

North American robot shipments up 7% in 2018 to new record

The Robotic Industry Association (RIA), part of the Association for Advancing Automation, has reported that robots shipped to North American companies in record numbers in 2018.

RIA's 2018 robot shipment statistics report said that 35,880 robot units were shipped to North America last year, which was up 7% from 2017. Of those, 16,702 shipments were to nonautomotive companies—a 41% increase. Other notable growth came from areas of food and consumer goods (+48%), plastics and rubber (+37%), life sciences (+31%), and electronics (+22%).

Shipments to North American automotive OEM and tier supplier customers totaled 19,178 in 2018, which was 12% lower than in 2017. While automotive still accounted for 53% of total North America robot shipments last year, that figure is its lowest percentage since 2010.

"While the automotive industry has always led the way in implementing robotics here in North America, we are quite pleased to see other industries continuing to realize the benefits of automation," said Jeff Burnstein, president of the Association for Advancing Automation (A3). "And as we've heard from our members and at shows such as Automate, these sales and shipments aren't just to large, multinational companies anymore. Small and medium-sized companies are using robots to solve real-world challenges, which is helping them be more competitive on a global scale."

INDUSTRY REPORT



Study: 5G to account for 15% of global mobile industry by 2025

GSMA—an association representing the worldwide mobile communications industry—has released a report that states 5G is on track to account for 15% of total global mobile connection by 2025 as the number of 5G network launches and compatible devices ramps up this year. GSMA said a further 16 major markets worldwide will switch on commercial 5G networks during 2019, following the initial 5G launches in the U.S. and South Korea last year. GSMA calculates that mobile operators worldwide are currently investing about \$160 billion per year on expanding and upgrading their networks, despite regulatory and competitive pressures.

Some other key report findings:

- The number of 5G connections will reach 1.4 billion by 2025—15% of the global total. By this point, 5G is forecast to account for around 30% of connections in markets such as China and Europe, and around half of the total in the U.S.
- 4G will continue to see strong growth over this period, accounting for almost 60% of global connections by 2025—up from 42% last year.
- The number of global IoT connections will triple to 25 billion by 2025, while global IoT revenue will quadruple to \$1.1 trillion.
- 1 billion new unique mobile subscribers have been added in the four years since 2013, bringing the total to 5.1 billion by the end of 2018, representing about two-thirds of the global population.
- An additional 1.4 billion people will start using the mobile internet over the next seven years, bringing the total number globally to 5 billion by 2025 (more than 60% of the population).

IPC supports passage of U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement

IPC has joined the new USMCA Coalition, launched Feb. 26 in Washington by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The coalition is comprised by more than 200 companies of diverse economic sectors, and advocates for the congressional approval of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

"Building a stronger U.S. electronics industry depends in no small measure on building a stronger North American supply chain," said IPC President and CEO John Mitchell. "Our association has members with moth headquarters and thousands of jobs in the U.S., Mexico and Canada, and thus we have a strong interest in securing enactment of this agreement. The USMCA promises to spur even greater integration among the North American economies and strengthen the region's stature as a formidable global manufacturing base."

SEMI launches SEMI Works, nurturing industry talent

SEMI announced on Feb. 25 that it had launched SEMI Works—a program to attract, develop, and retain talent essential to the global electronics industry's growth and education.

"SEMI has made workforce development and talent advocacy a top priority and dedicated significant resources and expertise to tackle the issue," said Ajit Manocha, SEMI president and CEO. "As the global industry association anchoring the \$2 trillion global electronics industry and representing the end-to-end semiconductor supply chain,

Copyright of EE: Evaluation Engineering is the property of Endeavor Business Media and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.