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**MANUFACTURING
VISION**

Business savvy drives success at Portes et fenêtres Président

The self-driving office



by Rich Porayko

You can take automation beyond the production floor.

Automation in manufacturing is obvious but what about automation in marketing and communications? If a task or project can be completed faster, cheaper and with higher quality through crowdsourcing, using an app or a Software As A Service (SAAS) website than doing it the old fashioned in-house way, aren't those forms of automation as well? Removing handling and waste is classic Lean thinking.

The Cloud has changed the way we do things. MS Office 365 and Google Docs allow for collaboration around the office or the planet. I've been using Adobe's Creative Cloud collection for several years now. Subscribers are always running the most current versions of Adobe's 20+ collection of graphic design, video editing, web development and photography software. There's no muss or fuss. I have everything I want on demand.

As a freelance writer for the last 11 years, I have recorded and transcribed hundreds of interviews and seminars. I love researching, interviewing and writing, however transcribing is awful, tedious work that I have come to loathe. One hour of audio will take me at least three hours to transcribe. I've spent weeks of my life transcribing. Usually weekends. Think of the opportunity costs. I've tried different smartphone and desktop applications, however they have all sucked.

Then I discovered Rev.com. For \$1 U.S. per minute, a live person will transcribe your audio in less than 12 hours with a claim of 99 per cent accuracy. It's legit. You need to clean up the text a little but so far they've been incredibly accurate. The \$1-a-minute definitely adds up and eats margin but to pay \$60 US to get three hours of my life back to reduce opportunity costs so that I can work on another project or spend time with my family is a no-brainer. Here's a tip if you use it: trim your audio on your smartphone or desktop movie editing software to omit any audio you don't want to transcribe.

How many times have you run an internal contest within your company to name a new

product or service? Sometimes it works, other times, not so much. They are always time consuming. In the last month I've used the crowd-sourcing website SquadHelp.com for two naming projects. For the \$199 Bronze package that I used for both projects, SquadHelp takes \$99 U.S. as their fee and gives \$100 to the winner who submitted the chosen name.

The startup company name garnered 432 name submissions and the new product received over 1,200 ideas. Granted, 70 per cent of the ideas were garbage but 30 per cent were very high quality and 10 per cent were outstanding. A tip for this one: be as specific as possible when describing your new product, service or startup. Actively participate with the creatives during the contest. Rate the submissions and encourage creatives who are on the right track. Keep the decision-making team small.

There is a reason why the second-tallest building west of the Mississippi River is named Salesforce Tower. Their product isn't cheap and it absolutely dominates anything else on the market. Salesforce enables you to manage your sales, marketing and customer service, in one central location. Don't think CRM dashboard. Think command centre. The tip for this one is "garbage in, garbage out." Partner with a Salesforce implementation partner to increase your chance of success and start off on the right foot.

Need to create a photo collage for your social media page or newsletter? Look for the smartphone app PhotoGrid on Google Play or the App Store. It quickly and professionally optimizes photos into a grid faster and easier than Photoshopping manually. Remove the watermark and adjust the ratio to best suit the orientation of the images. Add video for a really eye-catching effect.

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