



Smarter consumer products manufacturing:

Building competitive advantage with AI and industrial intelligence

A playbook to accelerate productivity, agility, and growth at scale



Table of contents

Increased volatility	3
Beating challenges with smart manufacturing	4
The industrial intelligence difference	5
Breaking down silos: Real-world impact	6
Evolving through data-driven ecosystems	9
Next steps	10



Increased volatility—Is your consumer products strategy keeping up?

A single, all-powerful principle has always governed the consumer products (CP) industry:

“Consumer preference dictates your business model.”

Lately, though, consumer preference is just one piece of an increasingly challenging puzzle: Raw materials costs are high, supply chains are increasingly unreliable and complex, and ecommerce continues to grow and disrupt. At the same time, consumer sentiment is evolving quickly, sustainability targets are in flux, and labor gaps are widening.

These converging pressures are squeezing margins and forcing CP companies to rethink how they operate, as the latest research confirms:



84%

of CP manufacturing executives say containing costs to improve margins is a top priority.¹



85%

see upskilling workers as imperative.²



52%

cite budget constraints as a significant hurdle to driving growth and efficiency.³



45%

report feeling pressure to accelerate decarbonization efforts.³

The good news? Not only do decision-makers agree on a strategy to clear these hurdles, but that strategy is already paying off. Read on to learn how CP leaders are overcoming these challenges through smart manufacturing.

Beating challenges with smart manufacturing

When it comes to beating market-driven challenges, CP leaders' proven strategy can be summed up in a term:

Smart manufacturing.

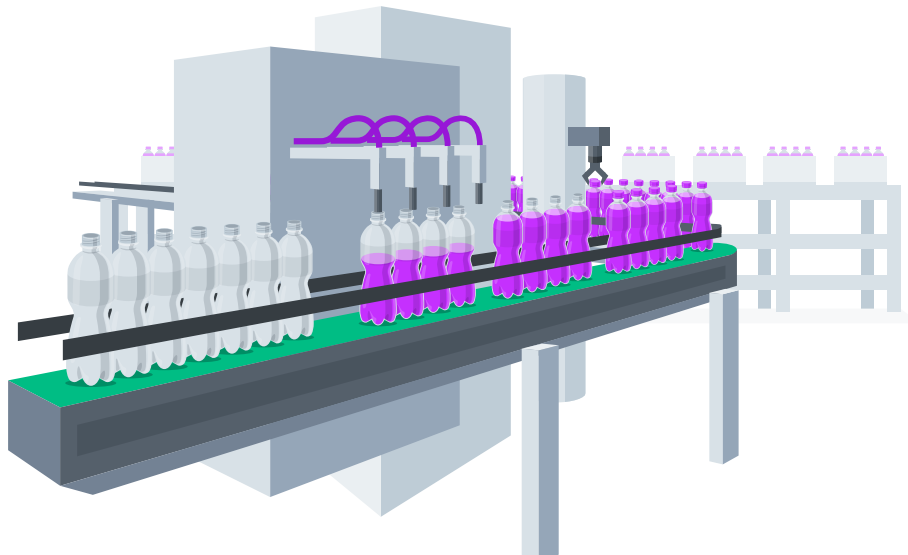
Smart manufacturing, or using advanced technologies to enable data-driven optimization and team collaboration, powers the industrial intelligence that consumer products companies need to make the right decisions at the right time, both within plants and across the value chain.

Still, some CP manufacturers have been slow to transform their manufacturing operations enterprise-wide, often citing multi-site

diversity, budget constraints, change management, and other investment priorities. The gap between ambition and action is clear.

But there's good news in this respect, too. Closing that gap begins with a smarter, more connected, and intelligent approach to manufacturing.

Early-adopters of industrial intelligence—a holistic, ecosystem-based approach to smart manufacturing—aren't just navigating change. They're shaping it. How?



92%

of manufacturing executives say smart manufacturing will be the main driver of competitiveness.⁴

62%

of consumer manufacturing executives say generative AI will deliver measurable value.⁵

93%

of cross-industry executives say digital technologies are key to accelerating sustainability agendas.³

The best platform for industrial AI: The industrial intelligence difference

Choosing the right data foundation and information architecture makes all the difference. By adopting software designed for multi-site standardization and leading industrial data management solutions, forward-thinking CP companies are connecting their distributed plant operations to create a single source of information through a data infrastructure management strategy.

Then, by linking this living operational digital twin with the best platform for industrial AI, CP leaders are building data-sharing ecosystems that empower their employees with smart insights. As a result, they're achieving new levels of productivity and agility at scale and setting the industry standard for responsible manufacturing.

When data-sharing ecosystems expand to include external stakeholders like supply chain partners, energy vendors, and customers, CP companies can meet market demand despite ongoing volatility and disruption.

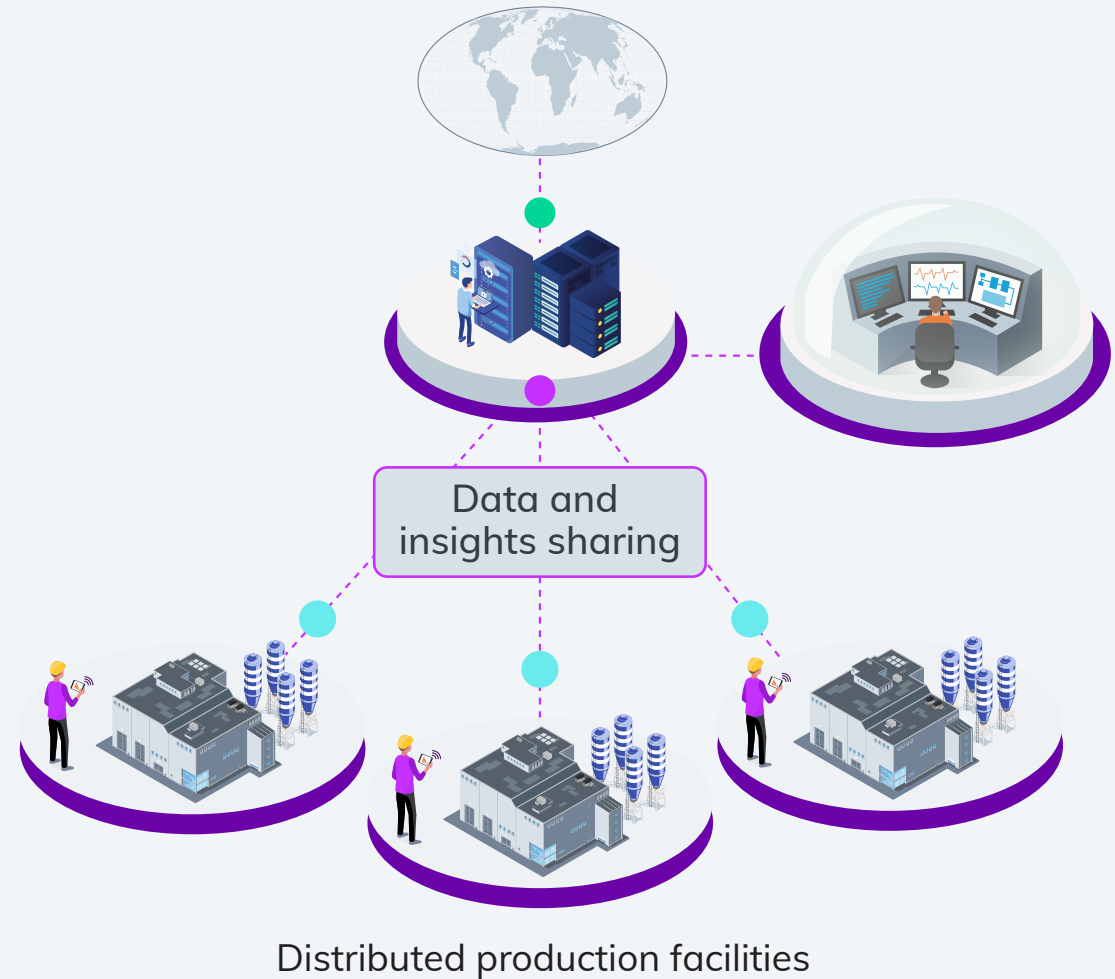
The time to adopt AI is now, and the next few years will determine which companies come out on top. Read on to see how to solve specific use cases and real-world examples of industrial intelligence in action, which may determine tomorrow's consumer products leaders.



Breaking down silos: Real-world impact

Whether you specialize in food, beverages, home and personal care, or other consumer products, you know that your network of production plants is your primary value driver.

Many CP companies operate networks of acquired plants that rely on diverse, disconnected legacy systems and plant-specific practices that make standardization, agility, and visibility difficult to achieve. When insights stay locked in one plant or system, you can't compare them, which makes it difficult to identify and scale best practices across the network of plants.



Breaking down silos (cont'd)

Thankfully, new technologies and strategies are driving the next wave of digital manufacturing and helping CP enterprises—no matter their size, maturity, or geographical distribution—face challenging use cases head-on.

Challenge	Use case	Solution
Inconsistent performance and compliance	Inconsistencies , stemming from siloed, site-specific practices, manual reporting, and human error, put your brand reputation and profitability at risk.	Connect and standardize operations across sites and systems to align plant-specific KPIs, share best practices, and drive consistent quality, traceability, and regulatory compliance.
Lost productivity, resources, and capacity	Inefficiencies , resulting from delayed corrective actions, reactive decision-making, and inefficient operational planning, make it more difficult to contain costs and improve your margins.	Increase productivity to increase profitability by empowering and educating employees with AI-generated insights to minimize scrap and optimize yield, quality, line throughput, energy consumption, and more.
Reactive decision-making	Reactivity , due to limited value chain visibility and inefficient information sharing, inhibits collaboration and innovation and makes it difficult to respond effectively to market volatility and rapidly evolving consumer preferences.	Build an agile, proactive ecosystem that supports sustainable growth and empowers teams and partners with trusted insights to improve business performance, customer satisfaction, and competitiveness.

Breaking down silos (cont'd)

Connect and standardize operations



Starbucks

Starbucks deployed the best software for multi-site standardization and gained real-time data visibility from plant floor to enterprise, eliminating manual reporting and siloed practices, improving control, and enabling faster, more accurate decisions that protect its brand integrity and profitability.

Increase productivity to increase profitability



Hill's Pet Nutrition

Hill's Pet Nutrition empowered its teams with AI-powered insights, improving process-to-product output by almost 30%, while increasing production output and decreasing waste.

Build an agile, proactive ecosystem



Agropur

By adopting real-time hybrid-cloud data and visualization tools, Agropur overcame reactivity and limited operational visibility, deploying integrated planning and execution systems across 15 sites in just 18 months and improving collaboration, agility, and responsiveness to changing market and consumer demands.

Beyond smart manufacturing: Evolving toward a data-driven ecosystem

So, what are these technologies? How do they work?

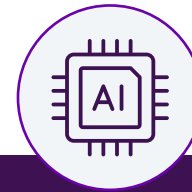
Remember, true evolution isn't about plugging in new solutions and technologies at random. It's about building scalable manufacturing operations and a data management architecture that connects people, processes, and technology across locations and functions, in service of your long-term business goals.



Hybrid-cloud infrastructure for seamless, secure data sharing between plants and corporate, while ensuring critical business continuity on the shop floor



Open, vendor-agnostic platform that connects and unifies existing data from plants, assets, and systems



AI-ready operations that improve planning, performance, and sustainability



Secure data-sharing communities that enable the connected ecosystem among supply-chain partners, contract manufacturers, service providers and customers

Most importantly, evolving your consumer products business into a smart manufacturing ecosystem means building the productivity, agility, and resilience you need to withstand disruption and be prepared for future challenges.

Next steps: Make it smarter. Improve productivity. Get agile.

In a market defined by disruption, CP companies at the forefront of technology adoption are creating their growth opportunity. They're moving beyond site-by-site optimization to quickly build a truly edge-to-enterprise connected network of smart factories and a more agile business.

By connecting their plants' operational data into an intelligent manufacturing ecosystem, they're:

- Optimizing productivity and efficiency at scale.
- Minimizing quality losses and compliance risks.
- Empowering workers and attracting young talent.
- Responding to change and disruption with agility.
- Meeting net zero commitments.

This is what intentional innovation looks like. It's focused on results, scaled across your business and network of plants, and built to last.





The future of the consumer products industry belongs to those equipped with industrial intelligence.

Will you join them?

Industry volatility

Beating challenges

Industrial intelligence

Breaking down silos

Data-driven ecosystems

Next steps



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