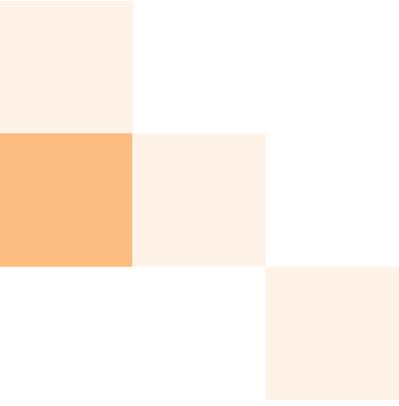




RFID Deployed: A Playbook for Simplified Implementation

How to Reduce Complexity, Minimize Risk, and Get Faster ROI



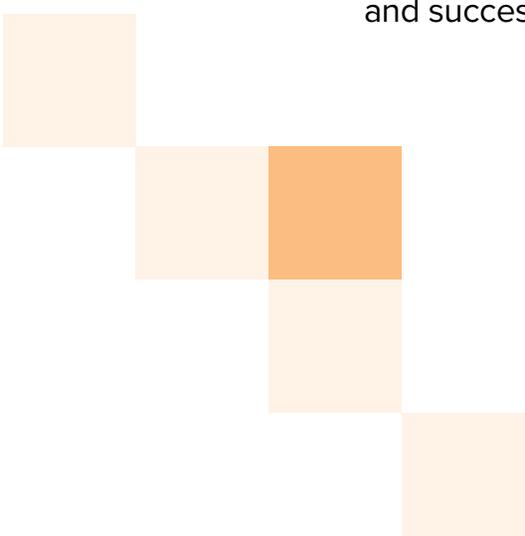


Companies are increasingly deploying radio frequency identification (RFID) to help track and locate their inventory and assets automatically and get better real-time visibility into the status and location all their business-critical items, equipment, components, and more.

But one of the biggest challenges is how to navigate the complexity of deploying such a transformative new technology, especially across multiple facilities and processes—each with its own unique environment and needs.

This also has to be done without disrupting current operations, sapping valuable resources, or creating undue financial risks. And the resulting RFID solutions have to integrate seamlessly with existing business systems and meet enterprise cybersecurity requirements.

This is where a standardized, proven methodology is the best strategy to simplify complexity and successfully deploy and integrate the right RFID capabilities for each site and process.





Why a Standardized RFID Deployment Methodology Is Essential

When combined with the right RFID technologies and software, a standardized RFID deployment playbook can save countless hours of work, stress, and worry, especially when you have a lot at stake and complex requirements to meet, and there is a lot to gain from a successful RFID deployment.

At DecisionPoint, where we've partnered with Zebra to help many leading manufacturers, logistics providers, retailers, and other businesses to successfully implement RFID, we've developed a standardized methodology and playbook that has proven just as helpful to our engineers and team members as it is to the clients we serve.

So, in this overview, we'll explain how our standardized methodology works, why it's so effective, the key components and steps it should include, and share a real-world case study that demonstrates how it reduces complexity and risk while unlocking faster and greater ROI for any business.



Understanding Where You Need to Get Things Right: The Architecture of a Good RFID Playbook

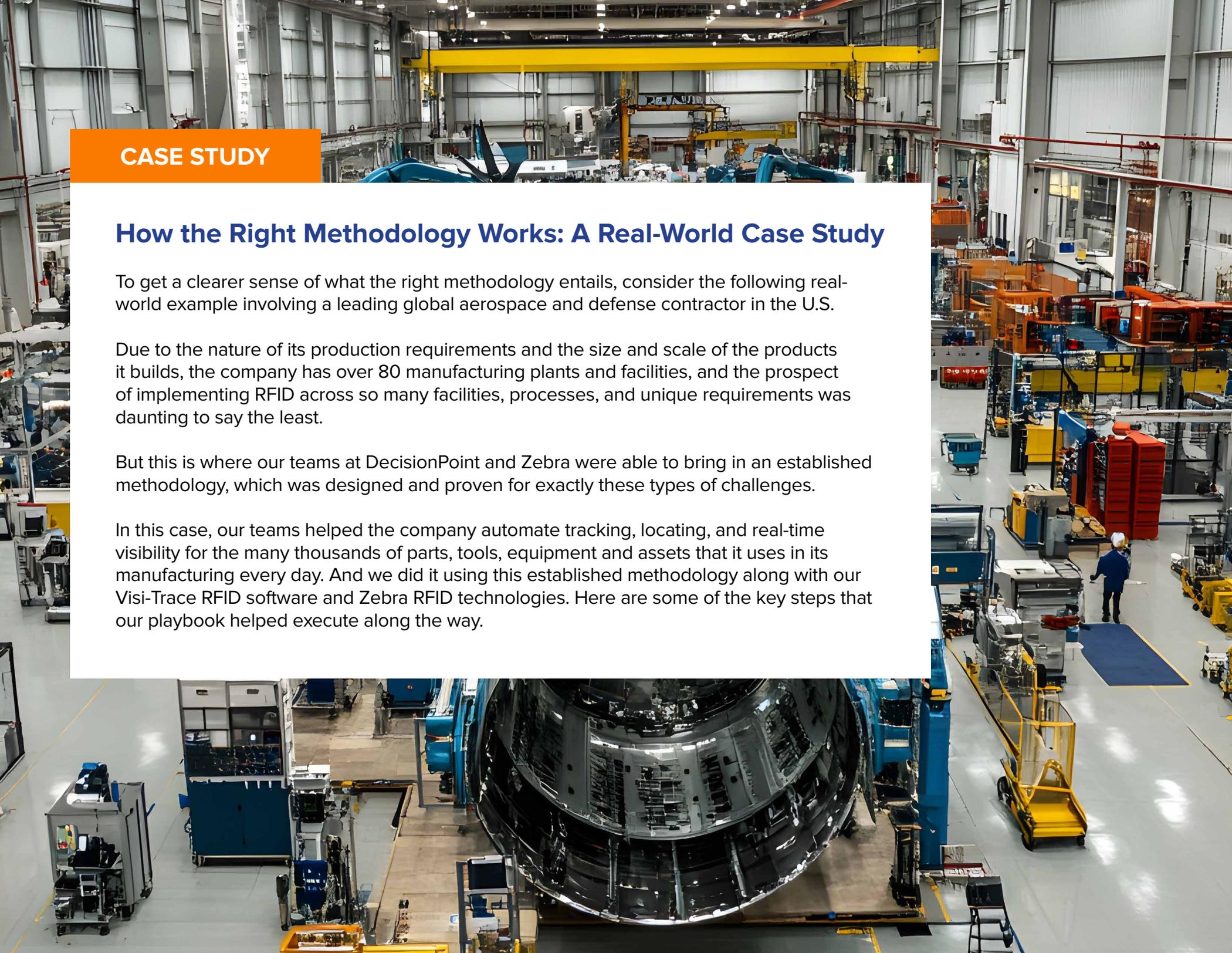
In principle, what we're trying to do with RFID is simple. We want to achieve real-time visibility into the identity, status, and current or last-known location of all the inventory and assets that we want to track in each facility and process.

But achieving that can be a complex task unless you have the right methodology and playbook to guide you. Ultimately, we need a playbook that helps us deploy the right RFID tag printing, tag readers, locationing infrastructure, and software in each facility and for each workflow. And we need to deploy and integrate the right RFID technologies and software to wirelessly and remotely identify, locate, and track those tagged inventory items and assets as automatically and efficiently as possible.

We also need our methodology and playbook to help us design, validate, and deploy the right technologies and systems that will deliver the right performance, with the right level of enterprise cybersecurity, and deliver the ROI and results we need in each facility and process.

So, to start, your methodology and/or playbook needs the following components:

- An enterprise-level approach that you can apply across facilities and processes
- A standardized methodology that's applicable to all areas and needs
- Enterprise-approved technologies that meet cybersecurity requirements
- A master plan for all read points and connections you'll need in each facility and process
- RFID technologies and software that facilitate deployment, results, security, and ROI
- A clear focus on configurability, scalability, interoperability, reliability, and performance
- A way for your RFID software platform to absorb all your collected data
- Integration and data transmission to send and share all data with your ERP or other systems
- A methodology and playbook that keeps risks, interruptions, and costs as low as possible



CASE STUDY

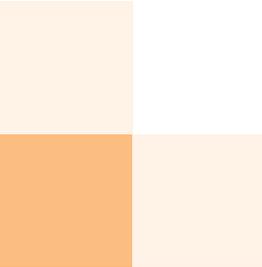
How the Right Methodology Works: A Real-World Case Study

To get a clearer sense of what the right methodology entails, consider the following real-world example involving a leading global aerospace and defense contractor in the U.S.

Due to the nature of its production requirements and the size and scale of the products it builds, the company has over 80 manufacturing plants and facilities, and the prospect of implementing RFID across so many facilities, processes, and unique requirements was daunting to say the least.

But this is where our teams at DecisionPoint and Zebra were able to bring in an established methodology, which was designed and proven for exactly these types of challenges.

In this case, our teams helped the company automate tracking, locating, and real-time visibility for the many thousands of parts, tools, equipment and assets that it uses in its manufacturing every day. And we did it using this established methodology along with our Visi-Trace RFID software and Zebra RFID technologies. Here are some of the key steps that our playbook helped execute along the way.



■ **Assessing Pain Points, Needs and Goals**

We started with a thorough understanding of the company's pain points, needs, and goals, by meeting with corporate executives and management and manufacturing teams across the organization.

■ **Detailing Inventory, Asset and Life Cycle Requirements**

Then, per our methodology and playbook, we got to work on understand the assets and inventory that would be involved, the meta data points and data fields it would need to track, and all their related processes and life cycles—all of which were documented in detail.

■ **Matching the Physical Environment with RFID Requirements**

Also following our methodology, we matched tracking and locating requirements against the physical geometry and layout of each facility, to determine the actual environment where its RFID solutions would need to operate and the key spatial and environmental factors we would need to take into account, in order to select the right RFID technologies and ensure the right performance, read rates, and reliability.

■ **Determining and Assessing Read Points**

Once the physical environment and the tracking and locating requirements and technologies were matched up and assessed, we proceeded with determining and documenting the right read points. This allowed us to build a present a plan map that shows the RFID readers, tags, cables, and antennas that would be deployed at each read point and to match that up with what will be read and where it's going in its processes and life cycle. Additionally, this allowed the client to share this map and documentation with the authorized third parties that handle physical installations in its secure facilities.

■ **Securing Cybersecurity Approvals**

All along, we also assessed enterprise-level cybersecurity requirements, so we could work with Zebra to get enterprise-level approvals once the right Zebra RFID technologies were specified. This way, we could eliminate the need to require site-by-site and redundant cybersecurity reviews and processes. Instead, Zebra's RFID solutions could go through the rigorous vetting process at the corporate level, with the resulting approvals applicable across the entire enterprise, with no additional reviews or approvals required.



■ Implementation, Unit, and Final System Testing

Once approval was secured to move ahead, we proceeded with actual implementation of the client's RFID hardware and software, with installation by its approved third-party providers, and our engineers worked with Zebra to tune the RFID systems and the data capture processes in each unit of each facility.

Finally, with all hardware and software configured and tuned, we performed final system tests to ensure that all data was being captured successfully and transmitted and shared with the company's business systems.

This led to a go-live week where we officially launched all the new RFID systems and solutions, and the company could start realizing and measuring results.

Ultimately, its new RFID tracking and locating allowed it to quickly start realizing key goals for the project, including:

- Real-time visibility into item statuses and locations
- No manual searches or tracking processes
- Easy map-based views and locating of assets and inventory
- Clear insights into last-known and current locations
- Pinpoint locating of items to within 18-20 feet
- Fast, efficient and accurate tracking and locating
- Digital accuracy with virtually no possibility of human error
- Automated business system updates

In fact, you can learn much more about this successful project by checking out our full case study.

[SEE THE CASE STUDY](#)



Applying This Methodology to Your Own RFID Implementation

If faster, more efficient RFID implementation, with far less risk, no operational disruption, and dramatically lower costs are all goals for your company, then it's definitely a good idea to make sure you have the right methodology and a good playbook in place before you seriously start investing in or working on an RFID deployment.

To learn more about best practices, how to get started, and how you can use our DecisionPoint Vizi-Trace software and Zebra RFID to help you build and deploy the right systems and solutions across your enterprise, [contact our experts now](#), and we'd be glad to share more insights, tips, and recommendations to support your success.



www.decisionpt.com | 949.465.0065 | info@decisionpt.com