

Africa's budding 5G infrastructure provides an unparalleled opportunity for growth in local manufacturing

The rapid deployment of 5G networking has the potential to unleash the power of the Smart Factory to enable globally competitive manufacturing capabilities in Africa.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Johannesburg, 7 June 2022: Over the past few years, technology experts have been extolling the potential of 5G technology to transform how we operate in a highly connected modern world. Buzz words such as Smart Homes and Smart Cities have worked their way into discussions at every level of society. In more recent months, the deployment of 5G networks across South Africa has taken these ideas from hypothetical scenarios to actionable opportunities, particularly for those in the manufacturing sector.

We are already accustomed to living in responsive homes and Smart offices, thanks to the power of WiFi, and it makes sense that the next frontier is bringing the power of connectivity to the factory floor. While standard WiFi can support several networked devices in a home or office space, this technology was never well-suited for industrial applications. The thousands of sensors and other devices in a manufacturing or warehouse setting demand a more flexible, robust, and secure network solution, which 5G and Edge Computing provide.

Smart factory solutions are now offering huge advantages for early adopters in security, labor productivity, and capacity utilization, to name a few. In a [recent study conducted by Deloitte and the Manufacturer's Alliance for Productivity and Innovation \(MAPI\)](#), respondents cited double-digit gains in labour productivity (12%), factory capacity utilization (11%), and total production output (10%) during the previous three years as a result of Smart Factory initiatives.

The benefits of adopting Smart Manufacturing processes are as far-reaching as they are practical, and the initial costs of deployment are quickly recovered with savings and increased capacity across the manufacturing process. According to the Deloitte study, early adopters of AI in manufacturing can pilot as many as ten different initiatives, targeting efficiencies at multiple levels simultaneously. With 5G, these trailblazing manufacturers can connect more devices and collect more and new types of data, enabling them to drive production, reduce costs, and remain at the forefront of the industry.

Maintaining an agile supply chain and efficient manufacturing operations has never been of greater importance than in the wake of the global pandemic. Manufacturers are in worldwide a race to exploit the potential of Smart manufacturing to respond to rapidly changing supply and demand pressures. Raw materials are in short supply, labour practices have had to change, and demand for manufactured goods remains high both during and after the pandemic. The need for efficiency has never been greater, and the Smart Factory is the only solution that has the potential to answer our current challenges.

5G is increasingly enabling industrial organizations to take advantage of powerful edge computing to bridge the traditional gap between digital and physical operations. African manufacturers are at a distinct advantage when it comes to adopting Smart Factory solutions, as we are building infrastructure at the same rate as those in the traditionally more developed markets. At no time in recent history have developing economies had a better opportunity to level the playing field in global supply chain dynamics and manufacturing capacity. With the current pressures on the South African economy, this is an opportunity that cannot be missed if we want to see the economy recover and thrive in the post-pandemic world.

The Manufacturing Indaba, taking place on 21 – 22 June at the Sandton Convention Centre, is meticulously designed to accommodate industrialists with extensive technological knowledge and those who lack proficiency in this arena. Attending manufacturers will have an opportunity to gain the knowledge and insight needed to gradually infiltrate relevant digital solutions into their current business practices, enabling them to remain or become globally competitive. Furthermore, exclusive debates will focus on well-versed technological industrialists to advance their existing knowledge and empower them to take their manufacturing operations to new heights. The Manufacturing Indaba is the ideal platform for African manufacturers to harness the unique opportunities awaiting them and place them on an equal footing with international economies.

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About the Manufacturing Indaba

Manufacturing activities boost the value generated in an economy by creating activity further along value chains, from raw materials to finished products. African governments have recognised that a resilient manufacturing sector paves the way for a nation to provide a quality standard of living for its citizens.

Supporting the growth of manufacturing in Africa, the 9th edition of the Manufacturing Indaba will be hosted from the **21 – 22 June 2022** at the Sandton Convention Centre.

The Manufacturing Indaba is the business meeting of choice for manufacturers!

<https://manufacturingindaba.co.za/register-conference-jhb/>

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