



The Automation Awakening

4 Predictions That Will Redefine Manufacturing and Distribution in 2021

From the only vendor that delivers True Automation comes 4 predictions on what's redefining the manufacturing and distribution industry in 2021 and beyond.

For manufacturers and distributors, 2021 is a time to learn from the disruptions of 2020. This year will redefine business leadership and success as automation plays a deeper role in supporting operations and processes.

In 2020, the business landscape experienced a paradigm shift. It was an in-progress disruption started by Amazon and accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic: All organizations are digital now. Business survival depends on your organization's ability to modernize and deliver sustainable outcomes.

2021 serves as a reset for the manufacturing and distribution industry—a technological enlightenment that compels us to use the lessons of the past year to focus on shifting businesses toward automation.

Sales order automation is the proven way to start this journey. It's quick to implement, doesn't require IT support, and offers a nearly immediate return on investment (ROI).

These four dynamics will shape 2021 and beyond:

- ◆ **ML and AI technology creates efficiencies surrounding delivery and service**
- ◆ **Customer experience is the new competitive advantage**
- ◆ **A “deliver more with less” mentality reshapes business**
- ◆ **True Automation leads to immediate, tangible outcomes**

PREDICTION 1

Touchless Automation Will Create New Efficiencies for Delivery and Service

3

When AI and ML are smartly integrated into your business processes, no human needs to interfere in that process. **This is touchless automation.**

Of course, when AI raises an alert or exception, a human is pinged to decide the next step. For example, if 10 orders come in, and 2 of those 10 orders contain an alert, 8 are processed without human intervention, offering 80% touchless automation.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) are opening new possibilities for delivery and service in the technology world. Whereas humans once needed to intervene in a process, AI and ML free individuals to work on strategic objectives rather than mundane tasks, such as data entry or verifying the accuracy of customer orders.

Organizations looking to improve delivery and service will focus exclusively on solutions that deliver touchless outcomes—outcomes without human intervention.

With touchless automation, **orders go out faster and with more accuracy**, fundamentally improving the process and timing of shipping and delivery.

PREDICTION 2

Customer Experience Will Be the New Competitive Advantage for B2B

The Amazon effect. It revolutionized the way we do business, from online ordering to 2-day shipping and immediate order confirmations. For the B2C market, it's made a customer-centric experience an expectation.

4

However, when it comes to manufacturing and distribution, most businesses are still light-years behind their B2C counterparts.

As leaders, we must acknowledge that we live in an experience-focused economy. A “right now” economy. We can't force buyers to change their behavior to meet our solution. Instead, we must adapt to our customers. They demand an entirely different relationship, one that looks closer to B2C than traditional B2B. They expect to be treated as partners through open, intuitive, and immediate experiences.

Sales order automation is integral to 2021's call to better cater to and delight customers. It delivers a shortened order cycle, processing orders in minutes, not hours. When vying for customers, executing a flawless customer experience will keep your clients coming back to you—not your competitors—for more.

As we head into 2021, we must conform our solutions to give customers what they want when they need it. As expectations evolve, our solutions must be lean and agile to meet customers where they are and provide the ultimate customer experience.

For more information on how traditional distribution models are changing, watch

How to Evolve from eCommerce to Multi-Channel Order Capture

where Forrester® Senior Analyst Joe Cicman and Ray Grady, president & CEO at Conexiom, discuss changing buyer preferences.

PREDICTION 3

The “Deliver More with Less” Mentality Will Reshape Business

The
cost of
manual order
processing can be
as high as

5
\$26
per order

The Hackett Group

On average, customer service representatives (CSRs) spend 30% of their day keying in purchase orders. But, as the COVID-19 pandemic made clear, companies cannot squander operational costs on inefficient processes that consume staff resources on tasks that don't drive strategic growth.

In 2021, businesses will look to create efficiencies throughout their operations, starting with deploying their CSRs to high value tasks, ones that involve providing exemplary customer service, exceling in product knowledge, and acquiring new clients.

Automation will serve as an essential way to reduce or eliminate the manual work involved in order processing. Not only does it reduce operational costs, but automation also levels out the ebbs and flows of staffing needs.

Because CSRs are not manually entering and verifying orders, there is no mandatory overtime or late nights spent by your team to manage increased order volumes. There is no more stress over not having enough staff during a demand spike. No more stress over an experienced and valued employee retiring or moving into another role.

Conexiom Sales Order Automation scales with your business so you can do more with less: less resources, less errors, less operational costs, less time, and less overtime.

PREDICTION 4

True Automation Will Focus on Tangible Outcomes and ROI

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, automation is increasingly becoming a business imperative. As businesses start researching ML, AI, and automation, they will begin to understand that not all automation technologies are created equal.

For example, some AI/ML solutions only deliver a process or workflow improvement. In 2021, if a tech solution is not fully automated, it's not relieving your employees of tedious tasks. And if your employees are still touching every order, you're not gaining the benefits of True Automation.

In 2021, companies looking to modernize will push for demonstrable proof of automation before they buy. This is because, unfortunately, many organizations have been duped by software salespeople who promise real automation, but then learn that the implementation takes months, the usability isn't intuitive, and the cost breaks the budget.

This way of purchasing automation solutions will be flipped on its head as CIOs become more adept on the available technologies and create new roles to manage digital transformation.

Conexiom is the only vendor that provides True Automation: complex data transformation and touchless document processing, delivered with 100% data accuracy.

True Automation isn't a piece of technology, it's about delivering tangible outcomes and ROI. Conexiom's Sales Order Automation provides immediate gains, drives productivity, and generates savings in 30 days or less.

Automation Awakening

For manufacturers and distributors, 2021 will begin the era of the Automation Awakening, where automation will play a key role in business operations and document processing.

As these predictions highlight, ML and AI will open tremendous opportunity, as companies look to create operational efficiencies and implement solutions to do more with less.



"Automation of an order—
in concert with eCommerce, better
experience, and better product information—
is really the entire picture that modern
businesses need to look at."

Ray Grady
President and CEO
Conexiom

Regardless of size or sub-industry, in 2021, manufacturers and distributors must leverage sales order automation to:

- ◆ **Stop manually processing purchase orders**
- ◆ **Eliminate processing errors**
- ◆ **Slash operational costs**
- ◆ **Reduce order cycle times**
- ◆ **Tactically redeploy hours saved into revenue-generating processes**
- ◆ **Focus on customer service and increase customer satisfaction**
- ◆ **Build business resilience**

Move forward with [Conexiom.com](https://conexiom.com)

Schedule a demo to see how Conexiom's Sales Order Automation solution can help your business delight customers, grow your company's revenue, improve productivity, and reduce operational expenses.



About Conexiom



Conexiom is a SaaS platform that delivers a sales order automation solution that eliminates manual document processing. Manufacturers and distributors across the globe, such as Grainger, Genpak, Prysmian, Rexnord, USESI, and Compugen, trust Conexiom to deliver touchless order processing with 100% data accuracy to eliminate unnecessary cost and resource burdens, and to redeploy human capital to provide the highest levels of customer service. Conexiom is based in Vancouver, BC, and has offices in Kitchener, ON, London, England and Chicago, IL.

For more information, [visit Conexiom.com](https://conexiom.com) or [request a demonstration](#).

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