



Process and Digital Transformation in Industrial Manufacturing: A Strategic Framework

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Article Info:

DOI: 10.22399/ijcesn.4268

Received : 17 September 2025

Revised : 05 November 2025

Accepted : 09 November 2025

Keywords

Digital Transformation,
Process Transformation and
Optimization,
Predictive Maintenance,
Industrial Internet of Things,
Manufacturing Excellence,
Servitization

Abstract:

Business production agencies that produce precision contraptions, control systems, and automation solutions face exceptional working pressures because of fragmented delivery chains, converting consumer expectations, and increasing convergence of technologies. Conventional operating models related to reactive maintenance practices, manual inspection cycles, and siloed information architectures are increasingly restricting organizational responsiveness while raising the level of operational risk profiles. This article explores how incorporated transformation via system optimization and virtual enablement builds a sustainable, aggressive advantage. Technique transformation resolves center workflow inefficiencies by using systematic re-engineering, lean, and cost movement optimization before the deployment of the era. Virtual transformation employs interlinked sensing technologies, cloud analytics platforms, and intelligence-based algorithms that create new cost propositions through predictive maintenance, remote diagnostics, and outcomes-based provider delivery. Thorough evaluation confirms that effective transformation calls for integrated intervention across strategic, technological, human capital, and organizational ranges instead of independent technology adoption. Manufacturing excellence implementations illustrate better overall performance through condition-based protection practices, real-time optimization of resources, and quality management structures. Customer-centric service delivery models utilize remote diagnostic competencies and subscription-based monitoring services that turn transactional relationships into ongoing partnerships aimed at the success of operational outcomes.

1. Introduction

Industrial production companies with expertise in precision devices, control solutions, and automation products work in situations where operational superiority has a direct impact on safety performance and market positioning. Modern manufacturing environments undergo core reengineering due to the imperatives of sustainability, technology convergence, and changing stakeholder demands. Recent systematic research reviewing green manufacturing trends between 2019 and 2024 shows that companies increasingly fuse environmental factors with operational efficiency goals, understanding that resource optimization, energy management, and waste reduction approaches simultaneously improve competitiveness as they respond to the needs of regulatory compliance requirements [1]. This alignment takes place along various

dimensions, such as circular economy principles focusing on material lifecycle prolongation, integration of renewable energy into production units, and digital monitoring platforms offering granular insight into resource consumption patterns. Manufacturing businesses are confronted with growing pressures from dispersed supply chains operating over several continents and regulatory regions, changing customer requirements for product traceability and transparency of environmental footprints, and next-generation manufacturing paradigms requiring real-time visibility into operations along with predictive decision-making abilities. These traditional operational paradigms of reactive maintenance practices, manually controlled inspection schedules, and isolated data structures increasingly limit organizational responsiveness. The so-called legacy methods normally consist of periodic maintenance periods based on equipment runtime hours instead

of real condition checks, which leads to unnecessary service actions that waste technical man-hours, replacement parts, and production time without preventing surprise failures that trigger emergency repairs and cause customer delivery delays. The intersection of process optimization strategies with digital enablement technologies offers a disruptive way forward for industrial businesses to achieve competitive advantage via operational excellence. Industrial network development analysis suggests that incumbent fieldbus architectures enabling closed-loop control applications are increasingly supplemented by Ethernet-based protocols that provide greater bandwidth capacity, enterprise information system integration support, and handling capacity for advanced analytics workloads [2]. The Industrial Internet of Things environment includes distributed networks of sensors integrated into production assets, edge gateways for localized processing of data to minimize cloud transmission latency, and cloud-based analytics platforms that collect performance telemetry from geographically scattered sets of manufacturing facilities and field-deployed instrumentation populations [2]. These technical foundations allow for a shift from reactive operational paradigms towards predictive maintenance approaches utilizing machine learning techniques, reviewing vibration signatures, thermal profiles, and performance degradation trends to predict equipment failure prior to functional deterioration.

2. Foundations of Manufacturing Transformation

2.1 Process Transformation and Optimization Heritage

Intellectual foundations of manufacturing transformation sprang from mature quality management paradigms and continuous improvement practices that matured over decades. These strategies focus on waste reduction in several operational dimensions such as overproduction that creates excess inventory carrying costs, waiting time that wastes labor resources without value creation, unnecessary transportation that tends to increase handling damage risks, excess processing with redundant approval steps, inventory accumulation that conceals quality problems and limits cash flow, unnecessary motion that causes operators to move excessive distances, and defect generation that leads to rework operations. Studies analyzing the effectiveness of lean manufacturing implementation demonstrate substantial methodological problems limiting quantitative

evaluation of improvement programs. Synthesis of lean management literature shows that although qualitative case study methods predominate reported studies, these methods often do not include stringent quantitative measurement systems required for statistical confirmation of alleged improvements in performance, cross-site comparisons of various implementation settings, or detection of causal links between individual lean practices and operational performance [3]. The lack of standardized measurement procedures leads to great variation in reported outcomes, with organizations inconsistent in their definitions of metrics, taking baseline measurements at varied temporal frequencies compared to intervention implementation, and attributing changes in performance to lean initiatives without accounting for confounding factors like simultaneous automation investments, fluctuating market demand, or changes in workforce composition [3]. This measurement disconnect inhibits organizations from accurately forecasting the expected magnitude of improvements while making transformation initiative planning or comparing performance with peer industries based on equivalent metrics.

2.2 Digital Transformation and Technology Integration

Modern transformation initiatives enhance traditional optimization practices with sophisticated technological capabilities that radically transform information availability, decision-making speed, and manufacturing flexibility. Industrial Internet of Things systems use various sensor modalities such as vibration sensors picking up bearing degradation in the form of frequency spectrum, thermographic cameras detecting thermal anomalies that signify deterioration of electrical connections, acoustic emission sensors tracking pressure vessel structural integrity in the form of ultrasonic wave propagation analysis, and process parameter transmitters sensing temperature, pressure, flow rate, and chemical composition. But the spread of networked industrial devices carries significant security and privacy issues that pose risks to operations continuity, intellectual property, and safety system integrity. Thorough examination of Industrial Internet of Things security architectures discloses that traditional information technology security methods are inadequate for operational technology contexts defined by decades-long lifecycles of legacy equipment, real-time control needs intolerant of security protocol latency overhead, and population heterogeneity with multiple communication protocols supporting varying security capabilities [4]. Industrial control systems

traditionally ran in stand-alone networks secured by air-gap architectures that physically isolated operational technology from enterprise information systems, but recent business needs for remote monitoring, cloud-integrated analytics, and supply chain coordination demand connectivity that puts critical infrastructure at risk of cyber threats such as attempted unauthorized access, malware spread, denial-of-service attacks disrupting production processes, and data exfiltration compromising proprietary process parameters [4]. Security issues exist on a variety of Industrial Internet of Things architectural layers, such as edge devices with limited computing capabilities that restrict cryptographic algorithm execution, network equipment subject to traffic interception, and cloud services aggregating sensitive operational information in centralized stores that are highly appealing attack points. Authentication methods need to trade security strictness for operational feasibility, whereas encryption protocols ensuring data confidentiality use computing resources and add latency that can breach real-time control system timing constraints [4].

3. Strategic Framework for Integrated Transformation

3.1 Holistic Transformation Architecture

Success in transformation demands coordinated intervention in various operational dimensions instead of disjointed technology deployment that treats symptoms without solving root systemic constraints. Corporations have to first map existing workflows to identify bottlenecks where work accumulates awaiting downstream capacity availability, redundancies related to duplicate data entry across disconnected systems, and cost-erosion points during order fulfillment cycles where non-value-adding activities consume time and resources without contributing to customer requirements. This diagnostic foundation enables targeted process redesign that eliminates structural inefficiencies before technological enhancement, preventing the common pitfall of automating dysfunctional processes. Comprehensive evaluation frameworks for measuring Industry 4.0 maturity in small and medium-scale manufacturing companies state that transformation readiness covers five core dimensions that need to be developed simultaneously to gain sustained competitive advantage [5]. The strategy and organization dimension includes leadership vision expressing transformation goals, organizational structure agility allowing cross-functional collaboration, and change management competencies enabling

workforce adaptability. The smart factory aspect refers to the digitalization of production systems, including sensor network deployment density, the maturity of real-time monitoring infrastructure, and the integration of automation throughout manufacturing operations. The smart operations aspect assesses supply chain digitalization, predictive maintenance implementation sophistication, and quality management system integration with production data streams. The smart products aspect looks at product intelligence capabilities, connectivity features allowing remote monitoring and diagnostics, and service business model development based on product-generated data. The data-driven services aspect measures data analytics infrastructure, algorithmic sophistication to generate insights, and the ability to capture data value through service offerings [5]. Evaluation across small and medium-sized manufacturing organizations exhibits significant heterogeneity in maturity levels, with most companies having unbalanced growth where particular dimensions make great leaps while others lag because of resource limitations, skill gaps, or strategic resource allocation choices [5]. Technology integration is a consequence of process rationalization through phased rollout of inter-linked systems that progressively build digital capacity while ensuring operational stability during transition phases.

3.2 Implementation Methodology

Successful transformation programs tend to move through disciplined phases, starting with managed pilot implementations that constrain scope to individual production lines, site locations, or product families where transformation ideas can be tested under representative operating conditions with risk exposure and resource investments contained. Pilot schemes provide empirical data about performance gains through before-and-after studies quantifying cycle time savings, defect rate improvements, equipment effectiveness gains, and cost per unit paths. Studies investigating Industry 4.0 readiness assessment highlight the essential role of systematic assessment frameworks identifying organizational readiness along integrated dimensions influencing the transformation probability of success. Holistic metamodels for enterprise readiness evaluation suggest hierarchical assessment structures including strategic readiness indicated by management commitment toward digital transformation, clear vision statement formulation, and strategic planning processes involving technology roadmaps aligned with competitive positioning strategies [6]. Human readiness determines the levels of workforce digital

literacy, acceptability towards technological change, presence of specialized capabilities such as data science skills and automation engineering capabilities, and training infrastructure with the ability to rapidly build capabilities aligned with changing technology demands. Financial readiness measures the availability of capital to commit to multi-year investment plans, cost-benefit analysis functions to facilitate investment priorities, and stable financial performance to provide a basis for long-term transformation funding [6]. Technological readiness analyzes current information technology infrastructure maturity, such as network bandwidth adequacy, computing resource scalability, cybersecurity posture defending operational technology environments, and system integration capabilities connecting proprietary protocols across heterogeneous equipment populations. Process readiness analyzes current process documentation quality, standardization levels across production facilities, process performance measurement systems supplying baseline data, and continuous improvement culture receptivity [6].

4. Operational Applications and Value Creation

4.1 Manufacturing Excellence

In production environments, integrated transformation enables concurrent performance gains within coupled operation areas. Connected monitoring systems enable end-to-end visibility of equipment condition using distributed networks of sensors monitoring vibration signatures of bearing wear development, thermal patterns showing electrical connection deterioration, acoustic emissions indicating structural defects, and process parameter changes reflecting catalyst deactivation or feedstock quality changes. This comprehensive instrumentation facilitates movement away from maintenance interval schedules towards condition-based servicing practices that respond only when empirical data provides signals of impending failure thresholds. Predictive algorithms analyze operating patterns to identify potential failures and predict unplanned downtime. Systematic evaluation of Industry 4.0 contexts of predictive maintenance methods determines that transfer learning strategies are a key development that is overcoming major challenges in machine learning model training for industrial use. Conventional supervised learning methods demand large annotated training data sets recording equipment failures and degradation across various operating conditions, but industrial settings often produce few failure examples owing to good preventive maintenance techniques and

long equipment life [7]. Transfer learning overcomes these limitations by taking advantage of knowledge learned from source domains with rich training data to improve model performance in target domains with scarce labeled examples, allowing for predictive maintenance model development for equipment types or failure modes where there is insufficient historical data available for standard machine learning training methods [7]. Manufacturing workflows take advantage of real-time optimization of resources, eliminating cycle times via dynamic scheduling algorithms that adapt to changes in equipment availability, material arrival variations, and order priority modifications, while limiting material waste via process parameter control and quality-at-source methodologies with instant defect detection. Quality management processes improve with precision via automated inspection capabilities using machine vision systems that inspect product dimensions, surface finish properties, and assembly completeness at rates higher than human capability inspection rates without compromising consistent evaluation criteria.

4.2 Customer-Focused Service Delivery

Digital transformation radically transforms models of customer engagement for industrial producers by making technologically unfeasible or economically unviable service delivery paradigms possible under conventional operational structures. Remote diagnostic functionality allows service organizations to evaluate equipment performance without on-site visits through secure access to installed equipment, streaming telemetry data disclosing operating parameters, alarm history, and performance trends that guide troubleshooting actions, driving down response time by removing travel delay. Subscription monitoring services shift transactional customer relationships into ongoing partnerships with a focus on outcome optimization. Detailed analysis of servitization phenomena across manufacturing sectors discloses underlying tensions between service-oriented business model ambitions and implementation realities. Servitization involves the strategy by which manufacturing companies enhance the emphasis on service delivery in their product-service portfolio mix, shifting from goods-dominant value propositions emphasizing equipment specifications to service-dominant logic stressing customer outcome attainment through integrated product-service offerings [8]. Servitization implementation is often, however, faced with organizational challenges, customer resistance, and economic limitations. Deservitization is the strategic reversal in which

producers intentionally scale down service focus, motivated by service operation unprofitability when cost structures outstrip revenue creation, organizational capability deficiencies in which manufacturing-based cultures are found to be inappropriately geared towards service delivery needs, and customer preference for transaction-based ordering to retain flexibility [8]. Customer-facing digital platforms give visibility to equipment performance through configurable dashboards offering key performance indicators, maintenance records capturing performed service activities, and recommendations for operations derived from analytics algorithms measuring actual performance against benchmarked populations. These platforms give customers actionable intelligence to make proactive operating changes while making manufacturers strategic partners to customer operational success instead of just suppliers [8].

5. Future Trajectories and Emerging Capabilities

Industrial transformation keeps evolving through a variety of promising technological paths that will reshape operational paradigms for manufacturing at a foundational level. High-fidelity digital twin technologies that create virtual replicas of physical assets, production systems, and entire manufacturing plants synchronized with real-time operational data feeds will provide simulation environments for end-to-end operational modeling. Comprehensive examination of digital twin adoption reveals that manufacturing applications predominate modern adoption trends, ranging from production line optimization, where digital models replicate material flow dynamic behavior and detect bottleneck operations, to predictive maintenance systems utilizing digital twins to predict equipment degradation paths and quality management applications using virtual models to link process parameter fluctuations with output quality attributes [9]. However, deployment of digital twins faces

daunting technical challenges such as data integration complexity to assemble data from diverse sources, model calibration needs to ensure virtual representations mirror physical system behavior, and computational resources needed to execute real-time synchronization [9]. Artificial intelligence use cases will go beyond pattern detection towards autonomous optimization systems that automatically adjust operational parameters based on varying conditions without the need for human intervention. Supply chain designs will include more advanced forecasting and transparent tracking mechanisms that offer end-to-end visibility using blockchain-based ledgers to create tamper-proof records of material origins, processing histories, quality inspections, and custody transfers across supply networks. Examination of blockchain deployments across supply chain fields suggests traceability applications as the most developed deployment category, allowing organizations to monitor product movements across distribution networks with cryptographically secured records [10]. Nevertheless, adoption of blockchain is challenged by implementation issues such as scalability limitations due to distributed ledger consensus processes putting limits on transaction throughput, interoperability challenges in connecting blockchain platforms with established enterprise systems, and governance issues in defining access control rules and conflict resolution mechanisms among supply chain stakeholders having divergent commercial interests [10]. Sustainability will propel the integration of environmental monitoring systems to enhance energy usage efficiency and monitor emissions across operational landscapes through sensor networks that quantify electricity consumption, water consumption patterns, and greenhouse gas emissions to facilitate carbon footprint analysis and reduction strategy formulation within the context of corporate sustainability initiatives and regulatory reporting requirements.

Table 1. Comparative Framework of Traditional and Digital Manufacturing Transformation Foundations [3, 4].

Dimension	Traditional Process Optimization	Digital Technology Integration	Transformation Outcome
Quality Management	Statistical process control charts, capability analysis indices, and fishbone diagrams for root cause identification	Machine learning classification models, unsupervised clustering algorithms, and time series forecasting methods	Enhanced defect detection through pattern recognition, invisible to manual oversight
Maintenance Strategy	Scheduled intervals based on elapsed operating hours, reactive emergency repairs, and preventive component replacements	Condition-based servicing through vibration analysis, thermal profiling, and acoustic emission monitoring	Elimination of unnecessary maintenance while reducing unexpected failures

Data Infrastructure	Siloed functional databases, manual data compilation, and inconsistent sampling frequencies	Cloud-based aggregation platforms, cross-functional visibility systems, and scalable computational resources	Real-time operational intelligence enabling proactive decision-making
Communication Protocols	Traditional fieldbus systems with limited bandwidth, isolated operational technology networks	Industrial Ethernet variants supporting gigabit transmission, time-sensitive networking extensions	Seamless integration between information technology and operational technology domains
Operational Visibility	Periodic manual inspections, delayed reporting cycles, and fragmented information sources	Continuous sensor network monitoring, distributed telemetry streams, synchronized digital twins	Comprehensive equipment condition awareness across geographically dispersed assets
Security Architecture	Air-gap isolation protecting control systems, physical access restrictions	Authentication mechanisms, encryption protocols, network segmentation strategies, and balancing connectivity with protection	Enhanced cybersecurity posture addressing interconnected device vulnerabilities

Table 2. Multidimensional Enterprise Readiness Evaluation for Industry 4.0 Transformation [5, 6].

Readiness Dimension	Assessment Criteria	Capability Requirements	Maturity Indicators
Strategic Readiness	Leadership vision articulation, competitive positioning alignment, and technology roadmap integration	Management commitment to digital transformation, clear articulation of transformation objectives, strategic planning incorporating technology evolution	Documented transformation strategy, executive sponsorship, and resource allocation authorization
Human Capital Readiness	Workforce digital literacy levels, specialized skills availability, and training infrastructure capacity	Data science expertise, automation engineering competencies, and change receptivity among employee populations	Continuous learning programs, cross-functional collaboration effectiveness, and skill gap closure trajectories
Financial Readiness	Multi-year investment capital availability, cost-benefit analysis capabilities, and performance stability	Sustained transformation funding capacity, investment prioritization frameworks, and financial resilience during transition periods	Budget commitments extending beyond initial deployment, return on investment tracking mechanisms
Technological Readiness	Information technology infrastructure maturity, network bandwidth adequacy, and cybersecurity posture	Computing resource scalability, system integration capabilities, bridging proprietary protocols, and legacy equipment connectivity	Existing platform interoperability, data architecture supporting analytics workloads, and security framework adequacy

Table 3. Manufacturing Excellence and Customer-Centric Service Delivery Impact Framework [7, 8].

Application Domain	Traditional Approach Limitations	Digital Transformation Enablers	Value Creation Mechanisms
Predictive Maintenance	Scheduled intervals consume unnecessary resources, reactive emergency responses, and limited failure forecasting	Transfer learning algorithms addressing training data scarcity, domain adaptation for equipment populations, and condition monitoring sensor networks	Maintenance cost reduction through intervention optimization, unplanned downtime frequency decrease, and equipment lifespan extension
Production Workflow Optimization	Manual scheduling is prone to suboptimal resource allocation, delayed bottleneck identification, and batch processing inefficiencies	Dynamic scheduling algorithms responding to real-time conditions, closed-loop feedback systems, and automated material flow coordination	Cycle time reduction through responsive scheduling, material waste minimization, and resource utilization improvement

Quality Management	Sampling-based inspection, missing defect patterns, delayed feedback enabling defect propagation, and manual measurement inconsistency	Machine vision systems examining products at rates exceeding human capability, statistical process control detecting subtle variation patterns	Defect rate reduction through immediate detection, rework elimination, and consistent evaluation criteria application
Supply Chain Coordination	Demand forecast inaccuracy due to limited data integration, inventory imbalances from siloed planning, and supplier visibility gaps	Enhanced forecasting incorporating economic indicators, multi-echelon inventory optimization algorithms, and collaborative planning platforms	Availability requirement satisfaction while minimizing holding costs, lead time variability accommodation, and stock allocation optimization
Remote Diagnostics	Physical site visits are required for assessment, travel delays impede rapid response, and geographic constraints on expert availability	Secure equipment connectivity, streaming telemetry analysis, and expert consultation regardless of location	Response time acceleration through travel elimination, service cost reduction, and remote resolution capability

Table 4. Advanced Technology Integration Framework for Next-Generation Manufacturing Operations [9, 10].

Technology Domain	Core Capabilities	Implementation Challenges	Strategic Applications
Digital Twin Environments	High-fidelity virtual representations synchronized with physical assets, multiphysics simulation integrating mechanical and thermal dynamics, scenario testing before physical implementation	Model validation, ensuring virtual accuracy across operating conditions, data integration from heterogeneous sources, and computational resources for real-time synchronization	Production line optimization, identifying bottleneck operations, predictive maintenance, forecasting degradation trajectories, quality management, correlating parameters with output characteristics
Autonomous Optimization Systems	Continuous operational parameter adjustment responding to changing conditions, reinforcement learning through trial-and-error interactions, and self-supervised learning, extracting representations from unlabeled data	Algorithm interpretability concerns obscuring causal relationships, negative transfer scenarios degrading performance, domain shift quantification, and assessing source-target correspondence	Raw material variation accommodation, ambient environmental fluctuation response, and equipment degradation compensation without human intervention
Blockchain Supply Chain Integration	Immutable provenance records throughout material sourcing and processing, cryptographically secured custody transfer documentation, smart contracts automating payment execution upon milestone verification	Scalability limitations for high-volume transaction throughput, interoperability with existing enterprise systems, and governance, establishing consensus mechanisms among competing participants	Counterfeit component infiltration prevention, regulatory compliance documentation automation, supply chain financing, working capital reduction
Environmental Monitoring Systems	Granular energy consumption measurement at equipment levels, greenhouse gas emissions tracking from combustion and refrigerant sources, and water usage profiling supporting conservation initiatives	Privacy concerns, exposing commercially sensitive production volumes, measurement standardization across facilities, and integration with sustainability reporting frameworks	Carbon footprint calculation enabling reduction strategy development, waste heat recovery opportunity identification, and resource optimization aligned with corporate sustainability commitments

6. Conclusions

Manufacturing businesses in precision instrumentation, control systems, and automation solutions sectors are driven by core imperatives that

require reinvention of operations beyond incremental improvement strategies. Convergence of process optimization techniques with digital enablement technologies provides transformational opportunities for shifting from traditional product-based business models to solution-focused architectures that emphasize customer outcomes and operational resilience. Effective transformation calls for systematic measurement of organizational maturity along strategic alignment, technological infrastructure, human capital capability, financial resources, and cultural readiness dimensions that combine to determine the probability for implementation success. Organizations should not fall into the trap of pursuing technology adoption without corresponding process rationalization, which only accelerates current inefficiencies at a higher speed without fixing underlying systemic limitations. Manufacturing excellence is achieved by cross-functional deployment of condition-based maintenance approaches using transfer learning algorithms, real-time resource management, striking a balance between throughput and quality targets, and supply chain coordination using advanced forecasting capabilities. Customer interaction transformation takes shape through remote diagnostic services, subscription-based monitoring offerings driving recurring revenues, and digital portals offering visibility while establishing manufacturers as strategic advisors. Competitive differentiation in the future increasingly comes from digital twin simulation ecosystems, autonomous optimization systems, blockchain-supported supply chain visibility, and environmental sensing integration to enable sustainability pledges. Manufacturing organizations that excel at integrated transformation secure sustainable sources of competitive advantage within markets in which operational excellence, customer outcome realization, and technological advancement govern long-term survival and leadership positioning.

Author Statements:

- **Ethical approval:** The conducted research is not related to either human or animal use.
- **Conflict of interest:** The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper
- **Acknowledgement:** The authors declare that they have nobody or no-company to acknowledge.
- **Author contributions:** The authors declare that they have equal right on this paper.

- **Funding information:** The authors declare that there is no funding to be acknowledged.
- **Data availability statement:** The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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