



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Ohio Manufacturers Are Under Pressure but Moving Forward, New MAGNET Survey Finds**

*Growth has slowed, uncertainty is rising, and manufacturers are adapting*

**CLEVELAND, March 2, 2026:** Manufacturing in Ohio is under pressure. Growth has slowed, uncertainty has increased, and cost pressures remain high. But manufacturers are not standing still.

Today, MAGNET released *Steady Under Pressure: The State of Ohio Manufacturing in 2025*, a statewide survey of manufacturing leaders across Ohio. The report shows a sector adjusting to tougher conditions by narrowing focus, strengthening operations, and continuing to invest where it matters most.

“This is not a story of retreat,” said Ethan Karp, President and CEO of MAGNET. “Manufacturers are operating in a harder environment, but they are adapting in practical ways. They are being disciplined, focused, and intentional about how they move forward. And despite the headwinds, they are optimistic about growing in the year ahead.”

Key findings from the survey include:

- **Economic uncertainty is now the biggest factor holding manufacturers back**, with **43%** saying it is hampering growth, up sharply from recent years.
- **Fewer manufacturers grew revenue last year than at any point in recent years**, with **48%** reporting revenue growth. That’s down from 65% in 2023.
- **Even so, optimism remains strong**, with **70%** of manufacturers expecting to increase headcount in 2026.
- **Manufacturers are trying new technology, but many struggle to turn pilots into real results**, with **39%** testing simple AI tools and far fewer seeing measurable returns.
- **Innovation is moving away from new products and toward improving how factories run**, as **74%** prioritize production process improvements and **72%** focus on production technology upgrades.
- **Labor shortages are easing, but workforce readiness is now the bigger issue**, with experienced technicians now being the hardest roles to fill.
- **Tariffs and reshoring are creating winners and losers, not a broad manufacturing revival**, with **only 9%** of manufacturers having reshored production and tariff impacts varying widely across companies.

Overall, manufacturers are operating more cautiously, prioritizing execution, and investing in practical improvements on the factory floor.





The findings reflect what MAGNET sees daily in its work with manufacturers across Ohio. Companies are focused on stabilizing operations, improving productivity, and building internal capability rather than making large, speculative bets.

“Progress right now is about execution,” Karp said. “Manufacturers are concentrating on what they can control and making changes that improve performance day to day.”

### **About the Survey**

*Steady Under Pressure: The State of Ohio Manufacturing in 2025* is based on MAGNET’s biennial Ohio Manufacturing Survey. The survey was conducted from August through September 2025, with responses from 266 Ohio manufacturing leaders, representing more than 30,000 employees, across sectors from metals and machinery to plastics, food, and electronics. The survey has an estimated margin of error of  $\pm 4\%$ . Read the full report here: [www.manufacturingsuccess.org/2025survey](http://www.manufacturingsuccess.org/2025survey)

### **About MAGNET**

The Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network is a nonprofit consulting group on a mission to make manufacturing better. Since 1984, MAGNET has helped manufacturers in Northeast Ohio grow through effective workforce programs, advanced technology consulting, and innovation services. MAGNET also catalyzes bigger change by rallying companies, community leaders, governments, and educators to tackle systemic challenges that hold the region back. Over the past 40 years, the organization has helped more than 10,000 manufacturers, generating \$10 billion plus in economic impact.

