

Deploying a Group-Wide Digital Operational Excellence Program

How to structure a sustainable, scalable, and value-driven multi-site deployment.



70% of manufacturers never move beyond the pilot stage

Today's uncertain business environment (political instability, wars, economic volatility etc.) highlight the need for greater flexibility. This requires leveraging data to inform and improve decision-making. According to a McKinsey study, 94% of companies that digitalized their operations maintained business continuity during these periods, a finding confirmed by our 2026 French Industry Barometer.

However, when it comes to scaling deployment, nearly 70% become stuck in pilot or deployment phases and are therefore unable to fully realize the return on investment of digitization.



The main reason is that sites develop their own operational excellence practices locally: meeting formats, performance indicators, tracking tools, and problem-solving methods all differ from one site to another. As a result, when a group seeks to deploy an initiative at scale, it encounters significant fragmentation, as well as a lack of resources and knowledge.



At Fabriq,

we have deployed more than 1000 sites across over 200 customers, including major industrial groups. Through this experience, we have identified the best practices for successfully scaling a digitalization project.

This white paper will help you both gain a better understanding of the pitfalls to avoid during your digital transformation and identify the best practices to adopt when deploying a solution such as Fabriq.

The 8 Pillars of a Successful Deployment

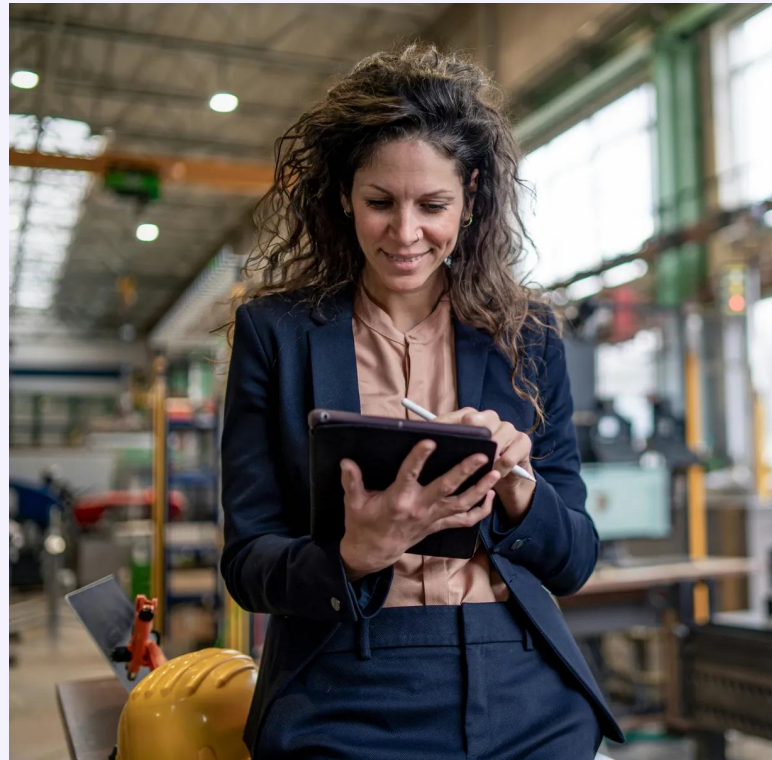
We have identified a number of drivers and principles that enable the successful scaling of a digitalization project across an entire industrial group.

1 A Digital Transformation Roadmap

Before anything else, it is essential to have a medium- and long-term plan and vision for your digital transformation. This transformation plan must be defined at the group level and supported by champions within production sites. Although the overall vision and governance of the transformation should be managed centrally, it is necessary and important to leave room for flexibility and autonomy at the site level. This allows you to foster innovation, encourage a culture of change, and test a greater number of solutions.

The transformation priorities within your roadmap will depend on your maturity level and ambitions, but it is not necessary to launch complex transformation programs to generate value from digital technologies.

It is at the roadmap level that you should define your objectives and success metrics. It is essential to clearly identify the expected benefits, as these objectives will determine both transformation priorities and solution selection.



2 Executive Sponsorship

Strong executive sponsorship is essential in any transformation initiative. Specifically, leadership support is required to:



Drive change throughout the organization



Set, prioritize, and arbitrate key decisions



Centralize and organize the transformation effort

If group leadership is not actively involved in the transformation, it will be impossible to scale the project across all plants.

The 8 Pillars of a Successful Deployment

3 Operational Support

Having local champions at each site is essential to the success of the transformation. Their proximity to day-to-day operations enables them to:

Facilitate change smoothly by supporting end users through targeted training;

Capture and relay feedback from the field, quickly identifying friction points and improvement opportunities, thereby avoiding frustration.

These support roles do not need to be dedicated full-time to the project; they can be fulfilled by operational personnel. However, it is important to select individuals who have sufficient time to dedicate to the initiative and who are genuinely committed to and engaged in the change process.

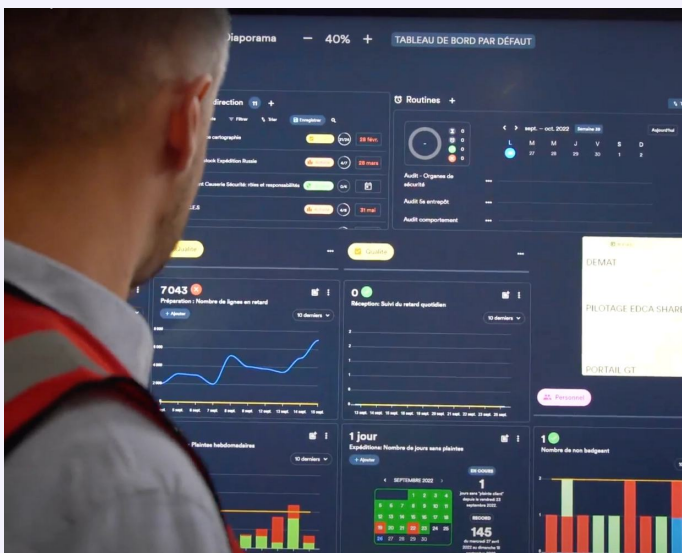


4 Putting the User at the Center of the Approach

The primary success factor of any digitalization project is placing the end user at the heart of the initiative.

This means going to the shop floor, speaking with end users, and understanding their real challenges. You must gain the enthusiasm of frontline teams by involving them in the process.

Experience consistently shows that sites that begin with technical considerations rather than operational needs struggle much more to secure engagement and buy-in from operational teams.



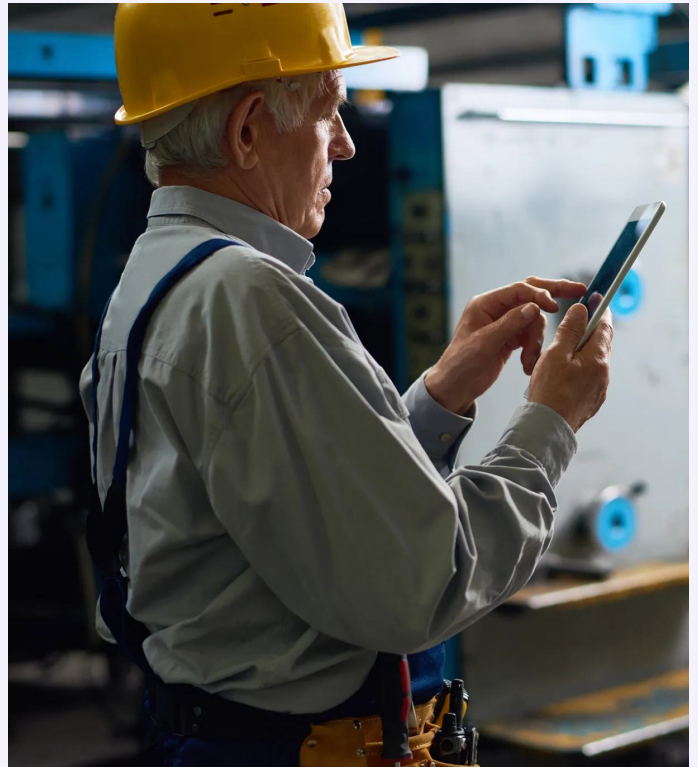
The 8 Pillars of a Successful Deployment

5 An Agile Approach

According to the Chaos Report published by the Standish Group, fewer than 30% of manufacturers adopt agile project management practices, despite success rates of 39% compared to only 11% for traditionally managed projects.

It is therefore essential to break projects into small phases that are quick to implement and easy to scale.

In practical terms, there is little value in fully deploying one plant and then fully deploying another in a linear fashion. Instead, identify the key functionalities to deploy, test them in a pilot plant, and then roll them out in parallel across multiple plants through short deployment phases (15 days to 1 month). The objective is to achieve rapid results, involve the entire organization, and smooth the deployment process.

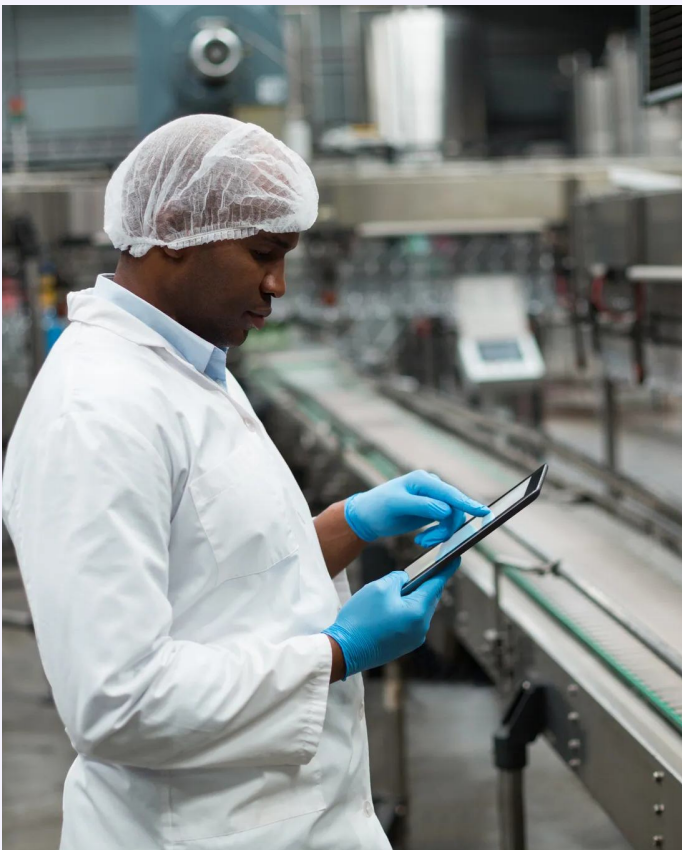


6 An Integrated Approach

This means that the transformation must not be carried out in silos: the software and technologies implemented must be integrated into a comprehensive approach. In concrete terms, this means connecting the software to each other. To do this, it is necessary to identify which data to connect and what the value of this connection is.

Furthermore, processes will be impacted. Having an integrated approach means having identified these processes, adapted them if necessary, and integrated them into the digitalization process. It is crucial to avoid asymmetries due to different coexisting systems because no one has been able to make a decision and streamline them.

This vision must be applied not only at the site level but also at the organizational level: this approach must integrate the software implemented, the data, as well as the investments, skills, and technologies.



The 8 Pillars of a Successful Deployment

7 The Right Infrastructure

If you want to digitalize your operations, it is essential to have the appropriate minimum infrastructure in place. For example, if you want to provide your operators with a solution that enables them to conduct Gemba walks or report issues in real time on production lines, you must have:

 **Internet connectivity**

 **Devices (smartphones or tablets) and displays**

Far too many manufacturers overlook this dimension and realize during deployment that the solution is simply unusable because the necessary equipment is not available.



8 Scalable and Usable Data

To leverage data, which is the lifeblood of digital transformation, you must identify the data you want to capitalize on.

Once the key data has been identified, it must be made usable. If you want to reuse data, it is essential to know where it comes from, what its quality is, how it is processed, and how it can be extracted and reused. Mature organizations generally have data lakes connected to BI or simulation software.

It is therefore necessary to design a data architecture that makes information accessible and actionable. In addition, any new solutions that are implemented must be able both to enrich and be enriched by the data that already exists.

The 7-Step Playbook for Scaling a Digital Tool

1 Define Your Macro Objectives

Before launching your project, it is necessary to define high-level objectives aligned with your Industry 4.0 roadmap. These may include accelerating operational problem-solving, improving team productivity, or sustaining your operational excellence program over the long term.

Once these macro objectives have been established, you should define more detailed objectives. Some will relate to project management, such as deployment speed, user satisfaction, or implementation costs. Others will relate directly to the transformation itself.

2 Identify Your Plant's Value Drivers:

Before deploying a digital tool at scale, it is essential to clearly identify the value drivers of your industrial sites—that is, the operational levers that have a direct impact on performance. This step helps connect your digital initiative to concrete, measurable outcomes and prevents the deployment from being perceived as a purely technological project.

Value drivers vary depending on the industrial context, but they are generally linked to key challenges such as productivity, quality, cost, lead times, and safety. The objective is to understand the critical performance indicators (KPIs) at your sites and identify the root causes that influence them. For example: unplanned downtime, micro-stoppages, scrap and rework, and changeover times.

To do this, it is recommended to rely on existing data sources (MES, CMMS, Excel spreadsheets, shop floor management routines) as well as the operational knowledge of frontline teams. Discussions with frontline managers, production leaders, and support teams are essential to identify daily pain points and prioritize improvement opportunities.



This will allow you to:

- prioritize high-value use cases;
- build a strong business case for deployment;
- align stakeholders around concrete objectives;
- facilitate team buy-in by quickly demonstrating tangible benefits.

The 7-Step Playbook for Scaling a Digital Tool

3 Select a Lead Site Representative of Your Organization:

The choice of the pilot site will be critical to the success of the project. The objective is to test the solution on a site that is representative of your group's operational excellence maturity. This will help you better anticipate large-scale deployment and identify key attention points and deployment methodologies.

It is essential to align the various stakeholders:



group-level project leaders



site director



site project manager



Selecting a pilot site will also allow you to refine the success criteria together with these new stakeholders. Within the pilot site, you should identify production lines or autonomous units that are willing to participate in the pilot. The selection criteria are similar to those used for choosing the pilot site itself: the lines should be representative of your operations and maturity level, and they should not be overloaded with operational activities that would compromise testing.

Support teams should also be included, as they typically participate in performance meetings and exchange information with shop floor teams. Since action plans will naturally be assigned to them, they must have access to and test the application as well.

The first phase of the pilot focuses on finalizing objectives and identifying the issues and needs of the pilot lines. You can then launch the testing period with the selected teams while keeping the pilot objectives firmly in mind.

To maximize learning during the pilot phase, it is important to give end users a degree of freedom. They should be able to test use cases that were not initially planned or expand beyond the original scope.

While the approach leading up to the pilot phase is largely top-down, the pilot itself should adopt a bottom-up mindset. By giving users sufficient autonomy, you allow advantages, friction points, and innovation opportunities to emerge naturally. You will often discover benefits and use cases you had not initially anticipated.



The 7-Step Playbook for Scaling a Digital Tool

4 Assess Maturity and Define Standards:

Preparing for large-scale deployment requires an analysis of the maturity of site data and processes. This phase is critical because it marks the transition from a pilot initiative to a true group-wide deployment approach. In fact, 80% of the success of a group deployment project depends on this stage.

Alongside this maturity assessment, you must identify the standards for using the software. These standards include: use cases, usage methodologies, configuration guidelines, and integration with other systems (such as MES and CMMS in the case of a performance management solution).

Implementing a performance management solution introduces new ways of working and modifies existing processes. During the standards definition phase, it is essential to capitalize on as much learning as possible from the pilot. This remains a bottom-up exercise that requires spending time on the shop floor and engaging directly with end users.

The data and process maturity analysis will allow you to prioritize deployment use cases and map process flows. It will also help define three levels of application adoption: basic, intermediate, or advanced. You will also be able to prioritize integrations with third-party software to reduce duplicate data entry and maximize the value of your data.

5 Manage Change:

Any transformation initiative requires effective change management.

This begins by identifying the various elements and stakeholders that will be impacted by the transformation. Processes, data management practices, teams, and individuals will all be affected. The transformation will impact the entire organization—from operators to plant directors—albeit in different ways. Communication therefore needs to be adapted to each audience.



Change Management Guide:
For more advice on managing change

[download our dedicated guide!](#)



The 7-Step Playbook for Scaling a Digital Tool

6 Plan the Rollout

Deployment depends on two variables: the scope of use cases and the scope of users. Deployment speed will be the result of these two dimensions. To distribute the workload effectively, we recommend rapidly deploying a small number of essential use cases to all employees within the same organizational unit.

This approach helps:



trigger change across the entire organization



minimize situations where teams must work across multiple systems



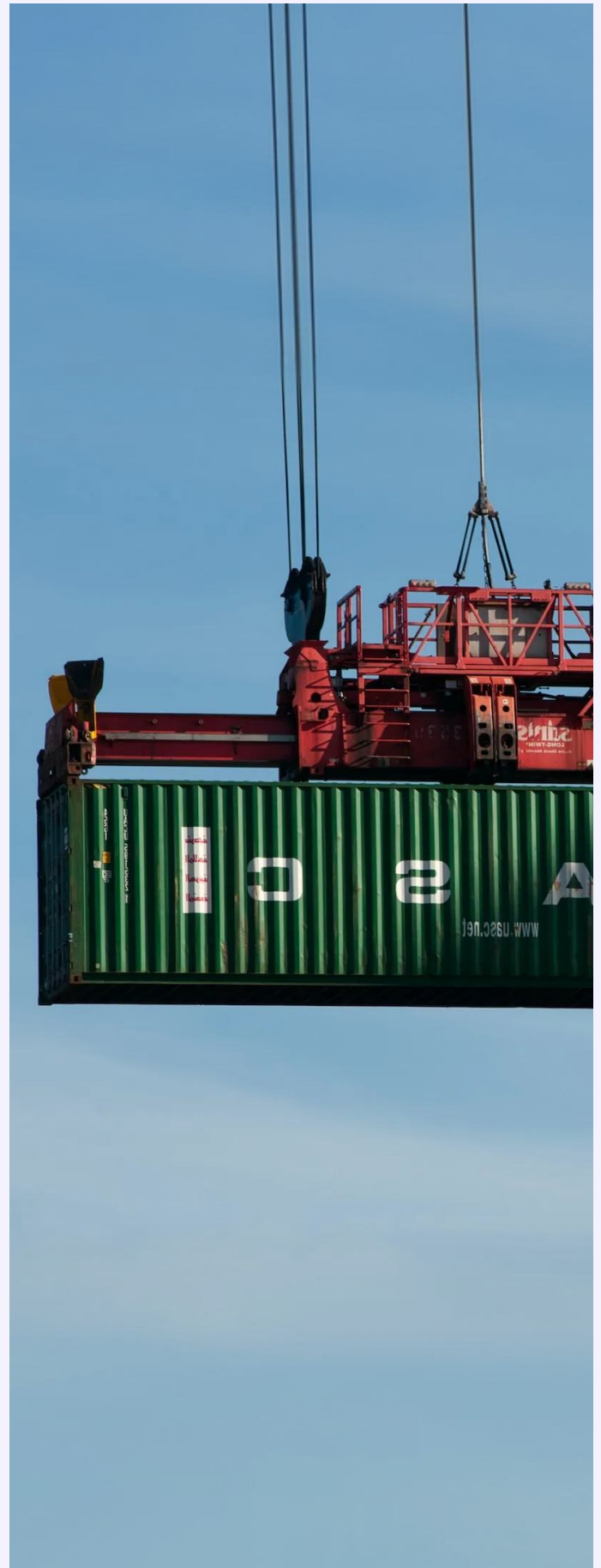
smooth the user onboarding process



increase deployment agility

During the pilot phase, the goal is to test a larger number of use cases with a smaller group of users. During deployment, the objective shifts to reaching the entire organization with a predefined set of use cases.

During the standardization phase, you will have defined the three deployment stages (basic, intermediate, and advanced). You now need to plan the site deployments, taking these stages into account. Going through distinct maturity stages in usage will allow you to deploy multiple production sites in parallel. The planning of these deployments must consider the maturity stages (determined during the analysis phase), the desired change at each site, and the available time at each site (they must not be subject to operational overload).



The 7-Step Playbook for Scaling a Digital Tool

7 Monitor the Deployment

The deployment monitoring and support provided to the sites will vary and depend on two distinct phases: a ramp-up phase and a run phase.

Digital transformation changes both processes and ways of working. As a result, there will be a transition period during which sites are deploying the solution, followed by a run phase where they fully leverage the software's capabilities.

Ramp-Up Phase:



develop team capabilities



manage change



make minor adjustments to account for local differences

Run Phase:



continuously improve the application



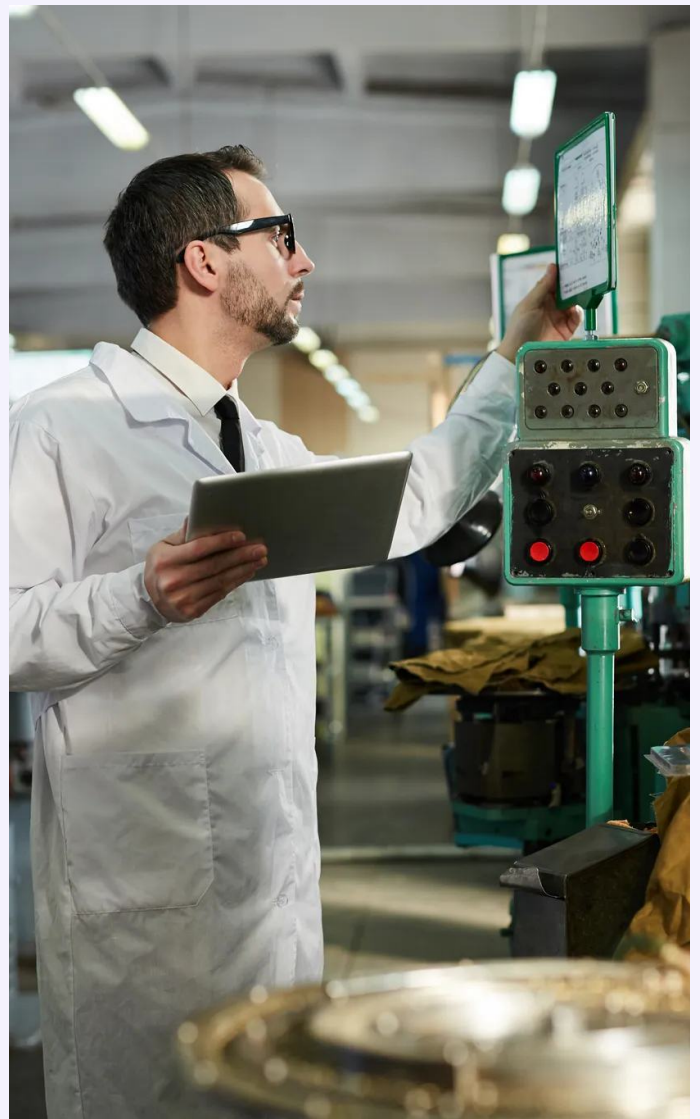
increase team maturity in operational excellence topics



continuously improve processes

During the first two months of use, we recommend that group project leaders hold weekly one-on-one meetings with the project managers at each site undergoing deployment. The objective is to gather feedback, understand friction points, and address them internally or with your solution provider.

Once the solution reaches a steady-state operating mode, we recommend quarterly reviews with site project leaders. Depending on maturity levels, geographic proximity, and common interests, several sites can be reviewed within the same meeting.



The Role of Digital Technology in Scaling Your Deployment

The digital tool you choose to deploy should not be viewed solely as an end goal, but also as an enabler of its own successful deployment. When used effectively, it can significantly facilitate the structuring, acceleration, and long-term sustainability of your initiative at scale.

In a multi-site environment, one of the primary challenges is ensuring consistency of practices without creating operational rigidity. Digital tools provide a common framework (standards, routines, and KPIs) while still allowing flexibility for local adaptation. They therefore become a true operational support system for your operational excellence program.

More specifically, a solution like Fabriq can support you in several key areas:



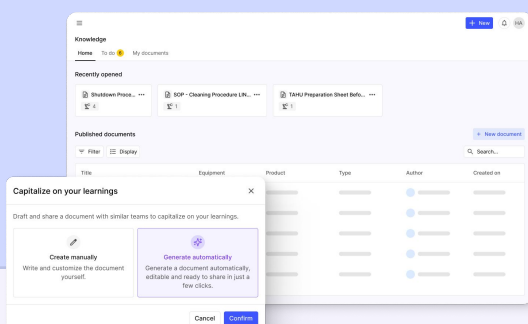
Standardize operational practices

Fabriq enables organizations to formalize and distribute common standards across all sites, including management routines, problem-solving methods, meeting structures, and performance indicator tracking. This facilitates a consistent deployment and reduces variation between sites



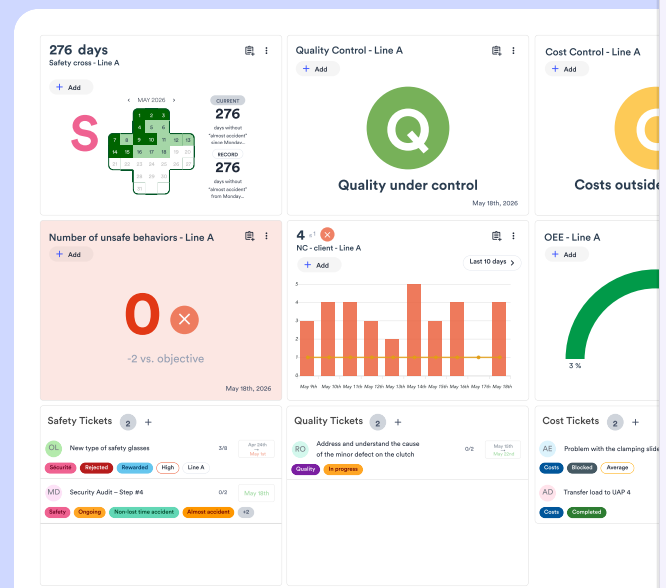
Centralize and leverage organizational knowledge

Fabriq captures learnings from the shop floor, shares them across all your sites, and turns them into measurable improvements so that each problem is solved once, not repeatedly. Transform problem-solving activities, lessons learned, and best practices into structured documents directly from your existing Fabriq workflows. Generate action plans to track knowledge acquisition and ensure that every lesson learned becomes a measurable and traceable improvement.



Improve visibility and performance management

Fabriq provides real-time visibility into both operational performance and deployment progress. Group teams can monitor adoption, identify friction points, and adjust support efforts accordingly.



Facilitate change management

A structured tool like Fabriq guides users through their new practices on a daily basis. By embedding standards directly into the tool, it reduces perceived complexity and promotes faster, more consistent adoption across the organization.

Real-World Example from an Industry Leader: Bel

Context and Challenges

A Robust but Non-Digitalized Operational Excellence Program

Since 2013–2014, Bel Group has been deploying a common operational excellence program across its 28 manufacturing sites worldwide. This program is built on uniform standards covering quality, production, industrial performance, and safety. Each plant follows the same group standards while maintaining its own local roadmap, adapted to its maturity level and specific business challenges.

Despite the strength of the program, several major limitations emerged over time:

- Multiplication of tools (digital and paper-based) across plants and workshops, with no common foundation
- No centralized consolidation of action plans at the group level
- Non-synchronized sharing of standards, with no real-time communication
- Time-consuming management routines due to manual data transcription between meeting levels
- Loss of historical data (whiteboards reset every week)
- Cascading and escalation of issues ineffective when managed on paper
- Difficulties scaling the PCS standard due to limited team buy-in

Digitization Strategy with Fabriq

A structured and progressive approach

In response to these challenges, Bel Group implemented Fabriq by defining a two-phase digitalization strategy at scale: a pilot phase on selected sites, followed by a progressive deployment across the entire group.

Step	Content
Phase 1 – Pilot (December 2022)	Sites in Lons-le-Saunier (France) and a plant in Slovakia
Pilot Duration	About 3 months of validation
Phase 2 – Global Deployment	Global deployment plan developed following pilot validation
Current Scope	Approximately 10 industrial sites deployed (2025)
Planned Expansion	Several additional sites planned

Pilot Site Selection Criteria

The pilot sites were selected based on three fundamental criteria:

- Strong management commitment to digital transformation
- Willingness to master the operational standards of the excellence program
- Existence of local objectives that reinforced underlying motivation

"We don't digitize simply for the sake of digitizing. If the foundation isn't solid, it's better to work on that foundation first. Priority goes to plants that are strong in standards compliance and open to transformation."

Patrick Saez, Bel Group

Real-World Example from an Industry Leader: Bel

Deployment at the Lons-le-Saunier Site

Deployment Stages

Deployment at the Lons-le-Saunier site took place in six successive stages:

Step	Description
Step 1 – Pilot Area	Launch in the Apéricube area (duration: ~3 months)
Step 2 – Build the Common Structure	The management committee and performance leaders build the common foundation for all Fabriq instances
Step 3 – Co-Design with Users	Working groups select KPIs, create routines, and co-design dashboards
Step 4 – Facilitator Training	Expanded training program (any employee can facilitate a PCS)
Step 5 – Test & Learn	Testing cycles + perception surveys + adjustments
Step 6 – Full-Scope Deployment	April 1, 2023: digitization of all PCS instances across the plant at once

The Co-Creation Principle

Co-design with frontline users was a key factor in adoption. Operators and managers participated in:

- Selecting the most relevant performance indicators for their areas
- Creating their own operational routines (shift handovers, shift starts, shift ends)
- Implementing checklists, inspections, 5S audits, and Zing audits

Result: Today, 100% of the plant's operational routines are digitized in Fabriq.

Results and Benefits

Key Figures



Operational Benefits

- Elimination of manual data transcription between meeting levels.
- Meetings focused entirely on analysis and action planning instead of administrative work.
- Real-time, self-managed updates of KPIs and dashboards.
- Preservation and analysis of historical data that was previously lost every week.
- Greater transparency in the escalation process for operators.
- Faster decision-making across operations.

Impact on Adoption and Culture

One of the most significant outcomes has been the spontaneous adoption by frontline teams, a strong indicator of successful cultural transformation.

"If we stopped using PCS and Fabriq, people would be dissatisfied. Whenever a production cell doesn't have a PCS, employees immediately raise the issue. It's one of the few standards where we've achieved that level of engagement."

Audrey Herry, Industrial Performance Manager

Real-World Example from an Industry Leader: Bel

Key Success Factors

Factor	Explanation
Build a solid foundation first	Don't digitalize before operational excellence practices are firmly established.
Management commitment	Select motivated sites and committed leaders.
User co-creation	Involve frontline operators from the earliest stages of dashboard and routine design.
Pilot-first approach	Validate on pilot areas before scaling; avoid an unprepared "big bang" rollout.
Test & Learn	Use iterative improvement cycles, perception surveys, and adjustments before full deployment.
Post-deployment autonomy	Empower teams to modify KPIs and routines without relying on the software vendor.
Proof of success	Use pilot sites as showcases to convince and inspire other plants.

Bel Group's digital transformation with Fabriq demonstrates how a global industrial company can accelerate its operational excellence program through digitalization while keeping people and frontline engagement at the center of the transformation. In less than three years, Bel moved from fragmented whiteboards and paper-based processes to a unified, real-time management system covering every PCS across deployed sites with an exceptional level of user adoption rarely achieved in transformations of this scale.



Dive into Bel's full video testimonial

[Watch the video](#)

Business Impact of a Digital Solution Like Fabriq

To quantify the economic impact of a digital operational excellence program, Fabriq commissioned Forrester Consulting to conduct an independent **Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) study**.

The study evaluates the benefits, costs, and risks associated with deploying Fabriq in a multi-site industrial environment. It is based on interviews with decision-makers from a large industrial company that deployed Fabriq across 80 manufacturing sites over five years.

Over a five-year period, the results show:

- ROI: 339 %
- Payback period: 3–5 months
- Net Present Value: \$32.3 million



Business Impact of a Digital Solution Like Fabriq

Quantified Financial Benefits (Risk-adjusted present value over five years)

\$34.1 million

in meeting efficiency gains. Digitalizing management routines allows managers to save an average of 30 minutes per day preparing and conducting meetings, representing 420,600 hours saved annually starting in Year 3.

\$4.0 million

from improved First Pass Yield. Faster and more structured root cause analysis reduces rework, scrap, and material waste.

\$3.6 million

through faster problem resolution. Operational issues are resolved an average of 15 minutes faster, minimizing their impact on production.

\$215,000

in software cost savings. Fabriq replaces fragmented or alternative digital tools at certain sites, simplifying the digital architecture and reducing software costs.

Beyond Financial Gains: Long-Term Strategic Impact

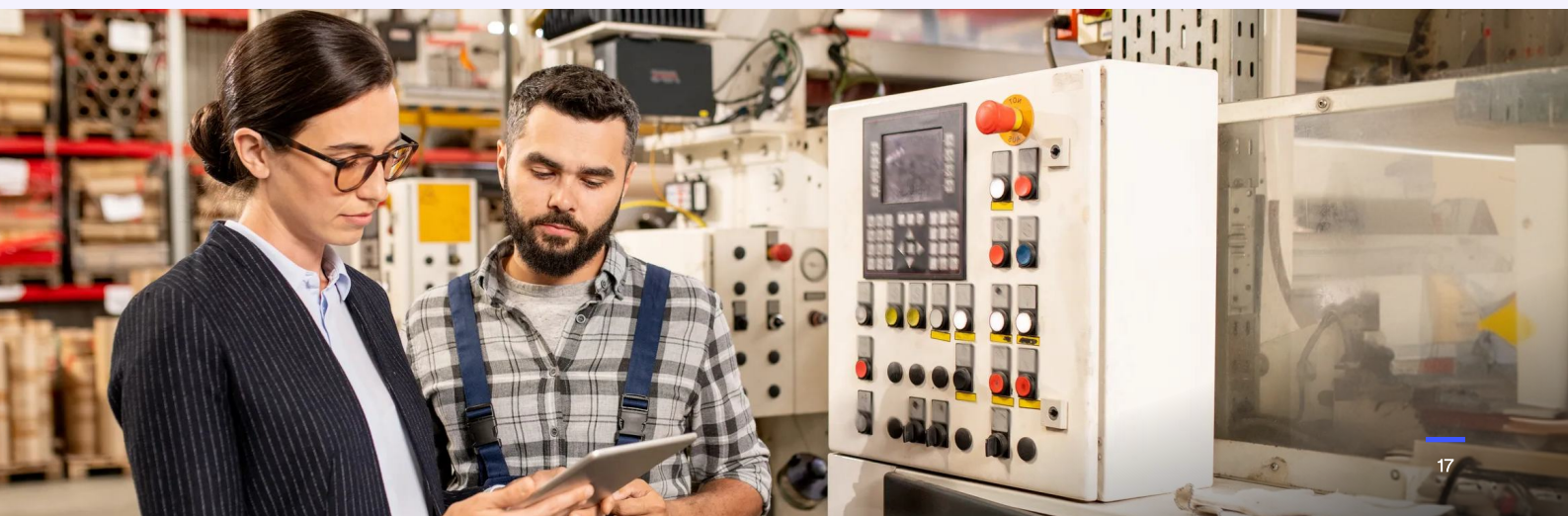
- Rapid adoption driven by an intuitive user experience on the shop floor
- Continuous improvement in QRQC maturity across all manufacturing sites
- Stronger employee engagement through more efficient and collaborative routines
- Improved organizational alignment built on a common operational language
- Enterprise-scale deployment without requiring complex IT infrastructure

Testimonial from a Group-Level VP Manufacturing 4.0:

“Previously, those who were managing the QRQC meetings had to take the notes, go back to their computer, and fill the spreadsheet with the actions. You record it, you print it, and you come back to the whiteboard. When you do that directly digitally, you save half an hour per day, minimum.”

Read the full study to assess the financial, strategic, and operational impact of Fabriq.

[Read the study](#)



Conclusion

Rolling out a digital tool at scale is not simply a technology decision, but a fundamentally an organizational transformation. While 70% of industrial companies never move beyond the pilot stage, the barrier is rarely the lack of capable technology. More often, organizations struggle with insufficient structure, alignment, and methodology for scaling successfully.

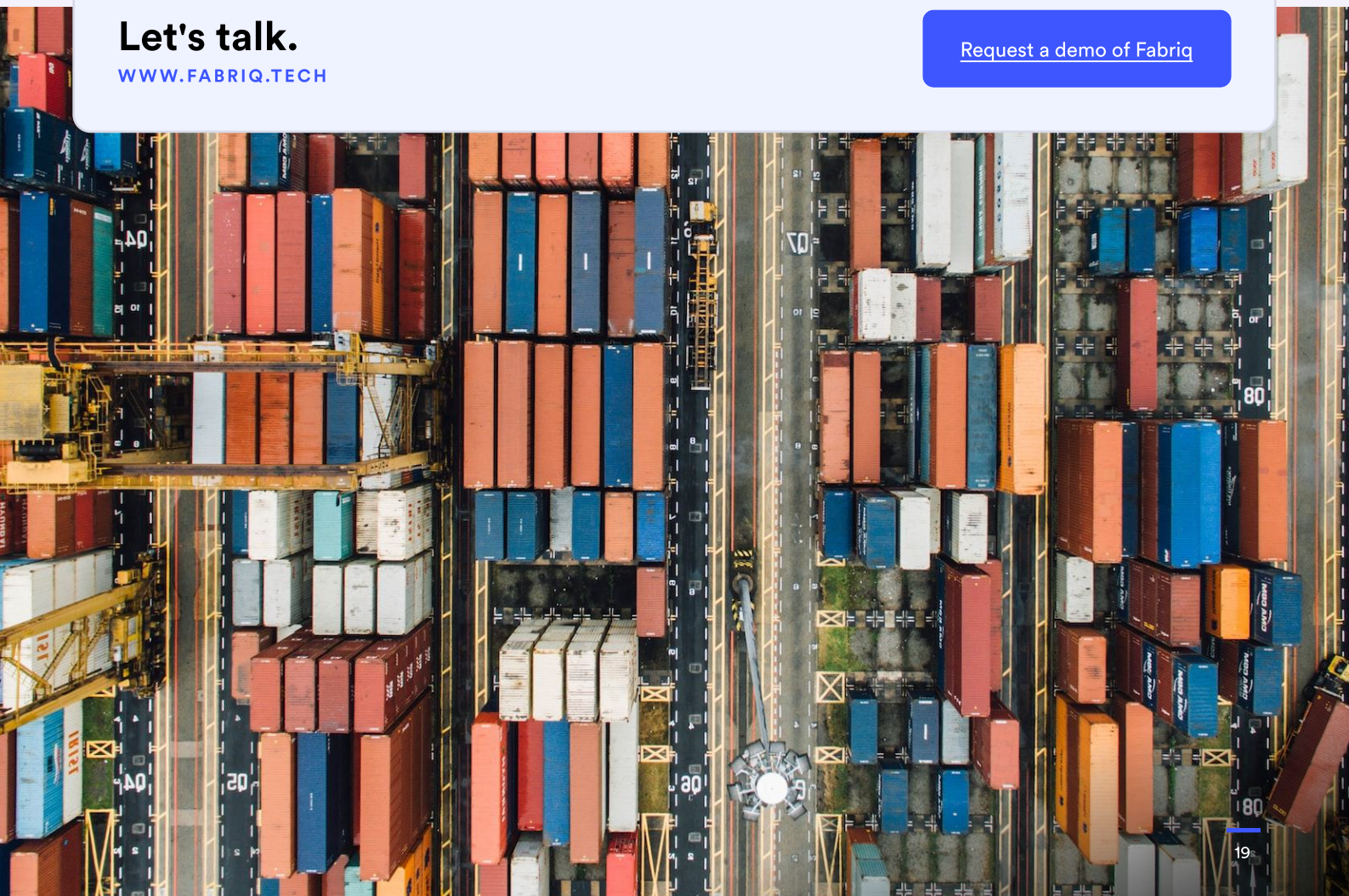
As illustrated throughout this playbook, success depends on several complementary factors: a clear vision championed by leadership, strong frontline engagement, a pragmatic and agile implementation approach, and the ability to standardize without sacrificing flexibility. Equally important is connecting digital transformation initiatives to concrete, measurable, and shared operational objectives.

When used as an enabler rather than an end in itself, digital technology provides the framework to structure transformation, capture organizational learning, and accelerate the spread of best practices. It becomes the foundation for driving operational performance and embedding a lasting culture of continuous improvement across the entire enterprise.

Let's talk.

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[Request a demo of Fabriq](#)



The only Connected Workforce Solution built for operational excellence at scale.

Fabriq embeds your operating model into daily execution, from shop floor to top floor. Powered by AI, it enables leaders to solve problems faster, outperform Safety, Quality, Cost and Delivery standards and turn learnings into shared knowledge.

Trusted by Safran, Takeda, Medtronic, Mars, Renault and Nexans, Fabriq accelerates time-to-value while working alongside customers to sustain and scale performance improvements over time.

80,000+

daily users across all sites

1000+

sites managed worldwide

60+

countries worldwide

Are you ready to standardize your operations?

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