



# AUTOMATE CANADA MAGAZINE

The official magazine of Automate Canada.

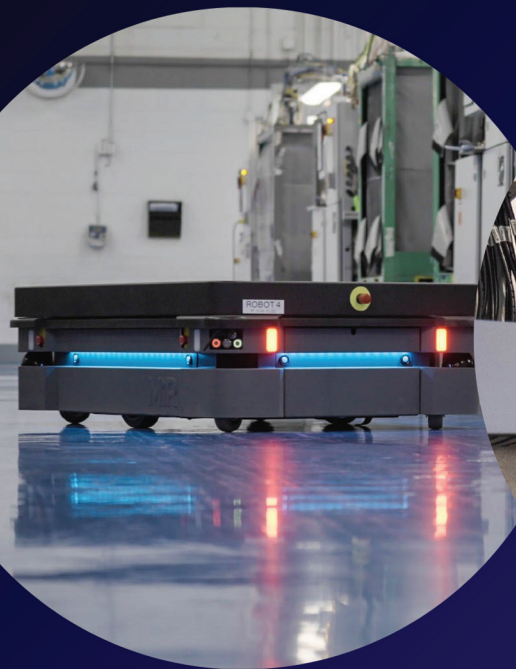
Issue 5, Fall 2024



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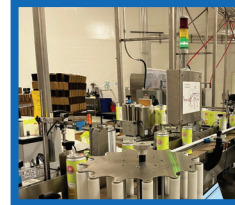
# CONTENTS

## UP FRONT

- 4 Greetings from the Chair of Automate Canada
- 5 Greetings from the Executive Director of Automate Canada
- 7 All About Automate Canada
- 8 Why Should You Join Automate Canada?
- 9 Board of Directors



Cover photo courtesy of Global Vehicle Systems ([www.globalvehicle.ca](http://www.globalvehicle.ca)).



## MEMBER SHOWCASES

- 18 Global Vehicle Systems: Building a History in Automation
- 20 ONXY Engineering: Engineering Solutions Are What They Do Best

## FEATURES

- 11 Automation Across All Industries
- 14 Taking Off in Aviation
- 16 Reflecting on 2023 and Strategizing for 2024
- 22 Index to Advertisers

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**Dave Fortin**

Chair, Board of Directors  
Automate Canada

What can I say to embody what I envision for Automate Canada? I believe that our foundational principles, "Share, Learn, Grow" means that we need to share with and trust other members just a little bit more than we are comfortable with. We need to push the boundaries if we want to make a difference for ourselves or for others!

Sharing is defined as: to give or receive a part of something, or to enjoy or assume something in common.

What I am talking about is sharing and communicating valuable information amongst our peers and even competitors within the context of our organization. So, for someone to share valuable information means that other(s) must be receiving this information. Do they even want it? Ideally, they want to learn something... right? And why learn in the first place? Well, so you can grow your knowledge and wisdom, of course!

So, what are the common "denominators" that make sharing valuable?

### Let's start with trust

You would not share anything of yours with someone you do not trust... am I right? So, in a way, sharing says – "I trust you!" I cannot begin to

## The Power of Sharing as a Business Strategy

tell you how important trust is in a business relationship. You should all know this!

Sharing can be in the form of a favour. You know what they say? What goes around, comes around. Doing a favour for someone or sharing something of value with them is an act of generosity. This act may never result in a returned favour (and none should be expected),

However, it often is returned in one form or another. We usually call this Karma!

### Sharing is caring

Mentoring and teaching is a form of caring; caring that the other person, organization, or community as a whole becomes more successful. While mentoring won't have much or any returned benefits since the mentee is typically much your junior. However, this form of sharing will certainly establish you (and your reputation) as a person of wisdom, which may have its own intrinsic rewards.

### Sharing can be courageous and an act of leadership

This is especially true from a mentor or teacher point of view. Sharing in this way establishes you as an expert, a leader, and someone who can add value to an idea or an organization. You may soon find yourself being sought after to be on boards or task forces.

### Sharing will nurture and foster a culture of collaboration

Sharing within the business community lays the foundation for mutual growth and success. It's more than just exchanging ideas; it's about creating a culture of openness and mutual support.

When we share knowledge, insights, and best practices, innovation thrives, silos break down, and inter-organizational or cross-functional collaboration becomes the norm.

By sharing information companies can also minimize their exposure to potential losses and protect their financial stability.

### So, lets recap:

- Mentoring a junior employee or younger business owner is sharing!
- Teaching is sharing!
- Brainstorming is sharing!
- Giving information freely to another associate or peer (outside of your organization in this case) is sharing!
- Letting someone use something that is inherently yours is sharing!
- Doing someone a favour can be a form of sharing!
- Sharing should not be done with the expectation of a reward or a returned favour!

### Be forewarned, sharing could result in the following:

- Increased trust!
- Will likely lead to increased collaboration!
- Could lead to an enhanced reputation!
- May result in others sharing more in return!
- Will increase learning opportunities!
- Increase potential cost savings from ideas!
- Reduction in business risk!
- Potential business opportunities!
- Supporting the business community!

### Ask yourself these questions:

- Are you wanting to learn?
- Are you willing to admit you do not "know it all"?
- Will you allow yourself to be humble and even a little vulnerable?
- Are you willing to take the first step by sharing in some form?
- Are you ok with others thinking of you as a possible leader?

The power of sharing extends beyond altruism; it should be a strategic imperative. So, let's embrace the idea of sharing and collaboration, let's foster a culture of openness, and let's seek out meaningful partnerships and alliances. By doing so, we not only enhance our own organization but contribute to a thriving ecosystem where a higher tide raises all ships.

**Share, Learn, Grow!**



**Nicole Vlanich**  
Executive Director  
Automate Canada

## Greetings from the Executive Director of Automate Canada

course that aligns with the challenges and opportunities facing our industry today.

In addition to strengthening our leadership team, we have actively engaged in a variety of events, both as hosts and participants. These events have been instrumental in promoting our members and the industry at large, fostering new partnerships, and creating business opportunities. I have also had the privilege of representing our industry at numerous roundtable discussions with government representatives. These discussions have provided a platform to share the challenges and concerns our industry faces and to advocate for the changes needed to ensure our continued growth and success.

The industrial automation sector in Canada is experiencing a profound transformation, driven by cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and the Internet of Things. These technologies are revolutionizing the way we manufacture, assemble, and deliver products, setting new benchmarks for efficiency, productivity, quality, and sustainability. Our sector is not just keeping pace with global trends; we are at the forefront, leading the way with innovation and excellence.

Canada's strong engineering base, combined with our relentless commitment to innovation, positions us as global leaders in industrial automation. It is inspiring to see Canadian companies not only adopting these advanced technologies but also contributing to their development. This proactive approach ensures that our industry remains competitive on the world stage and continues to thrive in an increasingly complex and dynamic global market.

At Automate Canada, we strive to support our members as they navigate this rapidly changing landscape. Through advocacy, networking opportunities, and professional development, we aim to empower our members to excel. We believe that collaboration is the key to overcoming challenges and seizing the opportunities that lie ahead. By working together, we can continue to drive innovation and ensure the long-term success of our industry.

Looking ahead, it is clear that automation will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of manufacturing. The potential for growth and innovation is immense, and I am excited about what lies ahead for our industry. As we continue to evolve, I encourage all our members to share their feedback and insights. Your input is crucial in guiding the direction of our association, ensuring that the services and events we offer meet your needs and contribute to your success.

I also want to extend an invitation to those who are not yet members of Automate Canada. Our association offers a range of benefits that can help your company thrive in this dynamic industry. Our collective voice is stronger when we stand together, and I would love to discuss how joining Automate Canada can benefit your organization.

Thank you for your continued dedication to excellence and innovation in industrial automation. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient industry that will continue to drive Canada's economic success.



As the Executive Director of both Automate Canada and the Canadian Association of Moldmakers (CAMM), I am honoured to address you in this issue of *Automate Canada Magazine*. This edition is dedicated to highlighting the remarkable advancements and innovations within Canada's industrial automation sector, as well as promoting the incredible work of our members, who are at the heart of this transformation.

Over the past year, Automate Canada has undergone significant growth and evolution. We have welcomed many new board members to our Board of Directors, each bringing a wealth of experience and fresh perspectives. These industry leaders volunteer their time to provide strategic direction for our association, ensuring that we continue to serve the evolving needs of our members. Their insights are invaluable as we chart a

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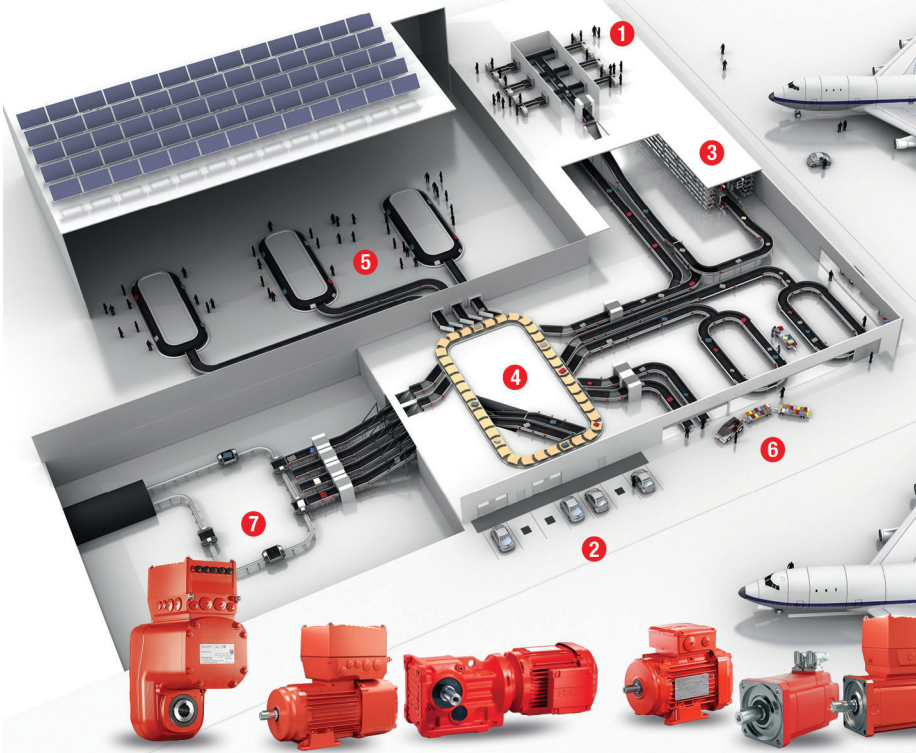


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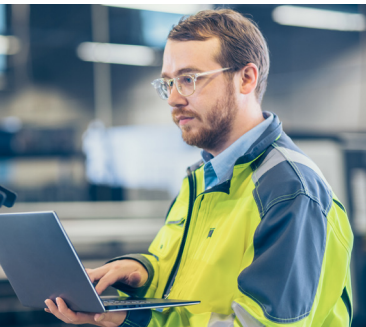
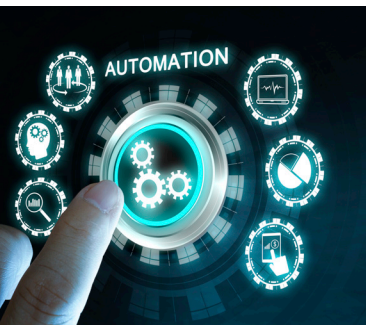
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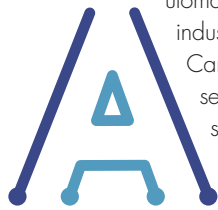
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## All About Automate Canada



Automate Canada is a Canadian industry association representing Canada's industrial automation sector, service providers, and suppliers. Founded in 2018 by the Canadian Association of Moldmakers (CAMM) and supported by Invest Windsor-Essex and NRC-IRAP, Automate Canada is an informative community of vibrant industry leaders who are facilitating the development and adoption of technology.

Canada has established a reputation as a hub for innovation in manufacturing automation and we are proud to be a part of such an impressive industry. Representing one of Canada's most essential technology industries, industrial automation contributes an estimated \$7 billion to Canada's economy yearly and creates approximately 40,000 jobs per year. Our industry contributions continue to grow and expand as technology continues to advance.

Automate Canada leads, advocates, and showcases the Canadian automation industry strengths and capabilities. We assist and promote our members and engage in activities that support business success and innovation expertise. We invest in market and industry research to identify emerging trends and issues within our industry and assist our members with any challenges. We have fostered relationships with trade commissioners, government officials, and international companies to ensure our place as a voice for our members and industry.

Our strategic pillars provide a roadmap to represent our industry locally, nationally, and globally and structures our focus when advocating to government and developing new programs. Our pillars and roadmap also ensure that we are addressing the needs of our member companies.

One of our pillars is Skill and Talent Development within which we work to address skilled labour shortages and provide our members with the knowledge to transition to Industry 4.0 practices and digital transformations. Our efforts are geared towards methods of developing a talent pipeline of skilled and ready personnel interested in advanced manufacturing. We work with partners, such as We Build a Dream and the YMCA, to attract under-represented groups to our

industry and to develop programs to encourage their involvement. We create and provide access to learning and training programs for our members and promote upskilling and reskilling opportunities to ensure our members and their employees are ready to adopt new technologies.

Automate Canada also embraces equality, diversity, and inclusion practices and provides information for our members to adopt these practices. We work with federal and provincial governments to advocate for the importance of skill development in our industry. We develop youth-focused initiatives and work with secondary and post-secondary institutions on curriculum development to ensure the training being provided is keeping up with innovation and preparing youth to enter the workforce, while cultivating an interest in advanced manufacturing.

Another one of our strategic pillars is Branding and Collaboration. Within this pillar we develop partnerships to promote 'Made in Canada' products as good value with high quality. We work with our partners to ensure Canadian industrial automation maintains their reputation as innovative and reliable while promoting our members to increase global relationships and foster business opportunities.

Our strategic pillar, Technology and Innovation, aims to support our members in their transition to Industry 4.0 practices and digital transformations. We promote a culture of innovation and ensure our members have access to funding information, resources, and tools to facilitate their transition. We promote and participate in research and development projects, as well as emerging technologies. We work with our members while developing new technologies and IPs, while performing research and development activities or commercialization plans.

We continue to add programs and services for our members including discount and affinity programs, training and development opportunities, and marketing and promotion support. We have a full calendar of upcoming events, including networking opportunities, trade shows, and learning and training events. We will continue to develop creative and innovative ways to benefit our members.

Please contact [info@automatecanada.ca](mailto:info@automatecanada.ca) if you have any questions.

## Why Should You Join Automate Canada?

Canada has an established global reputation as a hub for innovation in manufacturing automation.

Automate Canada leads and advocates for the Canadian automation industry, assisting and promoting our members.

Automate Canada is a national association representing companies involved in the industrial automation industry as well as service and supplier companies which provide specialized technologies to our industry.

### Our mandate is to:

- Promote and develop the global exposure of the Canadian industrial automation industry.
- Be the voice of our industry to all levels of government. Automate Canada will focus on trade discussions regarding the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) / the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement

(USMCA), the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), Canada-Mercosur, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), as well as on intellectual property, research and development, and commercialization issues.

- Encourage the development and adoption of technology in the manufacturing sector as a whole, as well as in the industrial automation industry, and in partnership with post-secondary educational institutions.
- Develop the next generation of highly skilled personnel through youth-focused initiatives.
- Assist small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in the industrial automation industry to grow their businesses locally and globally.
- Be committed to working with other organizations and associations to build global relationships.

- Assist members to identify opportunities for export.
- Invest in market research and industry research in order to identify emerging issues and trends affecting our industry and to target growing markets.
- Support Canadian SMEs in their path to prosperity, increased competitiveness, and improved capacity domestically as well as in the international marketplace.
- Showcase our industry's capabilities and strengths on a domestic and global stage through a range of direct activities and materials, like printed and digital directories, online presence, trade shows, B2B meetings, and site visits.

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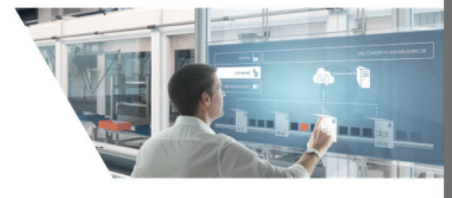
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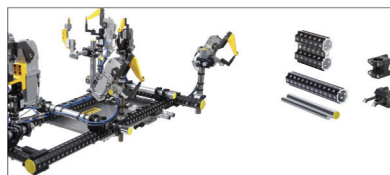
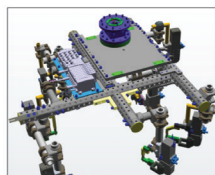
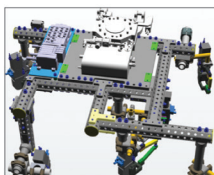
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# AUTOMATION ACROSS ALL INDUSTRIES

Companies that are interested in achieving the best results possible are turning to automation. Here's why.

By Paul Adair, Staff Writer

Technological advancements in automation are assisting many sectors across Canada, allowing companies to work smarter, safer, and in a more productive manner. With automation, industries like construction and manufacturing are able to achieve greater outputs and efficiencies, along with other significant benefits. Here are two examples from Automate Canada member companies that are experiencing success with automation.

## DMS Components

With locations in Oldcastle, Ontario, and Elk Grove Village, Illinois, DMS Components provides precision equipment for the world of automation, such as tools for drilling, tapping, and reaming, as well as tools for finishing. Founded in 1978, the company also licenses and distributes more than 12,000 precision standardized components and ancillary products for use in the injection molding and die casting industries, such as

ejector pins, core pins, sleeve ejectors, blade ejectors, leader pins, bushings, tapered interlocks, sprue bushing, and locating rings.

DMS views automation as the way of the future. Over the last few years, the company has watched more and more of its loyal customers move away from the traditional methods of building injection molds to fully embrace the practice of machine tool integration. This push towards automation is often seen as a way to drive their evolving sustainability goals, as well as to find greater cost efficiencies that will allow them to become more competitive in the global marketplace.

"Our customers will, for example, augment a part for greater weight reduction by building it from plastics – but they still need the strength of steel," says Jeff Battiston, Technical Sales, DMS Components. "To overcome this, the customer will glue plastic and carbon fibre panels together and then, in a



*Rather than turn a blind eye to the benefits of automation, companies like DMS Components view the technology as a way to drive sustainability goals and find cost efficiencies that will help them be more competitive in the global marketplace. Photo courtesy of DMS Components.*

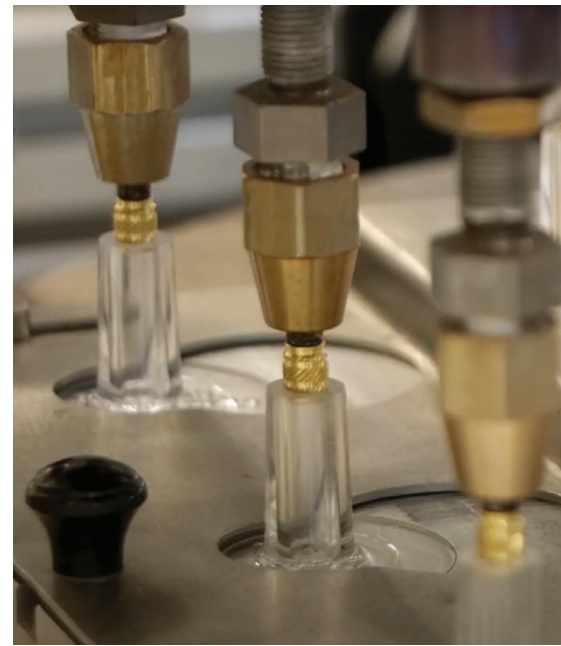
fully automated cell, drill holes and ream slots to streamline the process. The end product user likes this system because, if they need to move holes around or add holes, this kind of system gives them a cost-effective way to do just that."

Because many of its customers also struggle to find enough people to do the job, DMS has seen the benefits of automation in mitigating labour risks. For example, tool makers – especially in the finishing environment – are increasingly moving to robots or cobots (a computer-controlled robotic device designed to

assist a human operator) to grind, polish, or buff products.

"Our EFC-02 electronic force compliance helps them to do all that better than a human ever could," says Battiston. "This system has been used to finish turbine blades, cement structures, signs and numbers, automotive parts, pharma tanks and systems, and dairy tanks – the list is endless."

Looking ahead, DMS Components plans to continue supporting the manufacturing integrators who lead the way with innovative systems. By serving



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the growing demand for automation, the company is positioning itself to be a key player in keeping Canada on the leading edge of sustainability, while also driving the competitive advantage that the nation's brain trust can create.

"Look what the mold industry has done here in Ontario, such as with our continuous improvement and the best in design-and-build – all that knowledge will transfer to whatever this group decides they want to make better," says Battiston. "We plan at DMS Components to be part of that creative process and evolution."

### **SPIROL Industries Ltd.**

SPIROL is a global manufacturer and supplier of engineered components, shims, and fastener installation equipment used for fastening, joining, and assembly.

"You come across SPIROL every day and don't even know it because our products are hidden inside other assemblies," says Shawn Horton, US OEM Application Specialist at SPIROL. "Given our 30,000 standard items across 12 major product lines, you can find us in literally any industry in products that are mechanically fastened together."

SPIROL began with the invention of the 'coiled spring pin' by one of the company's co-founders, Herman Koehl, in 1948. Koehl developed this unique pin to support the requirements of hollow turbine blades for use in jet aircraft engines as an early lightweighting initiative.

In the years since, SPIROL has maintained its competitive edge by



SPIROL uses automation to manufacture more high quality product at a quicker pace. Photo courtesy of SPIROL.


reinvesting back into the company, as well as a steadfast commitment to becoming a leader in production technology. Automation, such as inline inspection machines, impact sensors, automatic binning systems, and automatic packaging equipment, among others, has enabled SPIROL's production team members to manufacture more product at a quicker pace – all the while maintaining a high level of quality that meets or exceeds its customers' expectations.

"Through innovative enhancements to our equipment and the implementation of automation within our processes, we have been able to manufacture products that literally set the industry standard for quality," says Horton. "In the 1980s, we created the Automatic Installation Equipment line to support the feeding and installation of fasteners into customer assemblies and, because SPIROL offers both the engineered fastener and installation equipment, we help our customers get to market quicker with a high quality, profitable product."

Today, SPIROL's installation equipment is used in many markets including agriculture, aerospace, automotive, cosmetic, hand and power tool, heavy equipment, industrial, medical and pharmaceutical, plastic molding, and

many others. The company also uses automatic feeding equipment designed and manufactured in-house at SPIROL to support the manufacturing process of its own product lines.

As producers of both engineered fasteners and fastener installation equipment, SPIROL understands that as much as 75 per cent of the performance of some types of fasteners is directly attributable to the installation process and quality thereof. One example of this is with threaded inserts for plastics.

"All factors that impact installation – including temperature, installation force, and insertion depth – need to be controlled in order to ensure nearly perfect flow of the plastic into the knurls and undercuts to maximize performance," says Horton. "It is nearly impossible to control this without some type of automation and, as competition grows, companies not willing to adopt automation will risk losing market share to companies that offer similar products with better quality and, in some cases, lower prices." 



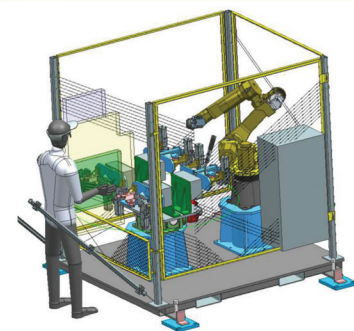
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# TAKING OFF IN AVIATION

The aviation industry needs automation in order to build planes quickly enough to support the immense growth in air travel. Improving safety, sustainability, reliability, and offsetting workforce shortages, are icing on the cake.

By Paul Adair, Staff Writer



According to the International Air Transport Association, the Canadian aerospace sector is expected to grow by more than 50 per cent over the next 20 years, resulting in almost 40 million additional passenger journeys by 2037.

While this is welcome news, the anticipated expansion also brings with it the reality that more aircraft, as well as more workers to build them, will be needed to keep up with demand. In addition, as the aerospace sector grows, it will need to do so with sustainability kept top of mind, not just in terms of emissions but also in the embedded carbon associated with its infrastructure, like airports and runways.

These are all areas where automation will play an increasingly important role.

"Automation is not really about doing more with less; it's really about doing everything better. It's about improving all the other factors of industry that need to be constantly improved on, such as safety, sustainability, and reliability, as

well as the workforce issues we face," says Ontario Aerospace Council (OAC) Communications and Member Relations Officer, Nick Persichilli. For 30 years, OAC has been the voice of Ontario's aerospace manufacturers, as well as various other associate members that serve the sector.

## The benefits of automation

Like much of manufacturing across North America, Canadian aerospace faces a workforce crunch. This is not a new problem but rather one that has been simmering for decades; the older generation of skilled tradespeople is retiring out of the industry, and younger generations appear disinterested in pursuing a career in the trades.

There are several reasons for this, but a lot of it comes down to a misguided belief that the trades are (as they once were) dirty, dark, and dangerous – when, in fact, that could not be further from the truth. The people who work in aerospace today are artisans whose products are still very much made by hand, which is an exacting job that is performed by some of the most

intelligent, skilled, and trained individuals in manufacturing.

It also used to be that when these tradespeople wanted to put two pieces of fuselage together, the metal edges needed to be manually and precisely lined up and held together for someone else to come along and rivet them together. Not today, where the aerospace industry has been transformed by the sophisticated tools it uses, like automation.

"Now we have automated machines that can position the pieces of fuselage together within a micron of where it needs to be and hold it in place for the tradesperson to come along and do the riveting," says Persichilli. "With automation, you want the tradesperson to be able to focus on the tasks that are most important to the process, like riveting, not struggling to keep the pieces together. That's what technologies have now been designed to do."

Aerospace manufacturing is an incredibly precise process with little to no margin for error. Should the automation





be off by even a few microns, it could potentially lead to disaster down the road, which is why there will always be a human component to automation.

"The tolerances these machines have to be built to are so precise that you really need to be careful what you automate, because you might be automating away some of the worker's skill and craftsmanship that helps ensure the aircraft is safe," says Persichilli. "Ultimately, automation is not about replacing workers' jobs; it's about augmenting the ability of workers to do their jobs better."

Where automation shines is in removing the many repetitive and manually-taxing tasks that go into building an aircraft and, as automation technology advances, more of these repetitive tasks will be identified and automated out of the process.

Persichilli points to the philosophy at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Canada Aerospace (MHICA) which is that, when a person becomes physically tired, the quality of their work suffers. The goal of the

company is to then automate those tasks that are physically demanding and exhausting to keep the human fresh and alert.

"That means going task by task, component by component, and looking at which part of the manufacturing process is dumb repetitive work, and what part needs human intelligence and dexterity," says Persichilli.

### **Automation's future in aerospace**

Although potentially invaluable to the aerospace industry, automation cannot be seen as a silver bullet that can solve all the challenges the sector faces. That said, the effectiveness of automation will certainly improve as human / machine interaction becomes more mainstream and commonplace.

"I feel that automation technology will only become smarter, better, more adaptive, and more user friendly, which will be combined with a younger workforce that is increasingly comfortable with the opportunities automation provides," says

Persichilli. "In the future, we're going to see a smoother interplay between aerospace artisan manufacturers and the tools they use, allowing them to do more than they could before, but still allowing them to be artists in their craft."

Looking ahead, Persichilli believes that the primary hurdle the greater adoption of automation will not be cost – it will be cultural and natural human resistance to change. So, for automation to truly take off in aerospace, it will need to have total buy-in from those using it, as well as from the business owners who choose to invest in the technology.

"If you have a management team or a leadership team that is skeptical about automation, it's going to make implementation of those automation tools problematic," says Persichilli. "You need that top-down support, as well as the freedom and time to figure out how automation works best for you. If you don't have that, you will soon discover that your failure with automation is a self-fulfilling prophecy." 🇨🇦

# REFLECTING ON 2023 AND STRATEGIZING FOR 2024

We are proud to say that 2023 and 2024 have been years of growth and success. Looking to 2025 and beyond, we expect the same!

By Nicole Vlanich, Executive Director, Automate Canada



As 2023 concluded, Automate Canada took the time to reflect on our achievements and celebrate the milestones that shaped our journey. The years 2023 and 2024

have been marked by significant growth, driven by active participation in industry events, key organizational developments, and initiatives that set the stage for promising years ahead. Our commitment to advancing Canadian industrial automation and advanced manufacturing remains steadfast as we continue building on our successes.

## A year of dynamic engagement

In 2023, Automate Canada actively connected with industry leaders, promoted our members, and expanded our network. We participated in key industry events, showcasing the innovative capabilities of Canadian industrial automation. Notably, our involvement in the Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference

allowed us to engage with leaders across the sector in discussions about the future of automation. Additionally, our participation in various trade shows underscored our commitment to staying at the forefront of industry trends. These events were critical in forging new partnerships and strengthening existing connections, reinforcing Automate Canada's position as an industry leader.

## Leadership and growth: A new chapter

The year 2023 also marked the beginning of a new leadership chapter for Automate Canada. We welcomed Dave Fortin as our new Chair, and he brought a strong commitment to the growth and success of our association. Under his leadership, we hosted our inaugural independent event, the EV Battery Cell Seminar, which attracted over 100 participants and received overwhelmingly positive feedback. This milestone event was made possible by the collaborative efforts of Dave's team at DataRealm,

whose expertise was crucial in delivering a valuable experience for all attendees.

## 2024: Ambitious plans for growth

Looking ahead to 2024, our focus was on expanding our reach and influence through strategic initiatives. We planned several key events, including a collaborative event with Manufacturing Automation – CALS24, and additional EV Battery Cell Seminars across Ontario. These initiatives aimed to broaden our impact, reach a wider audience, and further establish our leadership in the industrial automation sector.

CALS24 was set to be a premier event, welcoming industry leaders to share insights, explore new ideas, and forge new partnerships. We also hosted our Annual General Meeting during this event, offering members and non-members the opportunity to review our achievements over the past year and discuss our future plans.

In May 2024, I represented both Automate Canada and the Canadian



Association of Moldmakers (CAMM), of which I'm also Executive Director, at NPE, North America's largest plastics trade show, in Orlando, Florida. This event provided a platform to engage with automation companies from across North America and around the world, and we did a fantastic job highlighting the achievements of our members and the strength of Canadian industrial automation.

### **A new Strategic Plan: Share, Learn, Grow, Advocate**

As we entered 2024, we proudly introduced a new Strategic Plan centred around our mission: Share, Learn, Grow, Advocate. This plan reflects our commitment to our members and the industry, emphasizing knowledge exchange, networking, mutual growth, and advocacy. Automate Canada remains dedicated to ensuring that our members' voices are heard, and their interests represented in every aspect of our work.

Membership growth is a top priority for Automate Canada. As a national association, we understand the importance of representing members from all regions of Canada. Our goal is to better serve and advocate for our members by organizing impactful events that bring together diverse companies, create opportunities, and offer valuable insights. We invite our members,

sponsors, and partners to join us in this shared goal. If you know of companies that would benefit from membership or have suggestions for enhancing our offerings, we are eager to hear from you.

### **2024: Achievements and collaboration**

As we approach the final quarter of 2024, we take pride in the progress we have made. From welcoming new board members and member companies to actively participating in government and industry roundtable discussions, we have been fully engaged in representing our members and the sector as a whole.

Our collaboration with the Canadian Association of Moldmakers on advocacy initiatives has been particularly noteworthy. Together, we have worked tirelessly to ensure that the interests of the Canadian advanced manufacturing sector are represented during times of challenge and uncertainty.

We are excited to partner with CAMM on several industry events, including an August educational event with BDC on Financial Management, a September webinar with Corpay, and an HR seminar with CPG Incorporated. These events are designed to provide our members with important and relevant information. In addition to our participation in the 2024

Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference, we look forward to our event with CIBC, where we will provide valuable financial insights to companies during challenging times.

We are also excited to host a Halloween party in October and a Christmas party in November, offering our members the chance to enjoy dinner, drinks, networking, prizes, and dancing. These events underscore our commitment to providing our members with opportunities to learn, grow, and build relationships while also ensuring they have fun along the way.

### **Looking forward to 2025**

As we look toward 2025 and beyond, we do so with excitement and optimism for the continued growth of our association and member companies. We are committed to driving the success of Automate Canada and the broader industry through collaboration, innovation, and unwavering support for our members.

I would like to encourage you to reach out to me at [nicole@automatecanada.ca](mailto:nicole@automatecanada.ca) with any recommendations, requests, questions, or feedback. Together, we will continue to build on the successes of the past year and look forward to a bright future for Automate Canada and its members. 🍁

# GLOBAL VEHICLE SYSTEMS: BUILDING A HISTORY IN AUTOMATION

By Paul Adair, Staff Writer

**F**ounded in 1999 by brothers Mario and Paul Boucher, Global Vehicle Systems has grown to become experts in the design and build of automated assembly cells for plastic fluid delivery systems, power train and engine components, and interior and exterior trim assemblies for North

American automotive OEM and Tier 1 and 2 parts.

"My family has a long history with automation – one that I am happy to be a part of," says Stephane Boucher, Vice President, Operations at Global, and son of founder Mario Boucher. "We started out painting exterior vehicle components, which is where the name Global Vehicle Systems comes from, but it wasn't long afterwards

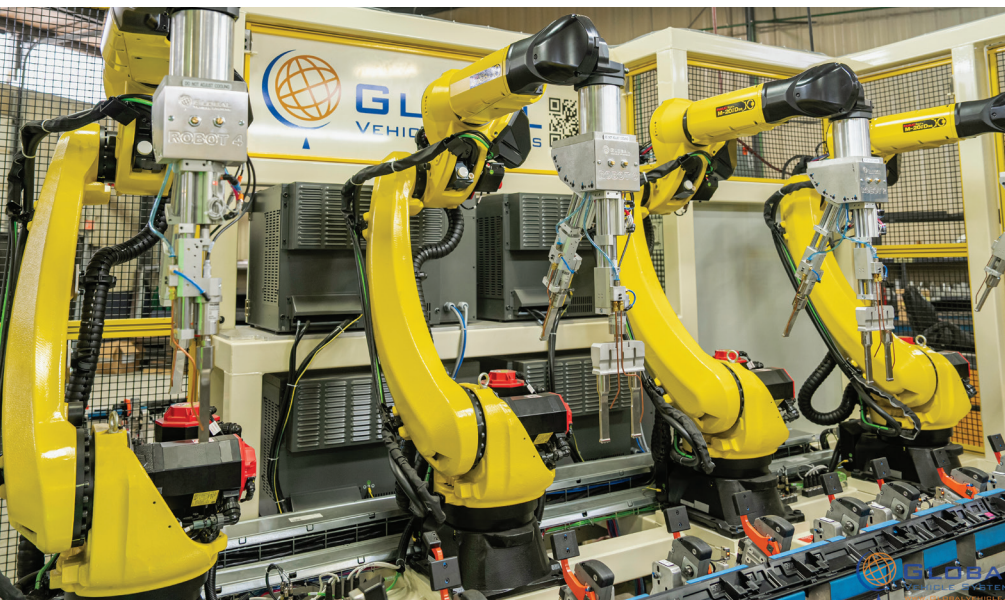


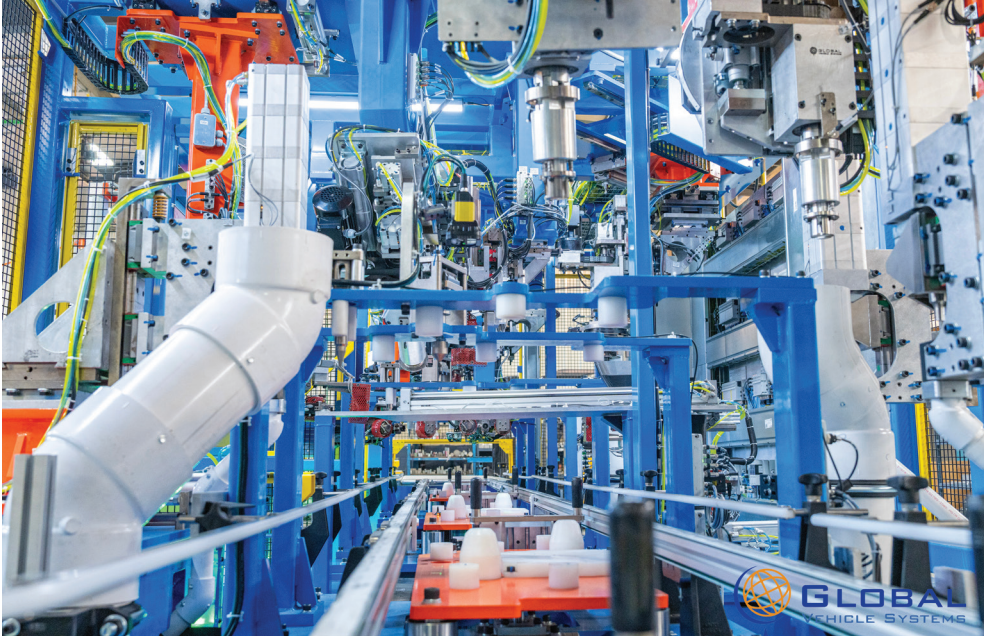
that we went back to our automation and tooling roots, designing and building custom automation systems."

Originally serving the southern Ontario region, Global has expanded its reach and now assists a diverse range of customers along the 'automotive beltway,' stretching from Montreal, Quebec, through Ontario, and into Michigan and Ohio towards the southern United States, and as far down as Puebla, Mexico.

Located in Chatham-Kent and Windsor, Ontario, Global today has more than 40,000 square feet of facility space and employs more than 50 engineers and skilled trade workers, some of whom have been with the company since the beginning. Global has created a workplace culture that is very entrepreneurial, yet one that also focuses on maintaining a healthy work / life balance for its employees. Global embraces innovation and continuously seeks out new and creative ways to solve the myriad of manufacturing challenges its customers face. The company does this by fostering an environment of collaboration, discussion, and teamwork, and promotes continuous learning and improvement.

"We recognize that diverse perspectives contribute to better results and, by leveraging the collective expertise of our employees and industry partners, we enhance the quality of our products and services," says Boucher. "We encourage our employees and partners to stay informed about market trends, industry best practices, and emerging technologies. By staying informed, we better position ourselves to engineer state of the art solutions."





“We encourage our employees and partners to stay informed about market trends, industry best practices, and emerging technologies. By staying informed, we better position ourselves to engineer state of the art solutions.”

- Stephane Boucher, Global Vehicle Systems

#### A focus on results

Global differentiates itself from the competition with a focus on engineering and innovation that is difficult to find anywhere else. Using advanced engineered scope development, simulated design processes / digital twin, and verified execution, the company strives to deliver solutions that maximizes their customers’ return on investment.

But the company’s focus also extends beyond immediate financial gains, emphasizing the importance of long-term sustainability and growth. Global does this by making strategic decisions that contribute to the lasting success of its partnerships and investments, as well as the overall resilience in the market.

“Our true value add is our innovation and how that advances the customers’ automation needs,” says Boucher. “We take the time to truly understand what the customer requires and then find the right level of automation or robotics to satisfy that need – never selling more when it’s not needed. That’s the advanced engineering philosophy we have at Global Vehicle Systems.”

#### Membership has its benefits

Global is proud of its membership with Automate Canada, appreciating the work the organization does on its members’ behalf. Boucher took the extra step and expressed interest in serving as an association Director because he recognized the tangible benefits Automate Canada provides in helping small to mid-size businesses compete in an increasingly competitive – and global – automotive environment.

“Automate Canada brings together the collective power of its members, which can really benefit the advancement of not just automation, but overall manufacturing in Canada,” says Boucher. “We’ve long been part of the automation community in Ontario, and the association has helped to elevate us to be able to compete with other industry leaders around the world, whether that’s in automotive or automation.”

Recognizing that its staff and customers form the communities it does business in, Global is also a strong proponent of helping out the people of the Chatham-

Kent and Windsor region. The company supports organizations like the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, as well as local youth sports organizations. Global staff also choose a charity every Christmas to support, and the company matches the funds raised by employees.

“We’ve been fortunate to be around for 25 years, and we are immensely grateful to the community that has supported us all these years,” says Boucher. “That is why we feel the need to give something back to those that might be less fortunate or even just a little support of their own.”

#### The road ahead

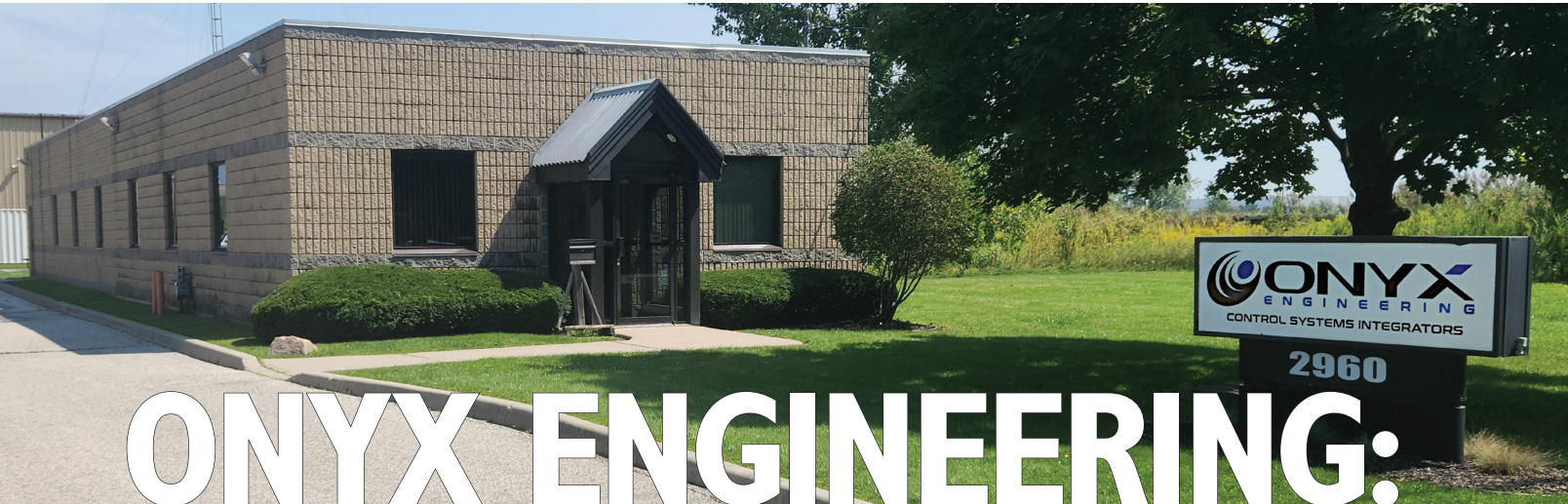
This year, Global celebrated the milestone of 25 years in business. Because of this, the company is currently in the process of freshening up its logo and website to more effectively communicate its products and services to rest of the world.

“The name ‘Global Vehicle Systems’ doesn’t really tell our whole story, so we are rebranding somewhat to ensure that everybody understands what we have been doing for the last 25 years,” says Boucher. “The time has gone by so quickly and, while it’s good to think about the past, we are excited for what the future holds.”

Going forward, Global will continue to invest heavily in education and advancing its skill sets, both as a company and for the individuals who work there, as well as looking at diverse approaches to better serve its clients.

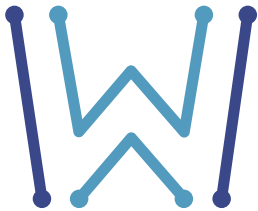
“The process of learning and continuous improvement is never over, and we expect to see lots of innovation and change in the future, which we will consider as we meet the evolving needs of our customers,” says Boucher. “While, after 25 years in business we consider ourselves one of the senior automation providers in our area, we know that we are far from done.” 🍁

Learn more at [www.globalvehicle.ca](http://www.globalvehicle.ca).



# ONYX ENGINEERING: ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS ARE WHAT THEY DO BEST

By Paul Adair, Staff Writer



Windsor-based ONYX Engineering Ltd. has been supplying innovative solutions to its customers across North America for more than 30 years. The company was co-founded by Dave Nixon and Dino Oliva in 1991 and has since grown to become an award-winning control systems integrator with major

vertical segments in a wide range of different sectors.

ONYX services include controls system integration, factory automation, OT/network services, panel fabrication, and process automation in various industries. The company's industry verticals are automotive, food and beverage, life sciences, logistics/warehousing, metal forming, petrochemical, power generation and water/wastewater.

The company fosters a culture that is both nurturing and professional. Working hard as a team, ONYX encourages its staff to be constantly upgrading their skills and learning new tools, which not only benefits the employees, but also the customer. This investment to its employees' professional development contributes to ONYX's extremely high retention rate, with some employees staying with the company for 15 or 20 years, or longer in some cases.

This has meant that ONYX is able to provide its customers with many decades of cumulative experience to meet their operational needs, as well as efficiently provide solutions that are tailor-made for their unique challenges.

"We are an engineering solutions provider that is agnostic to brand, and we lead with the best solution out there for our clients to achieve their goals," says Dino Oliva, Vice President. "Our customers expect us at the table in discussions and to be that trusted



partner who makes technology recommendations. By taking a holistic approach to their processes and infrastructure, we help make improvements that fit within their budget."

### Three decades of milestones

From obtaining its license to offering professional engineering services to the public to establishing its panel fabrication facility to later obtaining its Electric Testing Laboratories (ETL) accreditation, ONYX has celebrated many milestone moments.

The company has been recognized numerous times as an award winner in major construction projects and, since 2020, ONYX has been listed on CFE Media's (Control Engineering and Plant Engineering magazines) *System Integrator Giants* lists, which is comprised of the top 100 system integrators in the CFE Media Global System Integrator Database ranked on total system integration revenue.

ONYX is also the first – and only – recognized Rockwell silver level systems integrator appointed in its region – only one of six recognized system integrators in the province of Ontario. This allows ONYX to offer its superior application expertise to customers wanting a single resource for their Rockwell Automation-based equipment.

While there have been amazing successes in the company's history, there have also been challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. "We worked through the pandemic because much of our work was designated as being essential services, so it was challenging keeping our people safe while also maintaining the

high level of service that we've become known for," says Oliva. "During that time, navigating the border to continue supporting and completing projects in the United States became an issue. Because of this, it's taken a little longer for us to re-establish ourselves in those markets."

### Giving back

ONYX strongly believes in giving back to the community it serves. The company is a proud supporter of numerous charitable organizations, providing both financial support as well as volunteers to worthwhile initiatives, such as the Terry Fox Run. Since 2005, the company has raised more than a million dollars for the Tecumseh Terry Fox Run event.

Another important initiative has been the Kind Minds' 'iCan Bike' program, which provides specialized equipment to help individuals with special needs, eight years or older, learn to ride a bike independently.

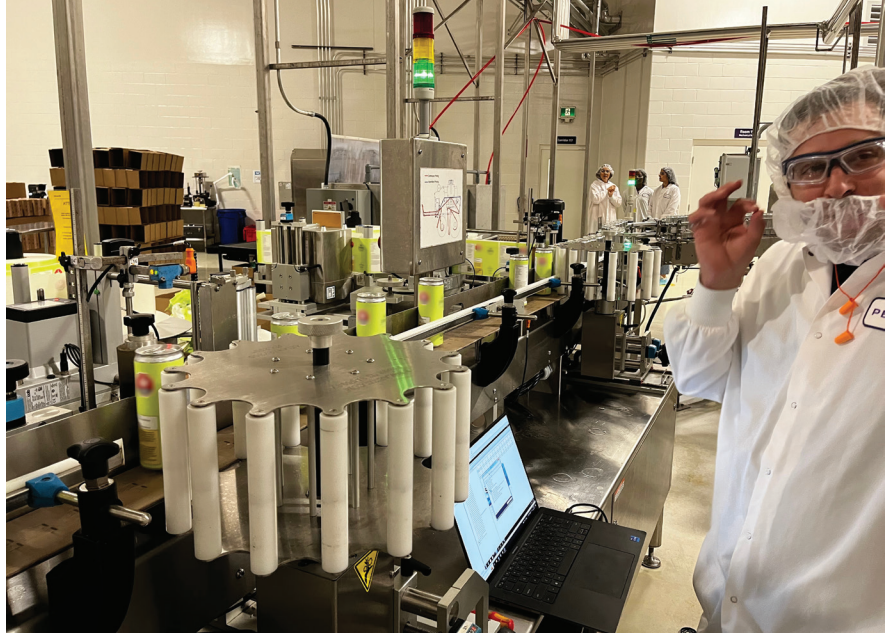
"We understand that the vast majority of people with disabilities never experience the thrill of independently riding a two-wheel bicycle during their lifetime," says Oliva. "For example, recent research shows that over 80 per cent of people with autism and 90 per cent of people with Down Syndrome never learn to ride a two-wheel bicycle. Defying these odds is why we exist."

ONYX is also proud of its membership with Automate Canada, seeing the association as a fantastic resource that allows companies in the business of automation to have a voice and influence change.

"Automate Canada shares with us the latest news of activities within the industry and government, keeping us informed about funding for clients and new opportunities for partnerships," says Oliva. "We know that if Canada does not increase its productivity output, we will struggle in the world market. We have to automate or die, and Automate Canada helps us do that."

### Eyes on the horizon

Looking ahead, ONYX will continue serving its clients through modernization and innovation, using technology to overcome challenges. As part of this, ONYX has been named a solution provider for GE Vernova (Formerly GE Digital) and,



ONYX Engineering believes in investing in employee professional development, which benefits the employee, company, and customers.

more recently, become a new integrator for Emerson Industrial Automation and Control System.

"Whether it is labour upskilling or updating safety around existing machinery, we are always modernizing and making operations more competitive and compliant,"

says Chris Uszynski, Business Development Manager. "Both as an industry and as a nation, we have to accept we can be more competitive and focus on our future through automation, and this is exactly what we will continue to do here at ONYX Engineering." 🍁

Learn more at [www.onyxengineering.com](http://www.onyxengineering.com).

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Mitutoyo Canada Inc. .... 21

## AUTOMATION CONTROL, INTEGRATORS

Morrell Group .....9

## CUSTOM AUTOMATED WELDING AND ASSEMBLY LINES

CenterLine..... outside back cover

## DESIGN AND BUILD OF CUSTOM MACHINERY, AUTOMATION, AND MATERIAL HANDLING

Ro-Matt International.....10

## HYGENIC DESIGN FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING

Rittal Limited ..... 22

## INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Automation Direct .....inside back cover

## INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION PROGRAMS

St. Clair College.....8

## INNOVATIVE AUTOMATION SOLUTIONS

Cowper Inc. .... 13

## INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISTS

Black Controls  
Company Inc. ....inside front cover

## MOTION IN AUTOMATION

Tunkers Canada Inc. ....10

## SINGLE-SOURCE AUTOMATION SOLUTIONS

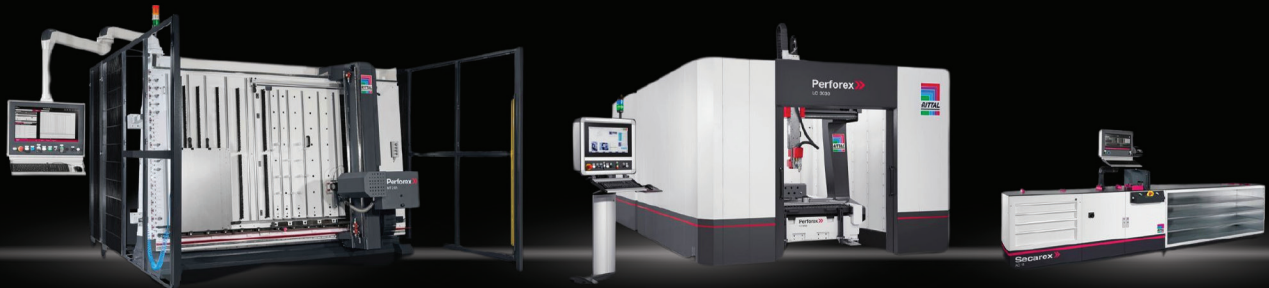
Sew-Eurodrive Company of Canada Ltd. ....6

## SURFACE FINISH TECHNOLOGY

Mirka Canada Inc. ....12

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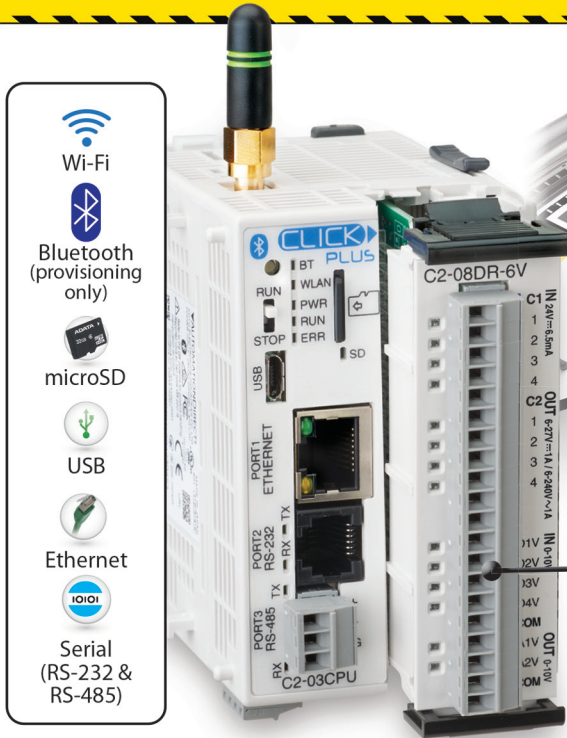


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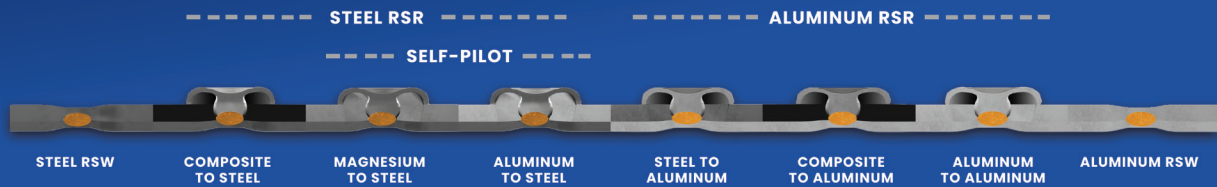
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