

A worker in a yellow hard hat and safety glasses is using a laptop on an adjustable stand in a factory. The worker is wearing a dark blue uniform and large red earplugs. The laptop screen displays a complex technical diagram. The background shows industrial machinery and a clean, well-lit factory floor.

ergotron®

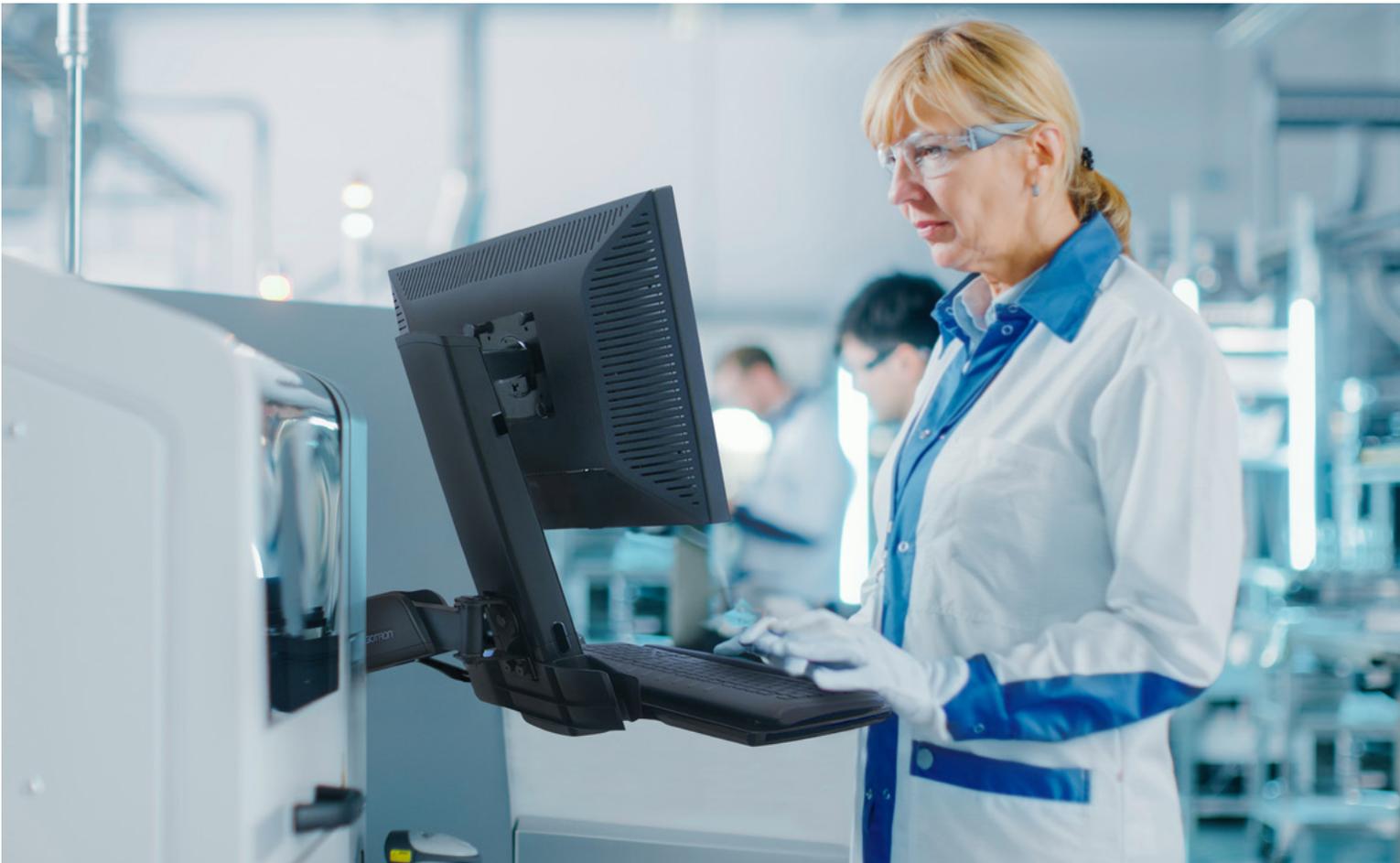
**FASTER,  
SMARTER,  
SAFER:**  
Focusing on  
employee satisfaction

## **FASTER, SMARTER, SAFER: Focusing on employee satisfaction**

Increased productivity and better workflow are usually the driving forces for modernizing the workplace. A smarter environment saves seconds to minutes on all the day-to-day tasks your people handle.

Once company leaders take a hard look at all the unnecessary steps their people perform – from loading docks to product shelves, from machinery and equipment to workstations – they no longer ask, “Would mobile equipment help us?”

Instead, they ask, “Where do we need mobile solutions? And whose products are the best?”



## Industrial facilities need the ergonomic edge

Workplace safety is a secondary driver: The more space people have to navigate around machinery, moving parts and each other, the lower the risk of collisions and accidents. Mobile powered carts, for example, reduce the risk of slip, trip and fall injuries because they can be moved exactly where people need them, without running power cords across busy work areas, and they reduce unnecessary walking back and forth.



What about ergonomics? The data is irrefutable: Numerous health studies show ergonomic workstations and equipment help lower repetitive motion injuries to the back, neck, joints and extremities.

The advantages for manufacturing and warehouse employees include being able to easily move what they need to move, standing comfortably or moving around instead of sitting most of the day, and not having to strain their necks and arms. Ergonomic workstations support the human body which benefits both employees and their companies.

## How much can ergonomic equipment help?

Most people still think of ergonomics primarily as a service industry or healthcare issue. Improper posture, poorly designed workspaces and bad habits are frequently blamed. But desk workers in office spaces are far from the only population group that's in danger of ergonomic injuries.

Industrial and manufacturing employees have a lot more to worry about than just accidents on the job. Many of the tasks they perform on a daily basis can result in pain and discomfort for the rest of their lives. Those at risk include machine operators, warehouse and inventory staffers, maintenance workers, plant managers, engineers and so on.

Case in point: Roughly one in 20 warehouse and storage facility workers need medical attention for a work-related injury per year, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. That's roughly double the national average for all other sectors.

Maybe you recognize the warning signs among your workforce – but you're not sure who's at the greatest risk or what the next steps should be.

## The danger of sitting too much and repetitive injuries

Fact: You are up to 94% more likely to die if you're inactive and sit for six or more hours a day, as opposed to someone who's active and sits less than three hours daily, per a 2010 American Cancer Society study published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*. A similar study published in the *British Journal of Medicine* found people who sit for long periods are more likely to develop diabetes, heart disease and other ailments.

Sitting too long isn't the only risk factor. Employees who perform repetitive tasks or sustain awkward postures (twisting, leaning over, reaching) are at the greatest risk to develop a musculo-skeletal disorder (MSD).

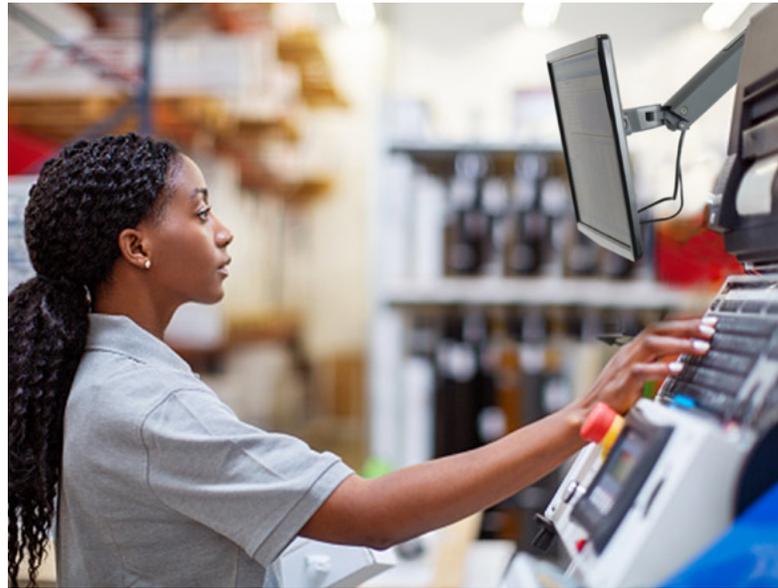
The figures may be higher than you imagine: About 30% of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses are related to MSDs. Total numbers in a typical year exceed 300,000 reported cases.

Companies are wise to pay attention when staffers complain about pain. When an employee reports discomfort on the job, in 50% of cases it results in a workers' compensation claim, according to *Safety News Alert*.

## Mobility matters more than ever

Increasingly, professionals can work anywhere – all they need is a laptop and Wi-Fi. Fewer employees are tied down to one spot, 9-to-5, five days a week.

Forward-thinking manufacturers are embracing mobile workstations and powered carts so employees can be directly engaged, wherever their work happens to take them. The obvious benefits include reduced traffic and travel time, improved workflow and more physical comfort.



Mobile powered carts prove to be an advantage for companies, and nowhere is that truer than in manufacturing. Organizations quickly find they're able to achieve the same amount of work – and frequently more – with fewer pieces of equipment to deal with.

Charging stations provide hours of power for critical devices like laptops, tablets, printers, barcode readers and label makers. No more writing down inventory or incoming orders before sitting down at a desk to input data.

Bonus: You reduce the likelihood of errors with order fulfillment. Staffers can input product data immediately as they're performing daily tasks.

Making it easier for team members to prepare and ship orders helps prevent costly mistakes. Customers are always more likely to remain loyal to vendors that deliver exactly what they want, on time, the first time around.

With ergonomically designed mobile workstations and carts, employees can complete every step of

a process, on the spot. They're armed with access to real-time data so they know what's on their shelves, where work orders stand, and more.

So, where can you improve workflow? How could mobile, ergonomic solutions make team members more efficient? Once you've answered those questions, insist on specialized products that fit your every need — and rely on a vendor that can customize tools for your unique requirements.

### Don't settle for less than the best

Steve Jobs once said, "People don't know what they want until you show it to them." That applies to any product, especially modernized workstations. Once people experience industry-leading quality, they won't want to settle for "good enough."

Visit any factory plant floor that's embraced robotics and the Internet of Things, and you'll see mobile workstations and carts. Smart companies creating cutting-edge products are also smart and cutting-edge in how their people work.

The ergonomic, safety-focused equipment they rely on should be as superior as the products they make. Mobile desks and carts, like any equipment used daily, will take a beating. They must be built sturdy and strong, while also light-weight enough that anyone can maneuver them easily.

Employees shouldn't have to worry about plugging in a device after a couple of hours. Battery technology for both powered and non-powered carts should allow users to charge multiple devices while working for eight hours or longer.

Mobile workstations are not and should not be one-size-fits-all solutions. Employees need the flexibility to adjust their work setup so it fits them, not the other way around — this is the basic premise of ergonomics. Height-adjustable workstations ensure comfort whether workers are sitting or standing. Similarly, monitors that are easy to adjust allow employees to precisely position their screens so they can work comfortably and efficiently regardless of the task they're doing.





## One final, practical consideration

We know a lack of ergonomic work equipment hurts production, wastes time and leads to needless pain and injuries.

Don't overlook how else your company can suffer, as a result of:

- workers' compensation claims and payouts
- hospitalizations and treatment for injured employees
- potential lawsuits and OSHA citations

Despite the lack of an OSHA ergonomics standard, federal and state OSHA inspectors can cite companies under its general duty clause.

One example: An automotive manufacturer recorded 22 MSDs of the hand, wrist and elbow over a three-year period. OSHA fined the company more than \$12,000 because it didn't address its lack of ergonomic safety measures.

Keep in mind there's an avalanche effect: Once OSHA fines a business, a workers' comp claim or lawsuit stands a much better chance of winning in court.

## Ergotron puts you in the driver's seat

Ergotron helps businesses create safe and flexible workspaces in manufacturing facilities, warehouses and back office environments that support efficiency and employee well-being.

Empower your team to access critical, real-time data at the point-of-use—without traveling across a busy manufacturing floor to input or retrieve information.

Ergotron's height-adjustable mobile workstations, monitor mounts and computer carts bring technology, tools and supplies to your team so they can stay safe and productive.