The Practical Guide to AI for B2B Manufacturers-Part 2 of 3

Driving Sales & Efficiency with AI – What's Working in B2B Manufacturing

Presented by Lisa A. Kilrea, AI & Digital Marketing Consultant

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Celebrating Over **30** YEARS EST.1995

WSI | Embrace Digital. Stay Human.

AGENDA

1. Who is WSI
2. Quick Recap of Sessions 1& 2
3. AI Use Spectrum-5 Phases
   ○ Real Life Example
4. AI Case Studies
5. Next Steps

3 Part Webinar Series Overview

Each 30-minute session will share **practical**, **non-technical insights** on how AI can drive lead generation, operational efficiency, and growth—plus time for live Q&A.

📅 **Webinar Schedule | 12:00–12:45 PM CST**

Sept 24: *AI for B2B Manufacturers – How to Start Smart and See Results Fast-* COMPLETE

Oct 8: *Driving Sales & Efficiency with AI – What's Working in B2B Manufacturing*

Oct 22: *Building an AI Roadmap for B2B Manufacturing Growth in 2026*

SHARE WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KtuaDnSnRyCbWtDLHI3ydA

SESSIONS WILL BE RECORDED AND LINKS SENT TO REGISTRANTS

Who is WSI?

1500 digital marketing consultants in over **80** countries

- Specialize in Digital Marketing & AI Strategy and Implementation

- WSI founded in 1995 – HQ in Toronto. 30 years in business

- We work with domestic and international clients around the world

- 30 years experience in helping businesses succeed online

- We turn complex digital data into actionable marketing insights

- Invested heavily in AI to help companies get better ROI from their marketing spend

- Experts in our field – leveraging global knowledge to deliver local results

We're Proud of Our Accomplishments

We don't mean to brag, but we believe awards should be celebrated – and respected. We are incredibly proud of all the awards the WSI network has won, and we believe our collective trophy case is tangible proof that we'd make a fantastic marketing partner for any business.

" This recognition is a testament to the talent of our network, the strength of our partnerships, and the strategic mindset that drives everything we deliver."

— Valerie Brown-Dufour, President of WSI

2025 WEB MARKETING ASSOCIATION AGENCY OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER! THIRD TIME IN SIX YEARS PLUS 200+ WMA AWARDS AND COUNTING!!!!

Our Team

Robert Mitchell

Director of Strategy and AI

Robert brings over two decades of experience in business expansion and development, offering a unique perspective on leveraging AI to enhance business processes and drive transformative solutions.

Kundan Mohapatra

Director of Strategy and AI

With a background spanning digital marketing, analytics leadership, and strategic consulting, Kundan guides clients through the evolving AI landscape, transforming technologies into potent business assets.

Seamus Smyth

Director of Strategy and AI

Seamus blends profound AI technologies and strategic business insights to guide clients through their AI transformation, turning complex advancements into practical value-driven strategies.

Lisa Kilrea

Principal, AI Strategy & Digital Marketing

Lisa is an AI and Digital Marketing consultant with 25+ years of experience working with Fortune 50 companies such as Pepsico and BP North America as well as start ups and SMBs.

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Recap of Session 1

- We went back in time to 1990's 2 years BG (before Google). Influencers were predicting the internet would never take off and newspapers would always be the way people consumed news. Yellow pages were how people found information

- Then Chat GPT was born 11/30/2022…3 ½ months later Chat GPT-4 was born and last month Chat GPT-5 came to be.

- Recap of the adoption rate of new on line platforms and time it took to reach 1 million subscribers (Netflix- 3.5 YEARS , AirBnB- 2.5 YEARS, Facebook 10 MONTHS, Chat GPT FIVE DAYS!)

- Massive capabilities improvement in Chat GPT in 3.5 months…bar exam lowest 10% with initial version, top 10% with Chat GPT-4.

- Chat GPT 4 has IQ of 155. Einstein is 160. Predicted it will be 1600 within the next year or 10X Einstein.

- History of AI: Started in 1950's. Each decade had it's notable AI progress..just was not mainstream until 2022. It's moved from theory in 1950's to everyday impact today

What Thought Leaders Are Saying

*"AI is one of the most important things humanity is working on. It could be more profound than **electricity or fire**."*
Sundar Pichai *(Source: Fortune)*

*"AI is the most revolutionary technology in decades—as fundamental as the invention of the **microchip and the internet**."*
Bill Gates *(Source: WSJ)*

What Does This Mean For YOUR Business?

- First time ever we can scale knowledge work!
- What would you do with a team of free college grads?
  - Engineering graduate
  - Data Scientist
  - Content Writers
  - Designers
  - MBA graduate
  - Medical student

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Spectrum of AI Use for Manufacturers

1. Existing AI in Platforms	2. Semi-Custom AI Solutions	3. AI-Enhanced Analytics	4. Custom AI Automation	5. AI Agents / Co-Pilots

Stage 1:
Existing AI in Platforms

Automating routine tasks
to cut costs and save time

Examples Covered

- Live Chat / Customer Service

Stage 1:
Existing AI
in Platforms

Stage 2:
Semi-Custom
AI Solutions

Stage 3:
AI-Enhanced
Analytics

Stage 4:
Custom AI
Automation

Stage 5:
AI Agents /
Co-Pilots

Live Chat / Customer Service

What it is:
AI-powered chatbots handle routine questions.

Why it matters:
Frees up staff for higher-value work.

Value:
Faster response times, improved customer satisfaction.

Use Case Example:
Customer asks about order status

Without AI
Agent handles repetitive questions
High volume delays responses

With AI
AI instantly answers FAQs
Agent only handles complex issues

AI reduces workload and improves service

Stage 2:
Semi-Custom AI Solutions

AI reduces risks by predicting problems and preventing downtime

Examples Covered

- Inventory Alerts

Stage 1:
Existing AI in Platforms

Stage 2:
Semi-Custom AI Solutions

Stage 3:
AI-Enhanced Analytics

Stage 4:
Custom AI Automation

Stage 5:
AI Agents / Co-Pilots

Inventory Alerts

What it is:
AI monitors stock levels and flag shortages.

Why it matters:
Prevents downtime and overstock costs.

Value:
Keeps production running smoothly, avoids costly delays.

Use Case Example:
Critical part stock drops below threshold

Without AI
Downtime risk
Production halts
Emergency rush order

With AI Alerts
AI flags shortage early
Suggests reorder
Avoids downtime

AI keeps production moving by predicting shortages before they happen

Stage 3:
AI-Enhanced Analytics

AI provides forward-looking insights to guide strategy

Examples Covered

- Demand Forecasting

Stage 1:	Stage 2:	Stage 3:	Stage 4:	Stage 5:
Existing AI in Platforms	Semi-Custom AI Solutions	AI-Enhanced Analytics	Custom AI Automation	AI Agents / Co-Pilots

Demand Forecasting

What it is:

AI predicts customer demand using data trends.

Why it matters:

Optimizes production and inventory.

Value:

Less waste, more sales.

Use Case Example:
Seasonal spike in orders

Without AI
Overstock or stockouts
Lost sales or waste

With AI Co-Pilot
AI predicts demand accurately
Aligns production with orders

AI aligns supply with demand

Stage 4:
Custom AI Automation

AI optimizes resources and processes for growth

Examples Covered

- Energy Optimization

Stage 1:	Stage 2:	Stage 3:	Stage 4:	Stage 5:
Existing AI in Platforms	Semi-Custom AI Solutions	AI-Enhanced Analytics	Custom AI Automation	AI Agents / Co-Pilots

Energy Optimization

What it is:

AI monitors energy usage and optimizes settings.

Why it matters:

Cuts energy costs and carbon footprint.

Value:

Sustainability and savings.

Use Case Example:
Factory energy peaks at midday

Without AI
High costs
Energy waste

With AI Co-Pilot
AI shifts loads intelligently
Saves costs and energy

AI lower costs and supports sustainability

Stage 5:
AI Agents / Co-Pilots

AI transforms entire business models and strategy

Examples Covered

- Finance Co-Pilot

Stage 1:
Existing AI
in Platforms

Stage 2:
Semi-Custom
AI Solutions

Stage 3:
AI-Enhanced
Analytics

Stage 4:
Custom AI
Automation

Stage 5:
AI Agents /
Co-Pilots

Finance Co-Pilot

What it is:
AI runs financial scenarios, generates insights, and recommends actions.

Why it matters:
Finance leaders need to simulate risks and opportunities quickly.

Value:
Better profitability decisions, faster reporting, reduced risk.

Use Case Example:
Steel price increases 15% →
Costs rise $250K

Without AI
Weeks of manual analysis
Delayed actions

With AI Co-Pilot
AI simulates instantly
Recommends supplier switch
Turns loss into savings

AI doesn't just report — it recommends

Where to start with AI?

Strategy First!	Identify Opportunities	Start Small	Measure & Celebrate	Scale Progressively	AI Readiness Assessment
					start here →
Don't fall into 'random acts' of AI - like random acts of marketing, they rarely produce lasting value.	Assess where the biggest opportunities exist and prioritize based on cost vs. benefit.	Begin with quick wins that can demonstrate efficiency gains and ROI.	Track results, showcase wins, and build momentum across the organization.	Move down the list of opportunities in a structured, step-by-step way.	45-60 minutes of discovery in one business area, across 5 topic categories. Output: tailored recommendations, ROI calculations, and a clear roadmap.

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WSI AI Assessment for Marketing and Sales Function

A Little about You

AI Adoption & Familiarity

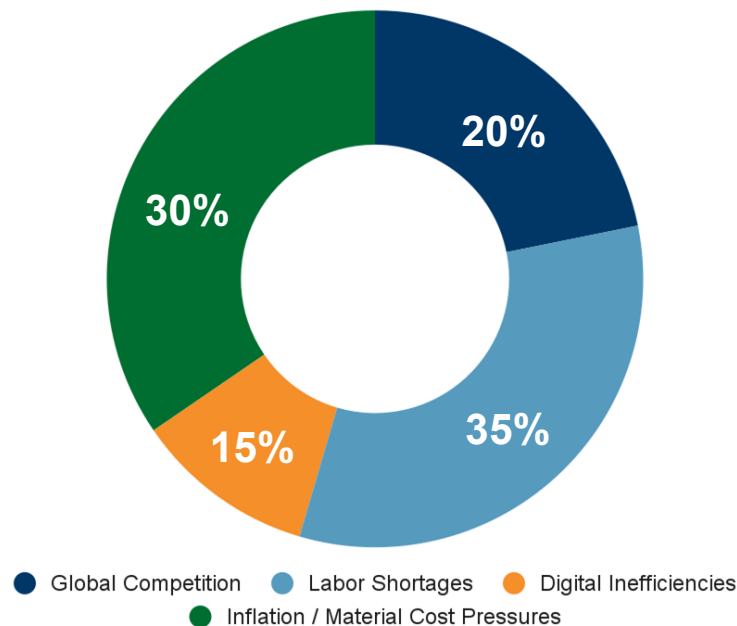Customer Engagement & Personalisation

Lead Generation and Sales

Marketing Strategy & Operations

Why AI is Relevant Right Now

➜ AI is driving 5–10x ROI for SMB manufacturers

➜ Affordable, scalable, and doesn't require a big tech team

➜ Helps tackle labor shortages, inflation, and global competition

- 20%
- 35%
- 15%
- 30%

● Global Competition ● Labor Shortages ● Digital Inefficiencies
● Inflation / Material Cost Pressures

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How AI helps Manufacturers Offset Rising Costs

Automate repetitive quoting & admin tasks
Free up staff time and reduce labor costs.

Predict customer churn & service needs
Retain more revenue and lower the cost of lost accounts.

Optimize inventory & material planning
Cut carrying costs and minimize waste.

Streamline recruitment & training
Reduce hiring costs and speed up productivity.

Identify efficiency gains to offset tariffs
Find hidden cost savings that protect margins.

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Your AI Readiness

Is your company ready for AI?

Data Access

Openness to Automation

Willingness to pilot / test

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Key Takeaways

AI is affordable and relevant to SMBs

Start with small wins that prove ROI

You don't need a big IT team

There's a clear path to adoption

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AI Use Case Examples

Metal Fabrication Company (AI Demand Forecasting)

From Guesswork to Accuracy – Optimizing Production with AI

1 Challenge

- Production schedules were based on historical averages, not real-time demand signals.

- Frequent stockouts of high-demand SKUs and excess inventory of slow movers.

- Inaccurate forecasting caused late deliveries and higher carrying costs.

- Sales and operations teams lacked alignment on true customer demand.

2 Solution

Deployed an AI demand forecasting model using ERP, CRM, and external market data.

- System generated weekly SKU-level forecasts with confidence ranges.

- AI insights fed directly into production planning and purchasing systems.

- Enabled proactive communication between sales, production, and procurement.

3 Key Results

30% better
forecast accuracy

25% lower
finished goods inventory

15% fewer
stockouts

Higher
customer satisfaction

"

For years we struggled with balancing too much of some products and not enough of others.

The AI forecasting tool has given us clarity we never had before, helping us run leaner and meet customer demand with confidence.

– Operations Director,
Metal Fabrication Company

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Industrial Equipment Manufacturer (AI Quoting Automation)

From 3 Days to 30 Minutes – Accelerating Customer Response Times

1 Challenge

- Manual quoting process relied on engineers reviewing specs and pulling pricing.

- Typical turnaround for quotes: 2–3 business days.

- Lost opportunities when customers selected faster-responding competitors.

- Strain on sales team to balance quote prep and prospecting.

2 Solution

Implemented an AI-powered quoting assistant trained on company's pricing database, historical quotes, and product catalog.

- Automated first-draft quote generation based on uploaded drawings/spec sheets.
- Built approval workflow so engineers validate outputs before sending.
- Integrated with CRM to log all quotes automatically.

"

Our sales team can now focus on customer relationships instead of paperwork.

What used to take days now takes less than an hour, and we're closing more deals because prospects get answers right away.

– VP of Sales,
Industrial Equipment Manufacturer

3 Key Results

85% faster	**5x more**	**Increased**	**Reduced**
quote cycle time	quotes processed per engineer	win rate	overtime costs

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Food & Beverage Manufacturer (AI Quality Control)

From Manual Inspections to Automated Accuracy – Ensuring Consistent Product Quality

1 Challenge

- Quality inspections relied on human operators visually checking packaging and labeling.

- Inconsistent detection of defects (e.g., mislabels, damaged packaging).

- High cost of customer complaints and product recalls.

- Slow inspection process slowed down production lines.

2 Solution

Deployed AI computer vision system with high-resolution cameras on production line.

- Real-time detection of mislabels, damaged goods, or packaging errors.

- Automatic rejection of faulty items without slowing throughput.

- Integrated analytics to identify recurring defects and root causes.

"

The AI quality control system has transformed how we manage production.

Not only are we reducing waste, but our customers notice the improvement in consistency.

– Operations Director, Food & Beverage Manufacturer

3 Key Results

95% defect
detection rate

50% fewer
recalls/complaints

Faster
throughout

Improved
brand reputation

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Strategic Next Steps

Your best first step:

- ✓ FREE AI Readiness Assessment. FIRST 10 TO DM ME IN CHAT

- ✓ 35-page report with recommendations

- ✓ Start proving ROI in 30-60 days

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What questions do you have?

Join us October 22nd for

Building an AI Roadmap for B2B Manufacturing Growth in 2026