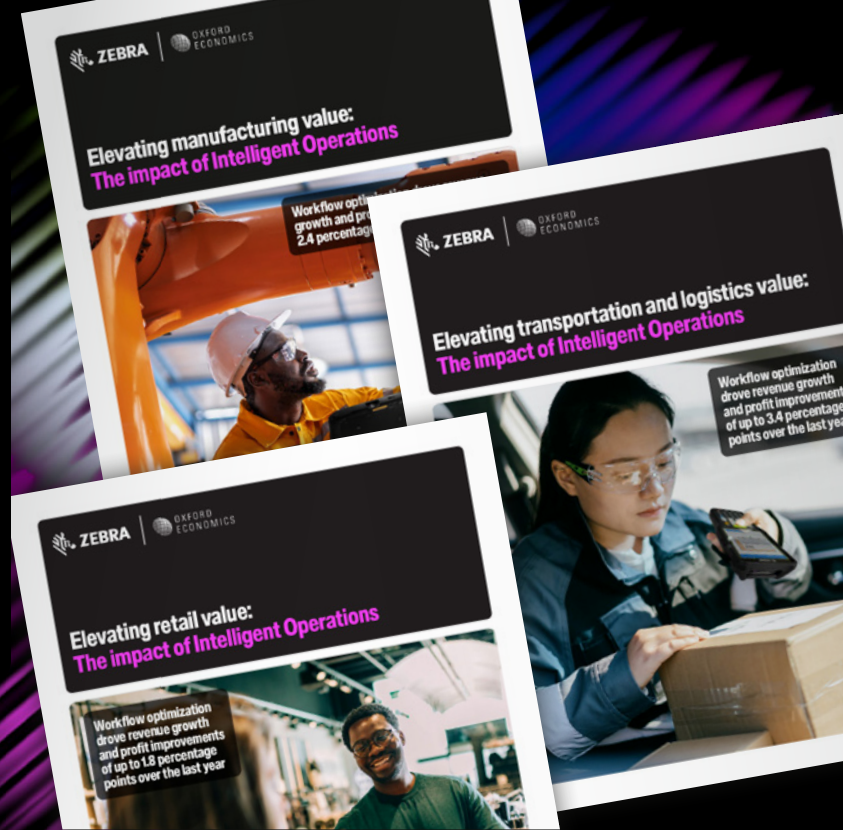


EXECUTIVE BRIEF

# The economics of Intelligent Operations



Zebra commissioned Oxford Economics to conduct an independent, global study on the impact of workflow modernization. The goal was straightforward: put numbers behind what we see every day—the **business value of intelligent operations**.

## Who Oxford Economics is

Oxford Economics is one of the world's leading providers of independent economic analysis. With over 400 economists and analysts worldwide, they specialize in rigorous, data-driven studies that link business activity to financial outcomes. Their work is regularly used by governments, global institutions, and Fortune 500 companies to guide strategy and investment.

## Why we partnered with them

Zebra already knows the power of intelligent operations. But independent validation matters—for our customers, for investors, and for our own strategy. Partnering with Oxford Economics ensures that the results are credible, comparable across industries, and backed by objective analysis.

## What they studied

Oxford surveyed 1,000 senior decision-makers across eight countries in three core industries: retail, manufacturing, and transportation & logistics. They examined **five workflows per industry**—everything from inventory management in retail to quality control in manufacturing and delivery operations in logistics.

## Global findings

Companies are already investing heavily: **nearly 70% of IT budgets across industries are dedicated to workflow automation technologies.** This is not a side project—it's where the majority of technology dollars are going. That level of commitment shows just how central workflow modernization has become to strategy and competitiveness.

Oxford Economics modeled the potential if the top 20 companies in each of the three industries studied—retail, manufacturing, and transportation & logistics—modernized their workflows.

THE RESULTS SHOW THE SCALE OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE [AT SCALE, ACROSS THE TOP 20 COMPANIES PER INDUSTRY]:



These figures aren't company forecasts. They illustrate the scale of potential gains Oxford observed across the industries studied. The conclusion is consistent: when organizations modernize frontline workflows, they perform better across revenue, profitability, productivity, and customer satisfaction. For more insights on the methods in calculating these results, see the detailed *Methodology Note* for details.

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## Cross-industry findings

Those gains aren't confined to any one sector. In fact, they show up consistently across industries, wherever frontline workflows are modernized.

Across industries, organizations that modernize their frontline workflows are:

- **Achieving measurable gains** in revenue, profit, and productivity
- **Addressing top challenges** like labor shortages, legacy systems, and rising costs
- **Leveraging technologies** such as AI, RFID, machine vision, predictive analytics, and automation
- **Empowering frontline workers** with real-time insights and connected tools

These are the very areas where Zebra operates—and this study shows how our solutions are driving measurable progress.

# Workflows studied

The study focused on 15 workflows across three industries—the same areas where Zebra solutions are already embedded and driving results. Each workflow was selected because it represents a critical point where operational performance links directly to business outcomes. For example:

- **In retail:** inventory management prevents out-of-stocks, capturing sales that might otherwise be lost.
- **In manufacturing:** quality control reduces defects and waste, protecting revenue and margins.
- **In transportation & logistics:** inventory management improves accuracy and fulfillment speed, preventing lost orders.

THESE EXAMPLES ILLUSTRATE THE BROADER SET OF WORKFLOWS ANALYZED IN THE STUDY:



## Retail (In store)

- Inventory management
- Point of Sale (POS) / checkout operations
- Associate task management and execution
- Order fulfillment
- Loss prevention



## Manufacturing (Plant floor)

- Material movement and handling
- Supply chain coordination and inventory management
- Production and assembly line
- Quality control and assurance
- Maintenance and equipment management



## T&L (Warehouse)

- Shipping and loading
- Inventory management and control
- Delivery and field operations
- Picking and packing
- Receiving and unloading

Taken together, these workflows represent the most critical points where operational improvements translate directly into revenue growth, stronger profitability, and higher customer satisfaction.

# Key messages (global)

Lead with these. Repeat them often. They anchor our story.

**“Oxford Economics found that workflow modernization could potentially deliver billions in revenue, millions in profit, and double-digit productivity gains—proof that intelligent operations drive measurable performance.”**

**“Oxford Economics put hard numbers behind what we’ve long believed—that intelligent operations are a business growth engine.”**

**“Better Every Day speaks to more than technology. It’s about people, workflows, and outcomes improving in measurable ways—and this study makes that impact undeniable.”**

**“The Oxford Economics research shines a light on a global shift. In stores, in factories, and in logistics, intelligent operations are redefining how people work, how products move, and how industries compete. This is the future of work, and it’s already here.”**



# Retail: Every shelf, every checkout, every customer

Retail happens in the details—from inventory accuracy to checkout speed. Oxford Economics shows that when retailers modernize workflows, those details translate into measurable gains in loyalty, profitability, and growth.

Oxford Economics didn't stop at topline numbers—they examined multiple retail workflows to pinpoint where modernization creates the greatest gains. For this briefing, we focused on **inventory management** and **loss prevention**.

## What Oxford found

RETAILERS ESTIMATED THAT WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS DELIVERED GAINS OF:

↓ **22%**

Operating costs

↑ **21%**

Customer satisfaction

↑ **20%**

Employee productivity

## Modeled impact

RETAILERS THAT IMPROVED WORKFLOWS REALIZED STRONGER RESULTS OVER THE LAST YEAR, WHILE THOSE MAKING NO SUCH IMPROVEMENTS DID NOT

### Inventory management

WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED:

**+1.8 PP**

Revenue growth

PROJECTED REVENUE UPLIFT:

**+\$53.8M**

### Loss prevention

WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED:

**+1.2 PP**

Revenue growth

PROJECTED REVENUE UPLIFT:

**+\$35.1M**

**+1.5 PP**

Profitability

**+\$3.5M**

These figures highlight the scale of value at stake in retail workflows—gains that go well beyond efficiency into measurable revenue and profitability. See *Methodology Note* for details.

# Retail

## Technologies driving change

### Inventory management



Mobile computers



Predictive analytics software



Mobile RFID readers

### Loss prevention



RFID readers



Smart shelving and sensors



RFID tags

## Executive talking points: Retail

**“Oxford Economics shows inventory accuracy isn’t just operational—it’s financial. A typical large retailer could gain nearly \$54M in revenue and stronger profitability just by improving inventory management—a return too big to overlook.”**

**“Retailers have long treated loss prevention as an unavoidable cost. Oxford Economics proves it’s something else: a bottom-line growth lever. Modernizing loss prevention can unlock more than \$35M in revenue for a typical retailer—that’s margin no one can afford to leave on the table.”**

**“In retail, **Better Every Day** means accuracy, speed, and service moving in the same direction—and Oxford proves that these everyday improvements add up to measurable business results.”**

# Manufacturing: From precision to performance



Manufacturing has always depended on precision—but in today’s environment, precision alone isn’t enough. Efficiency, quality, and speed must now work together to deliver performance. Oxford Economics found that manufacturers modernizing workflows are already seeing measurable improvements on every front.

To test and quantify those gains, Oxford Economics analyzed multiple manufacturing workflows. For this briefing, we focused on **quality control** and **material handling** to illustrate the business impact of modernization.

## What Oxford found

MANUFACTURERS ESTIMATED THAT WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS DELIVERED GAINS OF:

↑ **19%**

Employee productivity

↓ **19%**

Cost reduction

↑ **13%**

Customer satisfaction

## Modeled impact

MANUFACTURERS THAT IMPROVED WORKFLOWS REALIZED STRONGER RESULTS OVER THE LAST YEAR, WHILE THOSE MAKING NO SUCH IMPROVEMENTS DID NOT

### Quality control

WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED:

**+2.4 PP**

Revenue growth

PROJECTED REVENUE UPLIFT:

**+\$69.7M**

**+1.4 PP**

Profitability

**+\$3.4M**

### Material handling

WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED:

**+1.8 PP**

Revenue growth

PROJECTED REVENUE UPLIFT:

**+\$53.8M**

Oxford Economics projected the scale of impact if the largest manufacturers in the Fortune 2000 achieved similar workflow improvements. See *Methodology Note* for details.

# Manufacturing

## Technologies driving change

### Quality control



Machine vision



Machine learning



Fixed industrial scanners

### Material handling



Mobile computers



RFID sensors and tags



RFID printers

## Executive talking points: Manufacturing

“Oxford Economics shows manufacturers modernizing workflows are realizing measurable gains in efficiency, quality, and financial performance—proving that operational excellence now pays off directly on the bottom line.”

“Oxford Economics found that manufacturers improving quality control grew revenue 2.4 points faster and gained more than \$3M in profit—a reminder that every defect avoided is money earned.”

“Oxford Economics linked improvements in material handling to more than \$50M in added revenue—one of the industry’s most underestimated opportunities.”

“For manufacturers, **Better Every Day** means turning precision into performance—and Oxford Economics shows the gains are real.”



# Transportation & Logistics: From visibility to velocity

Transportation and logistics companies have always competed on speed and precision. Today, visibility across the supply chain is just as critical. Oxford Economics found that companies modernizing workflows are realizing measurable gains—from greater accuracy and faster operations to stronger overall efficiency—improving how people work and how goods move across the supply chain.

To capture that business impact, Oxford Economics analyzed multiple transportation and logistics workflows. For this briefing, we focused on **inventory management and control** and **delivery and field operations** to illustrate the business impact of modernization.

## What Oxford found

T&L COMPANIES ESTIMATED THAT WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS DELIVERED GAINS OF:

↑ **23%**

Customer satisfaction

↑ **21%**

Employee productivity

↓ **14%**

Cost reduction

## Modeled impact

T&L COMPANIES THAT IMPROVED WORKFLOWS REALIZED STRONGER RESULTS OVER THE LAST YEAR, WHILE THOSE MAKING NO SUCH IMPROVEMENTS DID NOT

### Inventory management & control

WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED:

**+3.4 PP**

Revenue growth

PROJECTED REVENUE UPLIFT:

**+\$25.3M**

**+2.2 PP**

Profitability

**+\$1.3M**

### Delivery & field operations

WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED:

**+2.3 PP**

Revenue growth

PROJECTED REVENUE UPLIFT:

**+\$17.1M**

Oxford Economics estimated the scale of potential gains if the top logistics companies in the Fortune 2000 modernized their workflows. See *Methodology Note* for details.

# Transportation & Logistics

## Technologies driving change

### Inventory management & control



Tablets



Mobile computers



RFID readers

### Delivery & field service



Mobile computers with barcode reader



Predictive analytics



Mobile barcode label printers

## Executive talking points: T&L

**“Oxford Economics found transportation and logistics companies modernizing workflows are achieving measurable gains in accuracy, speed, and profitability—turning supply chain performance into business growth opportunities.”**

**“Oxford Economics found smarter inventory management in T&L can add more than \$25M in revenue and over \$1M in profit—an opportunity too important to leave on the loading dock.”**

**“Oxford Economics shows modernizing delivery operations can unlock more than \$17M in revenue—proof that the last mile is now the growth mile.”**

**“In transportation and logistics, **Better Every Day** means equipping frontline teams with the tools to work smarter and deliver with confidence—Oxford Economics shows the payoff in growth and profitability.”**

## What this means for Zebra

Across retail, manufacturing, and transportation & logistics, the message from Oxford Economics is clear: **modernizing workflows delivers measurable business results**. Companies that act are realizing higher revenue, stronger profitability, greater efficiency, and more satisfied customers. Those that don't risk falling behind.

For Zebra, these findings are more than validation—they are proof of outcomes. They confirm that the work we do isn't just about devices or software; it's about results. It's about giving frontline workers the tools to be more accurate, more agile, and more effective—and about helping our customers succeed in measurable ways.

This is the essence of **Better Every Day**: small improvements in workflows adding up to billions in potential value across industries. Oxford Economics quantified what we've always known—when people, workflows, and technology come together, the results are undeniable.

### CLOSING MESSAGE

**“Oxford Economics proved that modernization at the workflow level creates measurable gains across industries. For Zebra, it confirms the impact we have in empowering frontline teams to achieve more every day.”**

## For more information

This briefing gives Zebra leaders the essentials. We've published three full industry reports with Oxford Economics—covering retail, manufacturing, and transportation & logistics—along with infographics, sales tools, customer-ready assets, and more. All materials are available on the Zebra Showpad at the following links:

[Main Page](#) | [Manufacturing](#) | [Retail](#) | [T&L](#)

This is an active initiative, and the hub will be regularly updated with new materials.

For questions or tailored support, contact:

- Mark Rogers — Business & Market Intelligence, Customer & Partner Insights
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- Liz Kirk — T&L Demand & Field Marketing, Customer CoE
- Rachel Feng — Retail Demand & Field Marketing, Customer CoE

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## Methodology note

The financial impact estimates in this briefing are based on Oxford Economics' econometric analysis of survey data collected from 1,000 senior decision-makers across 8 countries. The analysis linked reported workflow improvements to key business outcomes such as revenue growth, profitability, and productivity.

For the headline estimates (e.g., \$3B revenue uplift, \$120M profit), Oxford Economics modeled the potential impact if the top 20 companies in each industry on the *Forbes Global 2000* list achieved the same level of workflow improvement as leaders in the study. These figures should be viewed as **directional indicators of scale and opportunity, not precise forecasts for individual companies.**