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# MANUFACTURING

## TECHNOLOGY INSIGHTS

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E D I T I O N

# ORION LABS

**CONNECTING  
THE DESKLESS  
WORKFORCE**



**GREGORY P. TAYLOR,  
CEO**

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# ORION LABS

## CONNECTING THE DESKLESS WORKFORCE

By Laura Davis

### **The Voice-First Collaboration Platform for the 21st Century**

Smart, innovative organizations drive digital transformation enterprise-wide. These strategic efforts build more resilient, productive businesses, but organizations often forget one crucial constituency in their digitalization process: deskless workers.

Eighty percent of today's global workforce is deskless, operating on the frontline of work. These workers typically rely on radios, PTT devices, or even cell phones as their primary method to communicate with their teams when they are serving customers, protecting company executives and property, driving vehicles, using heavy machinery, loading stock in a warehouse, or dealing with hazardous materials.

Today's deskless workforce needs so much more in order to become a true connected worker. Orion is on a mission to take manufacturing enterprises on a long-overdue journey not just to modernize, but to truly innovate and digitally transform how their deskless workforce operates.

"Orion offers the leading voice-first, intelligent platform that empowers deskless workers by enabling real-time team collaboration, process automation, location

mapping, and access to enterprise systems," says Greg Taylor, CEO of Orion Labs. "Our platform immediately delivers the benefits of improving workforce productivity, safety and compliance, and staff and customer engagement. Our customers transform their operations and sustain these benefits by operating on Orion."

Taylor is deeply invested in transforming the deskless manufacturing workforce. He has three decades of experience leading companies that deliver innovative software and technology solutions to global manufacturers. He currently serves on the board of two large manufacturing corporations and was named CEO of Orion in late 2019.

Orion's platform consists of a mobile application delivered on smart devices, award-winning wearables, a browser console, and cloud service. Orion starts the digitalization journey for the manufacturing enterprise by supporting their deskless workforce's ability to communicate with a multimodal experience on the go, including voice, text, photo, and video. The platform significantly improves collaboration and coordinates and centralizes operational visibility, management, and decision-making to enhance productivity.

*GREGORY P. TAYLOR,*  
*CEO*

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**FOR THE FIRST TIME,  
ORION MAKES POSSIBLE  
A TRULY CONNECTED  
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AND ULTIMATELY,  
COMPLETE DIGITAL  
TRANSFORMATION OF  
THE ENTERPRISE**

By unlocking digital collaboration for deskless workers, Orion both modernizes current communication and addresses three emerging innovation trends from leading manufacturers: automation, intelligence amplification, and analytics.

“We are pioneering a new category with our intelligent collaboration platform,” says Taylor. “To digitally transform your entire organization, you have to build a connected workforce by incorporating them into an agile and responsive enterprise. We take our customers on a journey to first modernize and then innovate.”

Here are five value-add stages Orion emphasizes in order to connect workers to the digital enterprise.

## No. 1: Modernization with Voice-First, Multimodal Collaboration

On average, professionals use 4.5 different communication devices or methods to collaborate with team members at work. These tools include mobile calling, carrier push-to-talk, consumer radios, professional radios with license, SMS, and other voice products.

Many frontline workers still use radio technologies from bygone decades with signals that are often affected by the number of floors, stairwells, and walls in a given location. Others rely on simple PTT applications or access desktops away from the immediate point of work.

Orion offers an alternative and designed its platform to provide the deskless workforce with fast, reliable, and secure communications, able to reach any distance, on any network, on any device.

“Nearly half of people using traditional communications tools must switch between them during their workday — Orion eliminates this problem by providing secure communication that includes HD-quality voice, text, photos, videos, and

files such as PDFs all in one platform supported on the broadest range of iOS and Android smart devices,” says Taylor.

Orion continues to redefine best practices for the deskless workforce by enabling communications with any size team via unlimited groups, 1:1, or mass communication over any distance, including on-site, on the road, across town, or around the globe — eliminating the barriers caused by floors, stairwells, or concrete walls.

“We support these best practices and then give deskless workers the unprecedented ability to use real-time in-app location, dynamic group creation with granular talk modes, and advanced bot-driven capabilities like real-time language



translation and instant mass communication,” says Taylor. “Deskless workers need a flexible, multimodal option that supports how work gets done on the frontline.”

## No. 2: Modernization with Operational Command and Control

Visibility is crucial for a safe work environment for manufacturing organizations. Managers need greater visibility into where and what workers are doing at any given moment,

especially in a crisis or urgent situation.

“Once your deskless workforce is empowered with voice-first, multimodal collaboration software, it’s time to connect those workers to headquarters, regional, and team management with operational command and control,” says Taylor.

The Orion platform enables organizations to coordinate and centralize operational visibility, management, and decision-making to enhance productivity, safety, and dynamic response.

Managers communicate with distributed teams and handle dispatch with Orion’s web-based PTT via a

browser. Advanced location services enable managers to see the real-time location of each employee for better, response, safety, and accountability.

“Organizations that rely on heavy machinery or hazardous materials can use our platform for dynamic situation management to access on-demand intelligence and empowerment for changing situations — especially in emergencies and crises,” says Taylor. “Orion becomes the voice operations system of record for our customers.”

### No. 3: Innovation with Automation

“Once organizations have adopted our modernization solutions, they can truly innovate with process automation,” says Taylor.

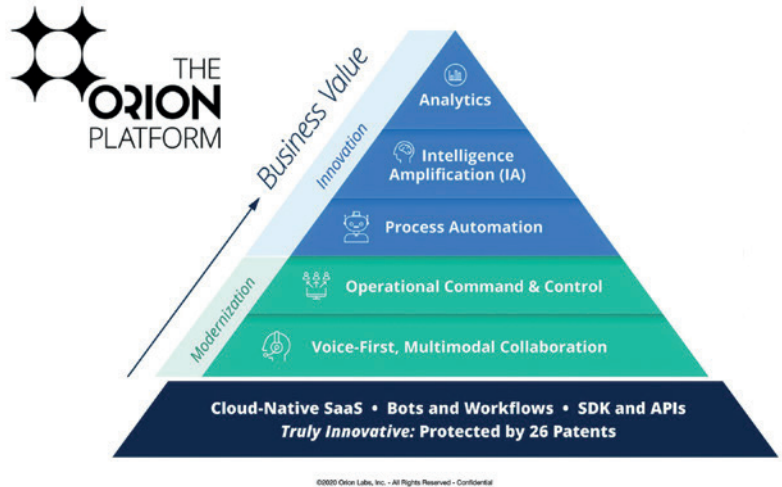
Orion enables process automation in two ways. It automates the routine and procedural tasks that people do every day, allowing them to focus on higher-value tasks. These routine tasks include standard checklists, operating procedures, and compliance forms.

In many cases, deskless workers have to work through paper checklists before they can use heavy machinery. For instance, a worker may need to answer questions like “Have you been authorized to use this equipment?”, “Have you been trained to use this equipment?”, or “Does this equipment need to be serviced?”.

Orion’s solution enables deskless workers to use voice to talk through checklists that are instantly recorded, logged, and archived. Their answers can also set off workflows like notifying engineers that a particular piece of equipment needs to be serviced.

Orion’s collaboration platform offers a seamless flow of information for employees in any language at any time. Native language and translation capabilities ensure employees understand and accurately interact with voice-first checklists, dynamic requests, and protocols in their native languages, eliminating language-based miscommunications. This precision provides unmatched operational improvements among multilingual teams, supports a diverse workforce, and enables companies to hire contractors irrespective of their language.

Orion also automates urgent and dynamic situations. In manufacturing, conditions can change in a second. The platform helps workers manage these dynamic situations by providing intelligence and empowerment when speed and response time are critical.



Orion does this with always-on, automated panic alarms, location breach alerts, man-down alerts, and lone worker protocols to name a few that are automatically or manually triggered based on commands, events, or actions.

“The ability to respond quickly in an urgent situation is always a safety issue and often a matter of life and death in manufacturing industries,” says Taylor. “A lone worker could find themselves pinned by a heavy piece of machinery or encounter a hazardous spill. The worker can immediately trigger a safety workflow with the words ‘help-help,’ or sentiment analysis can trigger safety workflows if a worker’s voice sounds distressed. These workflows alert managers and team members to the worker’s exact location, deploy immediate assistance, and record and archive all subsequent activity to ensure the response follows the highest standards of safety.”

Automation is an important factor in addressing COVID-19 and building a safe Return-to-Work plan. Orion’s automated processes address urgent needs with SOPs designed to ensure staff, contractors, and third-parties are safe from the moment they arrive at a facility.

Instead of requiring employees to fill out high-touch paper checklists, voice workflows walk employees

through health and safety questions and any additional safety protocols set by a health, safety, and environment (HSE) manager. Orion’s geolocation abilities also support contact tracing initiatives at a workplace, enabling HSE managers to identify workers who come in contact with certain areas or people.

### No. 4: Innovation with Intelligence Amplification

Intelligence amplification (IA) transforms critical deskless workers into a truly connected workforce. Where artificial intelligence (AI) is often focused on replacing workers with technology, Orion’s IA empowers deskless workers at the point of work — wherever that may be.

Manufacturing workers in the field or distributed on the manufacturing floor often lack access to the information needed to perform critical tasks optimally. Orion uniquely turns that paradigm on its head by ensuring workers have access to the right information in real-time with instant access to experts and knowledge bases. It also integrates to back end systems for information retrieval and execution of process logic.

Connecting workers with systems immediately amplifies any worker’s ability and intelligence, including new employees and contractors. The

use of contractors continues to rise in industries like manufacturing, making intelligence amplification an increasingly essential part of ensuring all workers perform at maximum efficiency from Day 1.

Now, new employees and contractors have immediate access to integrated workflows and information they need to get up to speed fast. Collaboration tools that work on any device can be quickly shared with contractors, allowing them to easily access critical information and communicate or integrate with existing groups, subject matter experts (SMEs), backend systems, and knowledge bases.

“Orion’s focus on intelligence amplification is novel and important. Imagine a scenario where a truck driver arrives to pick up manufactured goods. They trigger an automatic workflow as soon as the truck drives into a geofenced area. Orion sends them the information they need about what dock to use, what protocols need to be followed, what materials are being loaded, and any new route information for taking the goods to where they need to go,” says Taylor. “This immediately provides the information needed.”

### **No. 5: Innovation with Analytics**

Finally, 100 percent of the platform’s message stream and relevant metadata provides useful intelligence to inform analysis and decision-making uniquely for managing and optimizing an organization’s deskless workforce.

Managers use the data to evaluate how to prevent incidents from recurring with pattern analysis, traffic analysis, and other insights gained by the platform.

“Orion captures 100 percent of an organization’s message stream, including voice, text, image, video, and attachments, creating an entirely new ability for organizations to gather situational awareness, conduct pattern analysis, and uncover untapped opportunities for improvement and greater efficiency,” says Taylor.



With Orion, manufacturing organizations receive real-time intelligence to react to emerging situations, mitigate risks, and keep employees safe. This data provides situational intelligence from valuable operational, compliance, and safety data, allowing organizations to measure, report, and manage performance for internal and external improvement and revealing unique deskless operations insights for the first time.

### **Orion: The Future of Voice at Work**

With Orion in place, manufacturing and industrial companies transform their deskless workforce into an unmatched advantage — a crucial step to remaining competitive in today’s environment.

“Global shifts and economic pressure are increasing investments in digitalization of the entire industrial enterprise,” says Taylor. “For the first time, Orion makes possible a truly connected deskless workforce, and ultimately, complete digital transformation, unifying workers inside



**OUR COLLABORATION PLATFORM IMMEDIATELY DELIVERS THE BENEFITS OF IMPROVING WORKFORCE PRODUCTIVITY, SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE, AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT**

a single plant, at a multi-facility site, or across town, the country, or the globe.”

Orion pioneered its voice-first, intelligent collaboration platform to empower deskless workers, create a connected workforce, and build a truly digital enterprise. The company designed the Onyx, an award winning wearable which supports hands-free, heads-up collaboration for manufacturing workers, and holds 26 patents to protect its innovation advantage and continues to advance new ways to help its customers embrace the benefits of digital transformation. 



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Industrial IoT solutions and impacting the industry*