

Ai in Manufacturing: what to do on Monday

Make it work. Make it safe. Make it last.



Clear Quality Industrial Leadership Forum | 2 July 2026 | Tommy Findlay, iS3 Ltd

THE ORDER THAT WORKS

Most of what people call Ai is workflow automation that existed before ChatGPT. Do it in this order.

1

DIGITISE & STANDARDISE

Get off paper. Consistent, structured data entry.

2

INTEGRATE & AUTOMATE

Connect systems. Rules-based workflows do the repetitive work.

3

THEN APPLY Ai

Layer Ai where it adds value, on a solid base.

THE SYSTEMISATION JOURNEY: KNOW YOUR STEP, TAKE THE NEXT ONE

1

Paper & chaos

2

Digitised

3

Structured & integrated

4

Automated

5

Ai-enabled

THREE THINGS TO TAKE AWAY

1

Foundation first. Structure and govern your data before you reach for Ai. Most Ai failures are data failures, not model failures.

2

Standards are the accelerant. ISO 42001 and your integrated management system turn the Ai buzz into controlled improvement.

3

Own what you can't outsource. Governance, change management and human oversight. The tools will keep changing.

GOVERNANCE, IN PLAIN TERMS

9001

Quality

14001

Environ.

45001

H&S

27001

Infosec

42001

Ai

- The five standards share one backbone, the **Harmonized Structure** (what you knew as Annex SL). Run them as **one** system, not five silos.
- **ISO 42001** gives Ai governance, risk, traceability and human oversight. You don't have to certify to benefit, follow the principles.
- **EU Ai Act:** if you place products or Ai on the EU market, it applies to you, wherever you are based. Most manufacturers export.

The one line to remember: you can't measure or control what lives in disconnected spreadsheets. Get the data into one structured place, and Ai stops being a gamble.

Resources & next steps

Everything from today, in one place



START HERE

- **Free Ai readiness assessment.** See where you are on the journey: app.is3.co.uk
- **Slides, links and this handout:** is3.co.uk/manufacturing
- **Book a free 30-minute discovery call:** link.tomcrm.co.uk/widget/bookings/tom-findlay-1to1
- **Connect with me on LinkedIn:** linkedin.com/in/tom-findlay-ceng-innovation

HOW IS3 CAN HELP

- **Governance-led Ai.** ISO 27001 and 42001 principles built in from the start.
- **Business operating system.** One structured source of truth, your systems connected.
- **Automation and integration.** Retire the re-keying and the paper.
- **Strategic leadership.** The change management that makes it stick.

THE TOOLS WE BUILD AND RUN

The one-database, governed approach from this talk, working in the real world. These are tools we build and run ourselves.

- **TomPilot.** Our governed operating system: one central database with the dashboards, tools and Ai a team needs built around it. Structured data first, Ai on top, people in control. tompilot.co.uk
- **TomSocial.** Governed content and communications: it plans, creates and schedules content with a human approval step before anything goes out. tomsocial.co.uk
- **TomCRM.** Our CRM and automation platform for small businesses: enquiries, follow-up and pipeline in one place. app.tomcrm.co.uk

WORTH A READ (IS3 BLOG)

- [What the Fable 5 shutdown means for anyone building on Ai:](#) why you govern the layer and keep your data yours.
- [Governing the Ai you actually use:](#) GDPR, ISO, and the audit trail that earns its keep.
- [Open versus paid Ai:](#) what I actually use, and why I keep both.
- All posts: www.is3.co.uk/blog

References used in the presentation

Every figure, traceable to source



Manufacturing and Ai adoption

- Make UK, *Ai, Skills and the Future of the UK Manufacturing Sector* (2% widely embedded; 83% back-office vs 11% production). makeuk.org

Why most Ai projects fail

- MIT NANDA, *The GenAI Divide: State of AI in Business 2025* (95% see no measurable return). [State of AI in Business 2025 \(PDF\)](#)
- Gartner, *Lack of AI-Ready Data Puts AI Projects at Risk*, Feb 2025 (60% abandoned; 63% lack Ai-ready data practices). gartner.com

Ai and developer productivity

- Cui et al. (MIT), field experiments with GitHub Copilot at Microsoft, Accenture and a Fortune 100 manufacturer (about 26% more tasks completed). economics.mit.edu (PDF)
- InfoQ, summary of the study. infoq.com
- DX newsletter, breakdown of the three experiments. getdx.com

Software and ERP utilisation

- Zylo, *2025 SaaS Management Index* (over half of paid software licences sit unused). zylo.com

Regulation and standards

- EU Ai Act, high-risk deadlines deferred under the Digital Omnibus (Council and Parliament, 2026). consilium.europa.eu
- ISO 9001 quality management (revision, ISO 9001:2026, in draft). iso.org

CONNECT

- LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/tom-findlay-ceng-innovation
- Email: tommy@is3.co.uk