

AI Automation & The Future of Fluid Sealing Manufacturing

*What's Hype, What's Real, What It Costs, and What Industry
Leaders Need to Know Now*

By Gene Marks



For more than 20 years, Gene Marks has covered business technology for Forbes, writing 6–8 times per month on artificial intelligence, automation, and enterprise software. In this practical, fast-paced session, he separates AI hype from business reality and explains how manufacturers and suppliers in the fluid sealing industry can use AI to improve productivity, customer service, sales, and profitability.

Drawing from interviews with Microsoft, Google, leading AI companies, manufacturers implementing these technologies today, and his own firm's experience implementing AI solutions for clients, Gene shares real-world examples of where AI is delivering measurable ROI—and where businesses should avoid wasting time and money.

Importantly, Gene will also address an increasingly critical issue for businesses adopting AI: **what AI actually costs**. Beyond monthly subscriptions and user licenses, many AI systems charge based on usage through **tokens**. Gene will explain in plain English what tokens are, how token-based pricing works, why costs can increase dramatically as companies scale their AI usage, and how the growth of AI agents will affect those costs. He'll also discuss the additional expenses businesses need to consider, including integration, cybersecurity, data management, training, and IT support.

This keynote focuses on:

- ✓ AI: What's real, what's hype, and what leaders should ignore
- ✓ Practical AI applications for manufacturers and industrial suppliers
- ✓ What AI really costs: subscriptions, licenses, tokens, integration and ongoing support
- ✓ Tokens explained: what they are, how businesses consume them, and how token-based pricing works

- ✓ How AI costs change from a small pilot to company-wide adoption
- ✓ How AI agents could dramatically increase token consumption—and what businesses should plan for
- ✓ Understanding total AI investment versus measurable ROI
- ✓ AI in customer service, inside sales, quoting, CRM, forecasting, and operations
- ✓ Automating repetitive administrative and back-office work
- ✓ Using AI to improve engineering documentation, technical support, and internal knowledge sharing
- ✓ Workforce implications, training, and leadership in an AI-driven manufacturing environment
- ✓ AI governance, cybersecurity, and protecting proprietary company data
- ✓ Where AI is producing measurable returns today—and where to invest over the next 12–24 months

Attendees will leave understanding not only **what AI can do for their businesses, but what it actually costs to implement and scale it.** They'll learn how to evaluate AI investments based on real business value rather than hype and leave with practical ideas they can begin applying immediately.

About the Speaker

Gene Marks CPA runs The Marks Group PC, a technology consulting firm based in Philadelphia that serves more than 600 businesses nationwide.

For the past two decades Gene has covered business technology for Forbes magazine and has been writing almost exclusively about artificial intelligence

(AI) and its impact on businesses since 2022. He covers the latest software, hardware, security, networking and productivity tools that are essential for businesses of all sizes by telling the stories of the companies and experts who use them. He also regularly contributes technology pieces to The Guardian and Entrepreneur Magazine.

Gene is the author of more than a half-dozen business management books, his most recent being “The AI Business Playbook — Lessons, Risks and Opportunities” and “The 2026 CRM Companion Guide.”

Gene speaks dozens of times a year nationally on technology topics at manufacturing, distribution, service, retail, construction, banking and financial services conferences, industry association meetings and corporate events where he covers how AI and other technologies specifically impacts that industry.

Gene hosts the Paychex Thrive Podcast and YouTube series which covers technology and other business management topics where he interviews leaders in technology and others who impact business. He appears regularly on CBS Radio, The Wharton Sirius/XM channel, Fox Business and CNBC.

Prior to starting The Marks Group, Gene was a senior manager at the international consulting firm KPMG.