

April 2008

What is your eCommerce Readiness?

Last month, I defined eCommerce as any internet related transaction that enables the buying/selling process. This month I'm going to help you determine your eCommerce Readiness.

Typical implementations of eCommerce 4 Manufacturers include:

Implementation	What Does it Mean
Customer Service	Put more customer service information on your website, constantly update the customer service information on your website and put it in a format that is easy for your customer to access.
Online Bid/RFP Sites	Responding to Bids/RFPs for Work over the Internet. These sites have helped some manufacturers get in the door, but generally the work is low margin work. I don't know about you, but I personally like margins.
WorkProcess 2 Web	Taking internal workprocesses with numerous handoffs and touchpoints to the Internet/Intranet. This can dramatically reduce the transaction costs at each of these handoffs/touchpoints, significantly improve productivity and PROFITABILITY. In case it's been a while since you've seen one...PROFIT IS GOOD.
Online PriceQuote System	Allowing customers to generate price quotes online. This generally involves creating some type of knowledge application programmed with your product constraints in a customer centric view. By the way, the mistake many

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xRP: Free 30 Day Trial

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By: *Agent Technologies, Inc*

The future of Enterprise Resource Planning

- Customer Relationship Management
- To Do List Management
- Schedule Management
- Price Quote Management
- eCommerce System

Coming Soon!

- Knowledge Management
- Inventory

	companies make is that they think their product is too complex...or maybe a customer only wants to interact with your sales force. Give your customers the choice, because these knowledge applications TEACH your customers and answers many questions they are too afraid to ask you.
Selling Products Online	Allowing customers to configure and purchase online. This can be as simple as a book or as complex as a custom machine.
eFactory	Sending online customer configured orders directly to the plant floor. This is the holy grail of eCommerce with a fully integrated system from the Internet to the factory floor.

- Management
- Production Management
- Financial Systems Interface
- Intelligent Agents



Now that I have told you the how, its time to determine your eCommerce Readiness. Below are the basic questions I always ask.

- 1) What is your Ns%? (Sorry, I should have warned some of you math was involved)
 - Ns% = Hours of non-sales personnel divided by the total hours to generate rough price quote
- 2) How much does an order cost?
 - personnel time, facility time, rework, etc.
- 3) What is your calculated Internet Opportunity?
 - lowering operating costs by X, improved turn around, volume, keeping existing customers, etc.
- 4) How will you support eCommerce
 - accessing current customer service and computer abilities of your organization

By answering these questions, you can determine how ready your organization is for eCommerce. Contact us for a more in depth eCommerce Readiness Assessment.

Ben Moore

The Consumer's Workshop: the future of American manufacturing

The Consumer's Workshop: The Future of American Manufacturing is a hand book on how to setup the systems within

Manufacturing Statistics

1) Manufacturing Output improved in February 2008 to an Index of 115.5 (2002=100) Source: Federal Reserve Board

2) Manufacturing Employment **lost** 52,000 jobs in February 2008 and a total of 299,000 jobs in the past 12 months Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

3) Manufacturing Trade Deficit in January 2008 increased \$0.7 billion, or 1.1 percent, to \$68.7 billion. Sources: Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis

your company and create the workforce you need to be successful now and in the future. Written by authors that have worked at some of America's largest manufacturers, founded their own manufacturing organizations and helped numerous small manufacturers grow.

The Consumer's Workshop: The Future of American Manufacturing is a must read for today's business leaders. It is insightful and provocative in its approach to where US manufacturing has been, how manufacturing got into the troubles it faces today and what we need to do to become the standard for world class once again. If we want to know how to regain that competitive edge once again, the roadmap is certainly the pages of The Consumer Workshop.

-- Bruce Vaillancourt, Director, NIST MEP Program, TechSolve, Inc.

The Consumer's Workshop is an extremely timely review of how manufacturing strategy developed in the past and how it will change in the future. The author team clearly demonstrates that companies have to change -- and provide plenty of advise how such a change should take place."

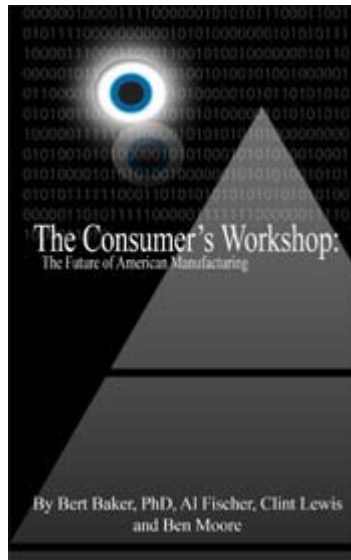
-- Frank Piller, PhD, International Manufacturing Consultant

As the authors make clear, eventually American manufacturing will become the workshop for direct production of consumer's own designs -- or it will be no more. Begin that path by following the steps outlined here."

-- B. Joseph Pine II, author, Mass Customization: The New Frontier in Business Competition

Investment: \$12.99

<http://www.theconsumersworkshop.com>



4)Manufacturers' New Orders decreased \$5.7 billion, or 1.3%, in February 2008 to \$424.4 billion.

Source:Census Bureau

5) Manufacturers' Inventories increased \$2.8 billion, or 0.5%, in February 2008 to \$538.4 billion. There has been an increase in 12 of the last 13 months.

Source: Census Bureau

Agent Technologies, Inc.
Phone: 513-942-9444
Fax: 513-942-9446
Email: info@agenttech.com
[Agent Technologies Inc](http://www.agenttech.com)

Founded in 1995, Agent Technologies, Inc. provides e-Commerce Solutions, Business Reporting Solutions, e-Business Strategy Development and Agent Based Systems. We specialize in comprehensive eCommerce 4 Manufacturing (sm) Solutions through our manufacturing consultants and software applications.

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