylor
Sr. Director, Engineering & Technical Procurement
Papa Johns

12:45 PM - 1:15 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

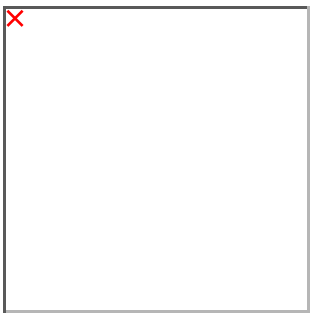
Expanding the Limits of Embedded Machine Vision

Mike MacDonald, Senior Manager, Product Management, Cognex

AI is reshaping what's possible in industrial machine vision — but getting it to work reliably on the factory floor is a different challenge entirely. Unlike consumer applications, industrial machine vision requires high accuracy on every run, millisecond cycle times, and scalable deployment across many production lines and sites. Achieving that level of performance typically means choosing between model capability and simplified

embedded deployment: larger, more accurate AI models demand compute that simply doesn't fit inside a smart camera system.

This session introduces Cognex's solution to this problem: the Nvidia-powered In-Sight 6900 Vision Controller and OneVision, a cloud-based training and model management platform. The flexible controller-based form factor allows for deployment of large models and customization of acquisition hardware to best fit application needs. Attendees will learn how this combination expands what is possible in an embedded product and how the most advanced machine vision applications can now be solved easily with Cognex products.



Mike MacDonald
Senior Manager, Product Management
Cognex

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Self-Serve Automation: How item Digitaltools Accelerate Design, Quoting & Deployment

Ben Hull, Director of Sales, item America

Engineering teams today are under constant pressure to move faster — design faster, quote faster, build faster. Yet many projects are still slowed down by disconnected tools, manual CAD work, revision cycles, and procurement bottlenecks.

What if your engineering platform could eliminate that friction?

In this session, we'll demonstrate how browser-based Engineeringtool, mini configurators, and fully connected digital workflows are transforming the way projects are designed and deployed. Using item's Engineeringtool and online configurators as real-world examples, you'll see how engineers can create complete 3D assemblies directly in a web browser — with no software installation, no licensing barriers, and no steep learning curve.

Attendees will learn how rule-driven design logic automates part placement, machining features, and documentation — dramatically reducing errors and saving hours of engineering time. With a single click, users can generate CAD files, assembly instructions, parts lists, and pricing — instantly connecting design to procurement.

We'll also explore how mini configurators allow teams to quickly build and visualize workstations, frames, enclosures, and automation structures in real time. This self-serve capability empowers engineers, integrators, and end users to move from concept to validated solution in minutes — not days.

The result?

- Faster design cycles
- Fewer revisions
- Greater accuracy

- Improved collaboration between engineering, purchasing, and operations
- Accelerated deployment on the shop floor

If you're looking to shorten sales cycles, reduce engineering bottlenecks, or empower your teams with smarter digital tools, this session will show you how connected engineering platforms are redefining speed and simplicity in automation.

Join us to see how digital tools are turning complex project process concepts into streamlined, build-ready solutions — faster than ever before.

Ben Hull
Director of Sales
item America

2:15 PM - 2:45 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

mot.OS® in Action: How an Intelligent Fleet Manager Transforms Mobile Automation Performance

Darren O'Reilly, Senior Director of Software and Technology, JBT Automated Systems

Nicola Tomatis, CEO, BlueBotics

As Automated Guided Vehicle (AGV) fleets expand in scale, complexity, and operational responsibility, the fleet manager has become the central driver of system safety, efficiency, and long term scalability. This Innovation Stage session will introduce mot.OS®, a next generation fleet management platform designed to serve as the intelligence layer behind advanced mobile automation systems.

The session will explore how mot.OS® acts as the orchestrator for an AGV fleet—mitigating safety risks, managing traffic flow, optimizing mission execution, and delivering meaningful performance insights. Built for modern automation environments, the platform supports real time decision making, predictive maintenance, AI driven optimization, and seamless integration across broader digital and automated ecosystems.

Attendees will gain practical insight into how a modern fleet manager can transform automated operations, including:

- Improving safety through intelligent zoning and proactive risk mitigation
- Increasing efficiency using dynamic routing and optimized mission handling
- Strengthening communication with automation layers and enterprise IT
- Enabling interoperability across diverse vehicle types and system architectures
- Leveraging analytics and KPIs to support data driven operational decisions
- Advancing predictive maintenance to maximize uptime
- Applying AI enhanced optimization to elevate fleet performance

This session will provide a forward looking view of how AGV fleet intelligence is evolving and why the fleet manager has become a foundational element of high performance automated operations.

Darren O'Reilly
Senior Director of Software and Technology
JBT Automated Systems

Nicola Tomatis
CEO
BlueBotics

3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Manufacturing-Native AI: How Industry Specific Models and Agents Are Transforming the Factory System Landscape

Angelo Stracquatanio, CEO & Co-Founder, Apprentice.io

AI is rapidly entering manufacturing, but most implementations rely on general-purpose models trained on the internet—systems that lack the domain knowledge required to operate inside real production environments.

Manufacturing is fundamentally different. It runs on complex processes, strict regulatory standards, equipment constraints, and deeply specialized operational knowledge that generic AI simply wasn't trained to understand.

A new approach has arrived: a manufacturing-native AI model trained on industry workflows, production methodologies, quality frameworks, and the realities of the shop floor. When paired with AI agents built specifically for manufacturing, these models unlock a new way to interact with factory systems.

Rather than living inside a single application, these agents operate as an agnostic intelligence layer across the factory's existing technology stack (ERP, MES, QMS, and other operational systems) working across the full digital thread of manufacturing operations.

This talk explores why manufacturing-specific AI models are critical for reliable agent behavior, how agents can operate across disconnected factory systems, and how manufacturers can begin deploying this architecture today to unlock faster decision-making and operational performance.

Angelo Stracquatanio
CEO & Co-Founder
Apprentice.io

3:45 PM - 4:15 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

OEE Meets SPC: Automating Data Collection for Real-Time Process Improvement

Josh Goodman, Product Marketing Manager, Minitab

At Automate 2026, automation leaders will be talking a lot about robots, vision systems, and AI. This session zooms in on a less glamorous, more profitable truth: if your plant can't see what's happening in real time, it can't reliably control it.

Many manufacturers still underestimate true capacity loss because downtime data is incomplete, delayed, or filtered through manual reporting. The result is predictable: lost throughput, missed demand, overtime strain, and inaccurate inventory forecasts. In the first part of this talk, we'll unpack how to turn unstructured events into structured operational intelligence using automated equipment connectivity and consistent downtime categorization. You'll learn practical approaches to capturing Availability and OEE in real time, separating "symptoms" from true root causes, and finding bottlenecks across cells, lines, and processes.

But here's the catch: knowing where downtime happens is necessary and often delivers fast wins, yet it's not sufficient. Many of the most expensive failures start before a machine stops. That is why the second half of this talk connects automation with quality engineering. Uncontrolled variation quietly drives scrap, rework, warranty risk, and even regulatory exposure. Inspection alone does not prevent defects; it only measures them after the fact.

We'll walk through how automated measurement and process data collection (from gages, CMMs, PLCs, and other sources) can feed real-time statistical process control early on in the process. You'll see how early detection of out-of-control conditions changes the economics of quality, enables faster corrective action, reduces bottleneck inspections, and builds operator ownership through clearer, immediate feedback loops. Examples will span both discrete manufacturing (dimensional control, tolerances, machining) and process environments (fill weights, viscosity, temperature, concentration).

You will leave with a cohesive roadmap for shifting from "post-process detection" to "in-process prevention," and from reactive firefighting to data-driven stability, without requiring new capital equipment.

Josh Goodman
Product Marketing Manager
Minitab

4:30 PM - 5:00 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

How Machine Vision and Physical AI Facilitate Human Centric Manufacturing

Sadiq Panjwani, Chief Operating Officer and Senior Executive Vice President, Teledyne Technologies

Manufacturing is rapidly evolving with a growing skills gap, increased automation, and more complex systems. In this session, Sadiq Panjwani will explore how machine vision and physical AI such as robots and edge intelligence are enabling a more human centric future of manufacturing. The presentation will draw on real world examples from advanced manufacturing environments and discuss 3D vision, thermal / LWIR (long wave infrared) and SWIR (short wave infrared) imaging, and advanced software systems that are augmenting workers by reducing repetitive tasks, accelerating on the job learning, and improving safety and productivity.

Sadiq Panjwani
Chief Operating Officer and Senior Executive Vice President
Teledyne Technologies

Thursday, June 25, 2026

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Camera + Radar Sensor Fusion: A Practical Path to Robust, Scalable 3D Perception

Sam Palmisano, Vice President, Product, Robotics & Drones, Aptiv

The next wave of robotics won’t be defined by sensing performance alone, but by what can scale in the real

world at the right cost.

This session previews a new approach to 3D perception using radar and camera fusion that challenges the tradeoff between capability and cost. Cameras alone provide context but can break down in harsh real-world conditions and rely on expensive sensor stacks to compensate.

Drawing on lessons from automotive-scale deployment, we'll explore how sensor fusion and machine learning together create a more practical path to autonomy; one that balances performance, cost, and scalability.

Sam Palmisano
Vice President, Product, Robotics & Drones
Aptiv

11:15 AM - 11:45 AM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

Physical AI with Human Touch

Alexander Schmitz, CEO, XELA Robotics

XELA's tactile system combines uSkin sensors and uAi software to help robots understand what they touch. Each uSkin sensing point measures pressure and shear forces. The data can be processed by uAi to visualize it, detect contact points, and record tactile data in real time.

We provide high-density 3-axis tactile sensing in a thin, soft, durable package engineered with minimal wiring for the future of robotics, from industrial robots to humanoids.

Tactile sensors improve how robot hands and grippers handle objects of different shapes and materials. We provide direct integration with a variety of grippers, providing a ready-made tactile solution for precise handling in automation environments.

Alexander Schmitz
CEO
XELA Robotics

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

From Reactive Maintenance to Continuously Optimized Manufacturing Operations

Scott Campbell, Asset Lifecycle Management Product Success Leader, IBM

Many manufacturers still operate in reactive cycles, responding to breakdowns, expediting parts, and disrupting production schedules to recover from preventable failures. This firefighting approach drives unnecessary downtime, inflates maintenance costs, and limits the ability to consistently improve OEE and plant performance. In this session, IBM will demonstrate how IBM Maximo Application Suite enables manufacturers to move beyond reactive maintenance toward continuously optimized operations. By combining predictive and condition-based maintenance, AI-driven asset performance insights, and intelligent work planning, Maximo helps teams prioritize work based on business impact, align maintenance with production constraints, and proactively prevent failures before they occur. Attendees will learn practical strategies to transform maintenance into a strategic driver of reliability, efficiency, and sustained manufacturing excellence.

Scott Campbell
Asset Lifecycle Management Product Success Leader
IBM

12:45 PM - 1:15 PM (CDT) Automate Innovation Stage - Booth 19046

1 Minute. 5 Images. AI Vision Inspection Go Live on the Same Day.

Keven Wang, CEO, UnitX Inc

Setting up an AI vision camera shouldn't take weeks — but for most manufacturers, it still does. In this session, UnitX CEO Keven introduces the UnitX Smart Camera and demonstrates live that enterprise-grade AI inspection can be deployed in under 60 seconds, trained from as few as 5 images, and go live in production the same day. UnitX walks through the full inspection picture: how in-process smart camera deployment catches defects at the source before costs compound, and how UnitX's end-of-line Visual Inspection System handles the deepest, most complex surface inspection challenges. Real customer results from automotive and battery manufacturing show what happens when the barrier to vision adoption is removed entirely, and what that means for yield, OEE, and the bottom line.

Keven Wang
CEO
UnitX Inc