Schenck finds Wisconsin manufacturers behind the curve on robotics adoption
According to Schenck’s annual manufacturing survey

WISCONSIN – The Manufacturing & Distribution team at Schenck, a full-service CPA and consulting firm, recently published the results of their sixth annual manufacturing survey, focused on the use of robotics in manufacturing.

Schenck’s 2018 Manufacturing Survey, Robotics in Manufacturing, is intended to provide insight as to how mid-size Wisconsin companies are implementing and using robotics to gain efficiency, shorten production time and improve safety.

Robotics Industries Association, the robotics industry trade group, reported in February 2018 that the robotics industry in North America set new growth records in 2017. While this may be the trend nationally, the same might not be true of Wisconsin manufacturers. More than 75 percent of survey respondents reported they were not using robotics in their factory—an increase in the number who reported the same in Schenck’s 2016 survey.

In addition, of those who reported they were not considering using robotics, nearly 90 percent indicated they struggle with identifying the appropriate applications of robotics on their factory floor.

“Manufacturers who are slower to adopt emerging technologies may find themselves falling behind their competitors on critical performance measures,” said Karin Gale, CPA, CM&AA, shareholder and Manufacturing & Distribution team leader at Schenck. “Many manufacturers focus significant resources around robotics as a way to reduce risk and enhance their long-term sustainability, and in today’s competitive global market, those who are hesitant to explore these options may find it more difficult to compete.”

Among the additional survey results include:

- Of the manufacturers who reported integrating robotics into their workplace, more than 95 percent anticipate increasing their investment in the next three to five years.
Some of the most frequently cited benefits include higher quality and reliability, increased productivity and better use of labor.

Most manufacturers using robotics report using traditional automation and industrial robots, with 8 percent using collaborative robots, which are smaller robots that work alongside human workers.

Schenck surveyed more than 100 Wisconsin-based companies across multiple manufacturing sectors, including metal or fabricating, plastics and rubber products, machinery, food and beverage, printing and more. The report is a summary of their responses, comments and suggestions, including how and why they are using these advanced technologies, the number and type of robotics used in manufacturing facilities, reported benefits of implementing robotics, the impact robotics has had on their workforce and more.

View and download the complete analysis at schencksc.com/2018mfgsurvey.

About Schenck SC
Schenck is a full-service regional accounting and consulting firm. The firm currently has nearly 700 team members who serve clients from 10 locations in Wisconsin. As one of the larger CPA firms in the United States, Schenck provides a full range of services, including accounting and assurance, tax, business consulting, human resources consulting, information technology, merger and acquisition, retirement planning, wealth advisory and payroll solutions for businesses, government and not-for-profit organizations, and individuals.

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