Don’t Wait ... Automate!

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This article first appeared in* IMPO's** May 2013 ***[1] issue.

A3, the umbrella organization for tech-focused trade associations RIA, AIA, and MCA, serves as the voice for the need to automate.

Recently, there has been a large amount of media coverage on the issue of automation technologies taking jobs, especially in manufacturing. The CBS News program *60 Minutes* aired a segment in January highlighting the automation industry, titled “March of the Machines.” Though we appreciated the focus on how technological advances in automation and robotics are revolutionizing the workplace, we were very disappointed in how they characterized the segment as “robots taking jobs” in America. In fact, we distributed a press release the next day expressing our criticism of the segment.

60 Minutes had the opportunity to highlight why innovative American companies are using automation to become stronger global competitors, saving and creating more jobs while producing higher quality and lower cost products, rather than closing up shop or shipping jobs overseas. Unfortunately they chose not to focus on this.

“To paint advances in technology as just taking jobs is very one-sided,” stated Dr. Henrik Christensen, KUKA Chair of Robotics & Director of Robotics, Georgia Institute of Technology and member of the Board of Directors of RIA. “Studies have shown that 1.3 better, higher paying jobs are created in associated areas for every one job that may be insourced. In fact, the larger issue is companies are having trouble finding qualified employees to fill these high tech job openings. We instead should focus on how best to educate our workforce in the United States so that we can remain the leader in automation technologies.”

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