

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How will SyncKanban™ software help me become more demand-driven?

SyncKanban software helps enable flow by gaining greater control of inventory replenishment and linking consumption to actual customer demand. A fully integrated, demand-driven SyncKanban system will help you control costs and establish budgets, better partner with your inventory supplier network, improve manufacturing capabilities, and build capacity.

You will become more demand-driven as you view and track supermarket and Kanban status in real-time and:

- Make instantaneous replenishment adjustments based on new demand information.
- Communicate across the supplier network in a fast and consistent manner.
- Right-size inventory through automated K-Loop™ sizing that takes into account changes in demand and supply.
- Provide a closed-loop process that can signal where problems need attention.
- Free buyers and planners from the administrative grind of executing K-Loops so they can focus on strategic sourcing, long-term strategy and continuous improvement.

Learn more about SyncKanban by reading our [brochure](#) or watching our [video](#).

2. What is a K-Loop?

K-Loops are inserted at strategic points in the supply chain; across supermarkets and into the supplier network. These strategic points can be between supplier and work cell (raw material), between work cells (semi-finished, in supermarkets) and between work cell and customer (finished goods). The K-Loop sends a signal in the form of what was traditionally a Kanban card, providing

authorization to replenish inventory once it has been consumed. K-Loop sizing and adjustments are used to account for changes in demand and supply.

3. Why should I convert from my manual Kanban to an eKanban system?

Manual Kanbans are traditionally limited to environments with less than 200 items to track. Also, manual Kanban systems provide no real-time demand signaling across the organization or assistance with communication across departments, multiple divisions or locations.

In contrast, SyncKanban™ keeps supply chain signals moving through your operation. Our automated, pull-based inventory replenishment system tracks the consumption of parts or finished goods in real time.

A manual Kanban system can help ease the organizational transition to the Pull signaling method for more change-resistant environments. It may also provide the opportunity to implement Kanban as a pilot program to test the process and work out the issues. Simple processes are most often used in this approach. And, like all new systems, there are valuable lessons to be learned:

- How to size the number of Kanbans in the process.
- How to quickly increase inventory to account for sudden and temporary increases in demand.
- When to remove Kanban cards as demand trends downward.
- Identifying data that is important for monitoring line performance.
- Understanding how changes in supplier performance and lead-times impact Kanban sizing.

For some, however, the immediate benefits of an eKanban system far outweigh the choice for implementing manually first, then transitioning to an electronic system.

Most companies have realized significant process improvements, cost efficiencies and a competitive advantage by switching from a manual to eKanban system. Improving flow and gaining more control and visibility into manufacturing process through an eKanban system also enables increased capacity through better inventory management, improved ability to manage resources, and through these gains, enhanced customer service. Companies who automate their Kanbans also avoid the drawbacks of manual Kanban systems that are prone to data entry errors and to lost or misplaced cards.

Read our white paper, [Gaining Control: Exploring Push v. Pull Manufacturing](#), to learn more about the difference between manual and eKanban systems.

4. What types of Kanbans does SyncKanban software support? How does SyncKanban manage tigger routes? Transfer Kanbans?

SyncKanban software supports supplier, transfer, and tigger route Kanbans. SyncKanban allows you to support execution across all of these Kanbans using a simple signaling method called K-Loops™.

K-Loops are inserted at strategic points in the supply-chain across supermarkets and into your supplier network. These strategic points can be between supplier and work cell (raw materials) between work cells (semi-finished, in supermarkets) and between work cell and customer (finished goods). The K-Loop sends a signal to replenish inventory once it has been consumed.

5. Does SyncKanban™ software work in complex, multisite environments?

Yes, SyncKanban software works effectively across complex, multisite environments with tens of thousands of SKUs. SyncKanban coordinates each type of resource in your supply chain via K-Loops™ that align eKanbans across people, processes and facilities.

Read our [case study](#) on client, Dynisco, to learn how SyncKanban works in complex environments.

6. Does SyncKanban software have any system limitations on the number of Kanbans (parts/SKUs) tracked?

There is no limit to the number of parts and SKUs that SyncKanban can manage.

7. Which ERP systems integrate with SyncKanban software?

Synchrono® has integrated with most major ERP systems in all types of IT environments. As a software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution, we minimize the impact of implementations on our customers, and in some cases, we engage partners who specialize in particular ERP systems like SAP and Visual Manufacturing.

8. Does SyncKanban software replace an ERP system?

SyncKanban software does not replace an ERP system, but integrates to become the real-time component that handles inventory replenishment and control. SyncKanban software synchronizes resources using pull-based principles to manage the flow of replenishment triggers across the production process. As such, it is configured to either a) feed inventory/replenishment information into your ERP system, or b) to become the component that drives replenishment activities within your ERP system. Some ERP systems have eKanban-management capabilities built in, but none have the robust ability of SyncKanban to provide real-time control, cost effectiveness, constraints management and visibility into your replenishment cycle.

9. How do I get my suppliers to use SyncKanban™ software?

Communication with suppliers improves with SyncKanban software. In this environment, both supplier and manufacturer - and supply and demand – are completely in sync. The SyncKanban supplier portal enables this transparency with suppliers receiving real-time replenishment signals as inventory is consumed.

It will quickly become very clear to your suppliers that there are significant payoffs to using the SyncKanban supplier portal. Everyone will benefit from less expediting and reacting, allowing for more real-time visibility and planning. It's smart to include your supplier network very early on in the process to explore opportunities for synergy as you are laying out the first areas that you will be automating using SyncKanban software. Synchrono® can help you during implementation by sharing best practices for managing supplier relationships during your implementation.

10. What type of training does Synchrono provide on SyncKanban software?

While SyncKanban software is quick to implement and easy to use, all Synchrono software systems are backed by a team of implementation and training experts to accelerate your success.

11. How is SyncKanban software sold?

SyncKanban software may be purchased independently, or as part of the [Synchrono Demand-Driven Manufacturing Platform](#). When sold as a standalone system, SyncKanban is offered as a software-as-a-service (SaaS) subscription.

SyncKanban software may also be licensed as part of the Synchrono Demand-Driven Manufacturing Platform that includes:

[SyncManufacturing™](#) *Demand-driven planning, scheduling and execution software*

SyncManufacturing software synchronizes and controls all activities in your manufacturing operation and extended supply chain — from planning and scheduling to inventory management, production and execution systems.

[SyncOperations™](#) *Smart monitoring and synchronization of equipment and processes*

SyncOperations software collects and analyzes time-series process and event-based context data during every phase of production. It aggregates data from Synchrono systems, as well as from machine-level and disparate enterprise systems. *Powered by Savigent.*

[SyncAlert™](#) *Real-time alert and escalation software*

SyncAlert software notifies impacted team members throughout your plant when constraints and/or machine-level events occur. You may configure escalation paths and the corresponding

email or text messages that communicate action plans to appropriate levels throughout your organization.

[SyncView™](#) *Real-time, synchronized visual factory information system*

SyncView software creates a visual factory so everyone can monitor your equipment and process status in real time — from wherever they are. This interactive, user-directed visual information system provides role- and work-cell based views that expose data and encourage action.

12. How is SyncKanban™ software integrated with my existing systems?

SyncKanban is an affordable, web-based, user-friendly software solution that easily integrates with your existing systems. As a software-as-a-service (SaaS), it requires very little internal IT support. It is configured for your environment to support your goals and business processes. Synchrono® provides ongoing support to ensure high-quality solutions that are tailored to your operation.

13. What is the expected ROI from implementing SyncKanban software?

Each manufacturing environment will experience different results, however, several of our existing clients have experienced up to a 50% reduction in inventory using SyncKanban software.

14. What kind of support will I get from Synchrono during the implementation process? After implementation?

Our comprehensive six-phase implementation process ensures a successful adoption and a meaningful ROI. From pre-implementation project planning to post-go-live support, the Synchrono team will work with you to drive results.

As a complete solutions provider, we model a system for your environment, implement the solution, transform your business processes and offer ongoing services and secure, online support. Role-based training and user-friendly screens ensure your team will quickly navigate our web-based software and realize its benefits.

15. How long does SyncKanban software typically take to implement? Where do I start?

It really depends on where you are in your Lean journey and how demand-driven your processes already are. Several of our clients have integrated their entire operations with SyncKanban software in about four months. However, initial Kanbans can be up and running within weeks. Many clients choose to evaluate their inventory and focus on high dollar inventory or critical parts

first, and then begin a phased work plan on the areas that will have the greatest impact on the organization.

16. What other benefits will I experience if I use SyncKanban software?

Automating supplier, manufacturing and transfer Kanbans will eliminate production waste in support of a Lean environment. Whether integrated with [SyncManufacturing™](#) software or implemented as a standalone subscription service, SyncKanban software enables real-time demand signaling, improves visibility throughout your organization and optimizes your inventory levels with instantly tracking lead- and replenishment-times.