

5 reasons to be agile



If there's a key to success in today's manufacturing industry, it's agility—the ability to accurately anticipate and swiftly respond to changing market demands. More and more companies are accomplishing this by pursuing a mixed-mode strategy, with different production environments for different product lines. IFS makes mixed-mode manufacturing easier and more economical by offering built-in support for all types of manufacturing in one integrated package. Here are 5 reasons to become agile.



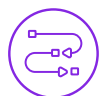
Diversification

The COVID-19 pandemic forced many manufactures to diversify, stopping making whisky and instead making sanitiser, stopping building automotive parts and instead building ventilators. But many were already ahead of the curve, recognising that diversification into different markets creates more stability for the bottom line. However, diversification can lead to multiple business solutions or making compromises. Without a business solution capable of running in a mixed-mode, agile manner, disparate solutions, and processes are introduced, reducing the effectiveness and value of the strategy.



Multiple solutions

Many solution providers have separate products for process and discrete, for project and engineer-to-order, for make-to-stock and make-to-order, all of which are at different levels of development and maturity. The resultant increase in cost and complexity of data management across the business can often be missed, costs to consolidate information, provide integration and management of upgrades can outweigh the flexibility of having an agile business.



Manufacturing is agile

The way products and processes have evolved over the past few years has seen many manufacturers adopting multiple manufacturing strategies in a single plant, with both discrete and process manufacturing models operating in parallel. Manufacturers without agile business solutions end up with compromises and the 'bending' of a solution to enable it to work, leading to poor system utilization and very poor user experience and adoption.



Opportunity missed

Manufacturers running in a single manufacturing mode can miss out on potential opportunities by not having flexible business solutions. Imagine operating a manufacturing business where you operate in a contract environment, then an opportunity to make a product in 1000's arises. Without the ability to quickly adopt a totally different manufacturing strategy, manufacturers are led to the preverbal 'round peg in a square hole', which increases manual operational and complexity, negating the advantage of the opportunity.



Speed of change

The need for a business solution to allow a company to operate multiple methods of manufacture isn't just about enabling suitable processes and data structures, its about how fast the change can be made. Utilizing a process focused solution to make discrete products or a discrete solution to make process products can be made to work. However, moving backwards and forwards and changing models quickly is often very difficult in these misaligned solutions, and in today's volatile manufacturing markets, that is vital. Being able to adapt the model quickly can only be achieved by a solution that has been designed from the ground up to allow both models to work in harmony.

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