

The Future of

Digital Work Instructions



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NEXT GENERATION DIGITAL WORK INSTRUCTIONS

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ABOUT MANUAL.TO



Executive summary

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Key terminology

Work instructions are changing. Instead of using traditional papers and PDFs, we're shifting to more digital, next generation methods that incorporate video, providing instant access in the moment they are needed. This change is making information not only more accessible but also simpler, safer, and more efficient.

Looking ahead, while Artificial Intelligence and Augmented Reality will have an increasing impact on work instructions to come, it is important to capture the know-how of workers today, in a format that is ready for tomorrow.

Big companies like Audi, P&G, ABB, Dupont and many more use next generation digital instructions to improve how they train new employees, ensure safety, and overall make their operations run better on a global scale. Making the shift to using these kinds of manuals can be a daunting task, and understanding the pros and cons of different ways of working is crucial.

If you're wondering how to upgrade your way of working, this guide will detail the challenges and benefits to the Return on Investment digitally connected manuals can bring to your business. It'll provide the steps needed to smoothly transition to these new ways of creating, sharing and following work instructions.

Let's get started!

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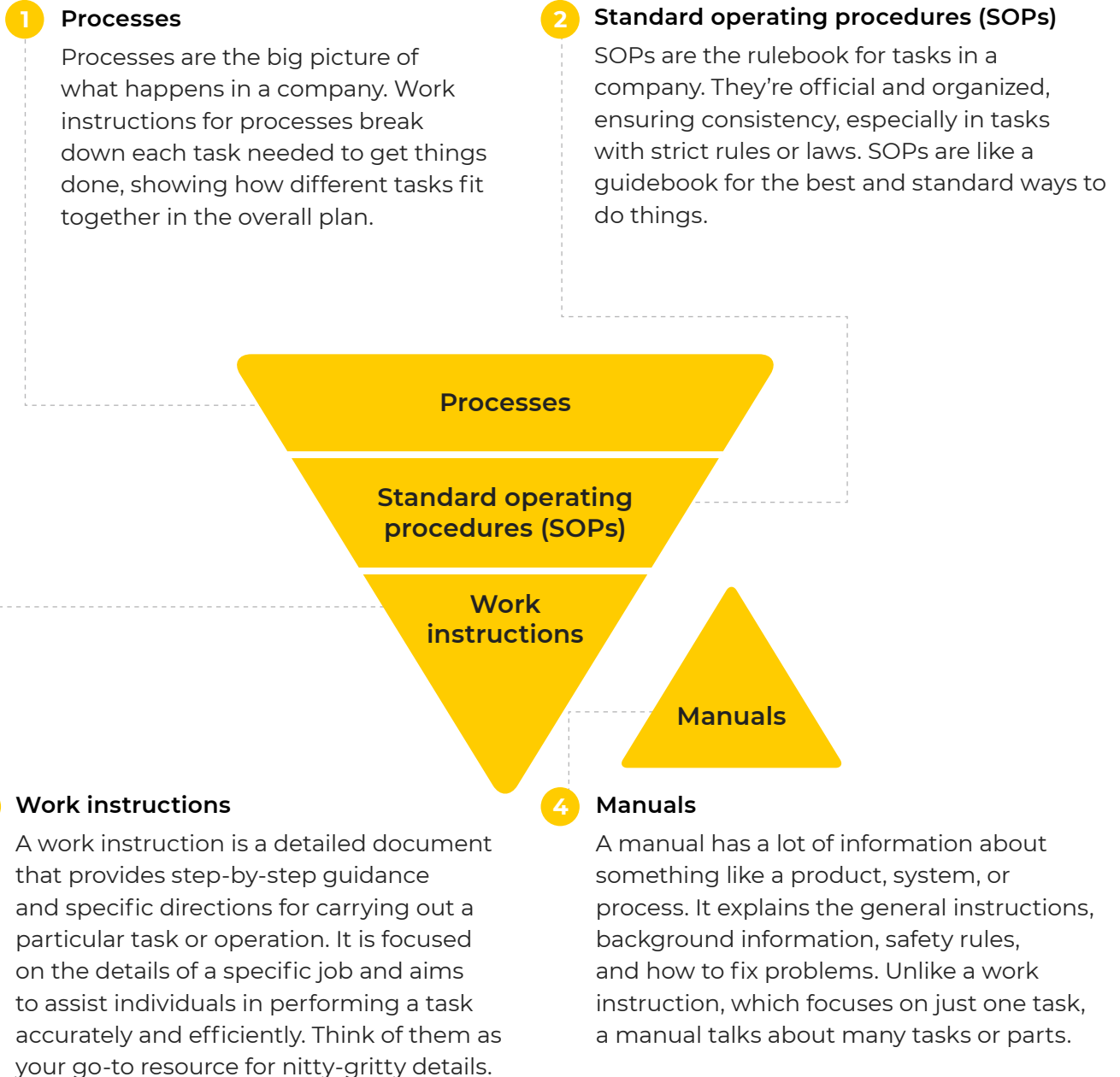
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Key terminology

Before you continue on, get to know these important words to understand the different terms used throughout the document.





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The way work instructions are given, and followed has evolved over time, creating improvements in making work easier and more efficient.

What stage of the evolution are you in?



Verbal instructions

In the beginning, people used face-to-face communication to share instructions. It was quick and allowed for hands-on learning, but steps or tasks could be confusing or misinterpreted as they were shared, especially as companies got bigger.



Paper-based instructions

Papers eventually became the norm for instructions to avoid any miscommunications. Written manuals, checklists, and SOPs became common to ensure consistency every time. But updating them was inconvenient, they were easily damaged and a lot of paper was used.



Simple digital instructions

Next, there was a shift to digital formats like PDFs and PowerPoint. It was faster and more secure than paper. But, updating them in real-time was still a challenge as they were stored in a single location, and not everyone could easily access it, especially from the workforce.



Video instructions

For a few years now, people have been creating video instructions. However, their linear format makes them impractical for on-the-spot training, while the sound component is not useful in noisy environments. Subtitles can be hard to navigate. Editing video still takes a considerable amount of time, resulting in a huge backlog. Because they are hard to update, they get outdated fast.



Next Generation Digital Instructions

Now, we're at the latest stage—the next generation of digital instructions. Digital work instructions are created using video or photos, and are stored on the internet or in apps. QR codes or personalized URLs can be accessed from the main point of need, and information is updated instantly across all locations. This way, everyone gets the latest information, in an interactive and multimedia-friendly way. No more relying on old information stored in a single place!



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Maintenance

Maintain machinery and reduce downtime.



Knowledge

Capture and retain know-how.



Operations

Standardize all processes.



Training

Train and onboard faster.



Health & Safety

Ensure workplace safety and compliance.



Quality

Meet quality benchmarks.



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Each of the following challenges – Ownership, Accessibility and Security – highlights the complexity that should be considered when it comes to documenting the day to day processes of a modern organization.



Ownership

Organizations struggle to find people to take ownership of creation, management and sharing of work instructions.



Accessibility

Global organizations struggle to share up to date work instructions easily.



Security

It's hard to keep work instructions confidential, safe and secure.



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Initial creation

Sometimes, it's not clear who's supposed to handle creating and keeping up with work instructions. This can lead to outdated information.

Regular updates

It's important to regularly check and update work instructions, especially in fast-moving industries. You need to make sure someone is clearly responsible for these updates.

Keeping things the same

For companies that need consistent processes, it's crucial to keep work instructions the same across different places and shifts. This helps with quality and auditing.

Getting everyone involved

Even if you have great instructions, they're useless if people don't use them. Encouraging everyone to use them regularly is a big responsibility.

Sharing knowledge

To turn the knowledge of experienced employees into useful instructions takes effort and a clear leader. With more people retiring than ever, losing this knowledge can have serious impacts on the business.



The **accessibility** challenge

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Accessing information

In many organizations, important work instructions aren't easy to get when you need them, especially in different locations or on the workfloor.

Language troubles

With diverse groups of workers, instructions in only one language can make it hard for some to understand. Text-only instructions can be a barrier for those who need a text-to-speech feature.

Keeping up-to-date

It's tough to keep instructions current and to make sure everyone has the latest version, especially in fast-paced industries.

Remote locations

For organizations with remote or field work, making sure everyone can get to work instructions outside of a regular workplace is an extra challenge.



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Protecting data

Making sure digital work instructions and the info they hold are safe from unauthorized access, cyber threats, and breaches is a top priority for all companies.



Who gets in

Figuring out who can access and edit specific work instructions, especially in big organizations with different roles, needs strong controls.



Following the rules

Following data protection and privacy rules, like GDPR, is a requirement for companies.. This means making sure digital work instructions and their systems meet legal standards, while allowing for transparency and version history.



Remote risks

As instructions becomes accessible from far away, ensuring they're safe from risks linked to remote access, like unsecured networks, is crucial.



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The challenges that were mentioned are always present, but shifting to next generation digital solutions brings benefits that help to counteract them.

From talking to digital: quick and easy updates

Digital platforms let us update instructions right away and share them instantly. No need to print and circulate the latest version. Everyone gets the newest info as soon as it changes.

All in one place

All instructions are in one digital spot but accessible everywhere, so everyone follows the same ones.

Easy to see

Check digital instructions on computers, phones, or tablets using QR codes or URLs.





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The benefits

Simplifying ownership: making it easier to manage

Next generation digital work instructions help with the challenge of ownership in two key ways:



Easy to handle:

They're easier to manage from one central location and seeing who manages what creates transparency.



Simple edits

Making changes or adding new information is easy and only done once. Updates go to all instruction points at the same time.

Better training: sharing knowledge in an engaging way

Digital work instructions can incorporate different kinds of multimedia, making learning more fun and effective.



Videos and pictures

Adding videos and images to text helps you learn better. Video is especially helpful in providing real life examples without needing to be on the floor.



More insight

Features in digital work instructions can track things like how long a work instruction was read for, until what point, and who read it, making it easy for the owner to follow up.



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For everyone: easy access for all

Digital work instructions are made for everyone in the company:

- Language help**
Instantly translate into 100s of languages using artificial intelligence, making the one work instruction accessible globally.
- Listen up**
Digital work instructions can also be read out loud with built-in text-to-speech features.

Staying safe: strong security measures

Security is a big deal for digital work instructions, especially when they discuss sensitive content.

- Who sees what**
Different access levels allow for key stakeholders to decide which employees or departments can see what items, keeping information consistent and safe.
- Web-based access**
Compared to mobile applications, web-based applications have consistent access, use standard ways to check who's logging in and reduce risks of storing data on your device.



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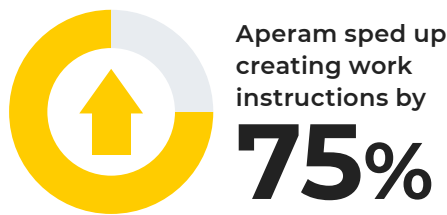
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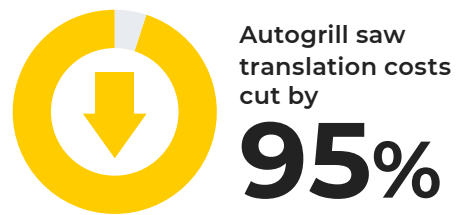
Work instructions creation efficiency

Create content for new work instructions quicker with simple and easy user interfaces.



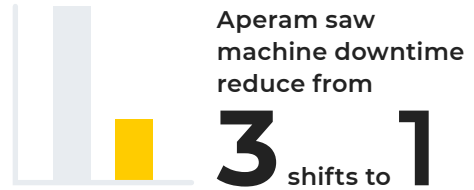
Cost reduction

The transition to the next generation of digital work instructions leads to substantial savings in printing, translation and distribution costs.



Downtime reduction

Being available at the point of use means machines can be fixed by anyone, quickly and efficiently.



Compliance

Help with compliance in changing industry standards and regulations. Compliance-related costs, including penalties, can be significantly lowered.



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Standardized procedures

Consistency in training and execution of tasks is another significant benefit. In a global company, this means that employees in different regions follow the same procedures, reducing differences in performance and quality.

Bekaert Deslee saw a

 **150%**
increase in
standardization



Autogrill saw
96% employee
engagement in new trainings

Team engagement

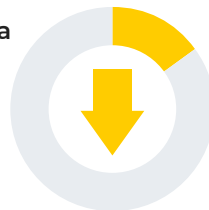
Interactive digital instructions enhance learning engagement and retention. Metrics like training completion rates and post-training assessment scores typically see an improvement, indicating a more effective training process.

Error reduction

Accurate and up-to-date instructions help minimize operational errors and workplace safety incidents.

Bekaert Deslee saw a

15%
decrease in
workplace errors



Training efficiency

Reduce time needed to train employees, allowing them to focus on other important tasks.

Aperam managed to
reduce training time by

80%
per employee



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The future of digital work instructions is bright, with the impact of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR).

AI and machine learning

AI will play a pivotal role in enhancing digital work instructions, with features like auto-generating content based on existing work instructions and real time translation of content. AI-assisted editing will also become more common, with the system suggesting or completing written sections of the work instructions, streamlining the creation and updating of processes.

The emergence of AR and VR technologies

AR and VR will offer more immersive and interactive ways to present work instructions, making complex tasks easier to understand and execute. VR will also create the possibility of remote training of teams before they move to the workflow. A great example is the [collaboration between Manual.to and Iristick](#), a provider of smart glasses.





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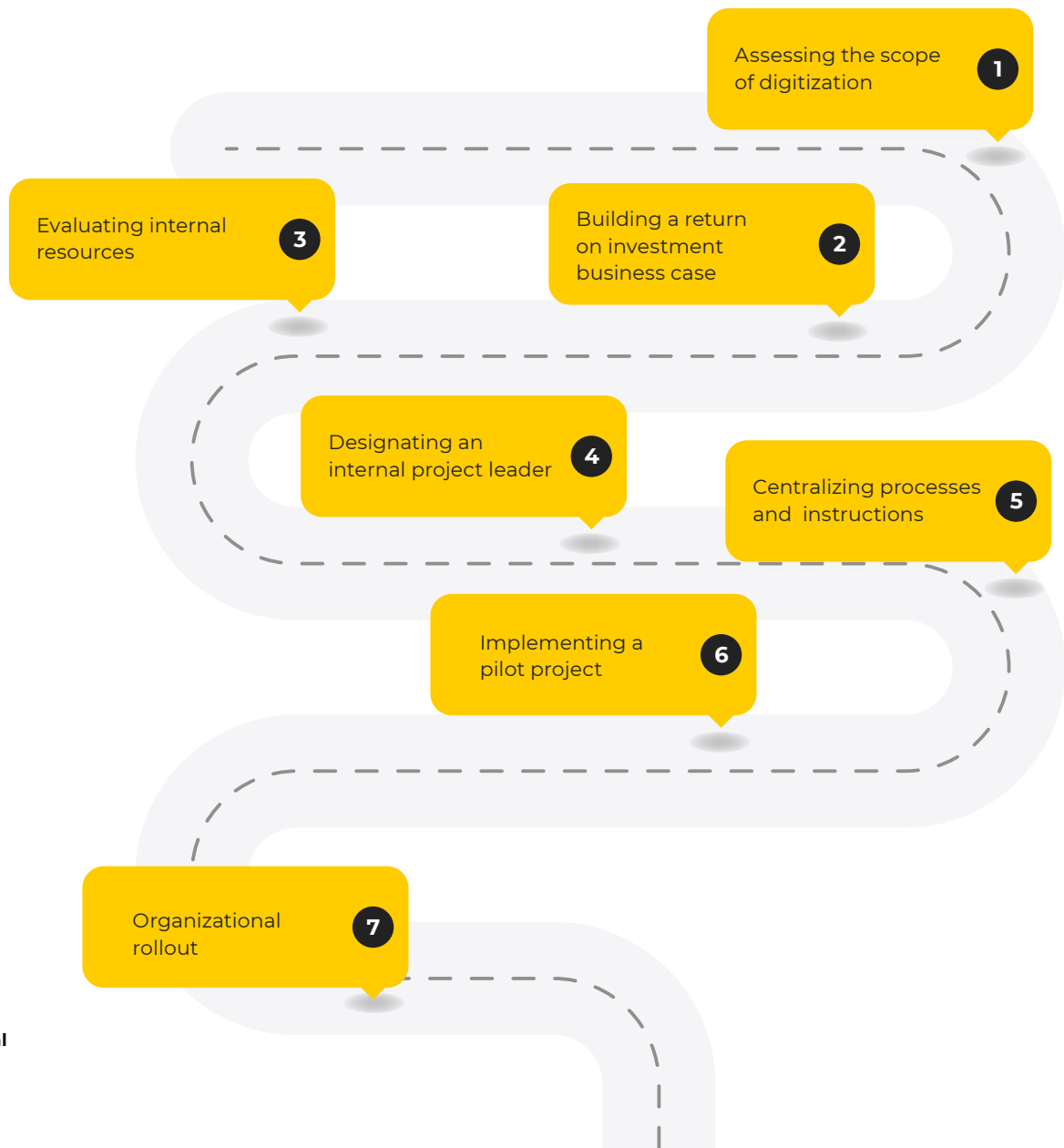
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Partnering for success Implementing digital work instructions

Moving to digitally connected work instructions is a big project. To make it easy and successful, it's smart to work with a partner who specializes in this kind of product. Once you've picked a partner to go on this journey with, here are the important steps to take together.





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Assessing the scope of digitization

Begin by working with your partner to assess the potential scope of digitization within your organization. This step involves identifying key areas and processes where digital work instructions can create the most value.

2

Building a return on investment business case

Work together to create a strong business plan. Clearly explain the expected positive results, like working more efficiently, saving time, and having less downtime. Showing these advantages will prove the project is valuable and will help get approval from everyone involved.

3

Evaluating internal resources

Check what your organization already has in terms of money and people. This will show where more help or resources are needed. It will also help plan how to train employees on the new system throughout the transition.

4

Designating an internal project leader

Appoint an internal project leader who will oversee the project. This leader will act as the go between for the organization and the partner to ensure smooth project execution.



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Centralizing processes and instructions

Gather and structure existing procedures from the areas identified in the scope to ensure they are incorporated into the new digital system.

6

Implementing a pilot project

Conduct a pilot project with your partner's support. This pilot will allow you to evaluate the effectiveness of the digital work instructions, fine-tune the approach based on feedback, and understand the practical implications of the full scale implementation.

7

Organizational rollout

After the pilot is successful, it's time to use digital work instructions everywhere within the organization. This means making sure everyone is using the new system the same way in all the right places.

Having a good partner is key. They'll give you lots of help, ideas, and the right tech solutions. This makes sure your change goes smoothly, and fits with your long-term goals.



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The transition from traditional work methods to the next generation of digital work instructions is a significant move toward achieving greater efficiency, safety, and adaptability. Key highlights include:

Evolution to next-gen digital

Shifting from traditional ways of communication to the next generation of digital work instructions is crucial. It helps address major issues and aligns with the evolving needs of modern businesses for quick adaptability.

Tackling core challenges

The next generation digital work instructions effectively handle challenges related to ownership, accessibility, and security. They offer a more agile and responsive approach to managing work instructions.

Advanced accessibility and security

Future developments in next generation digital work instructions focus on making them easy for everyone to use, regardless of their background. Efforts are also being made to ensure that important information stays secure and protected.

ROI and operational efficiency

Adopting next generation digital work instructions provides significant returns on investment through cost savings, improved training outcomes, error reduction, and compliance adherence – ultimately enhancing overall operational efficiency.

Incorporating advanced technology

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR), and Virtual Reality (VR) into next generation digital work instructions is set to revolutionize information dissemination and utilization in the workplace.

The transition to the next generation of digital work instructions is not merely a technological upgrade; it represents a fundamental transformation in how organizations share knowledge across departments.

The impact of this transformation is extensive, offering a pathway to more productive, efficient, and secure operations. Looking forward, the significance and influence of next generation digital work instructions is expected to grow, becoming an indispensable tool for modern organizations.



.to make the world smarter, safer and more productive

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About manual.to

Manual.to is a leader in the next generation of Digital Work Instructions that help in creating engaging work instructions and manuals in 3 easy steps:



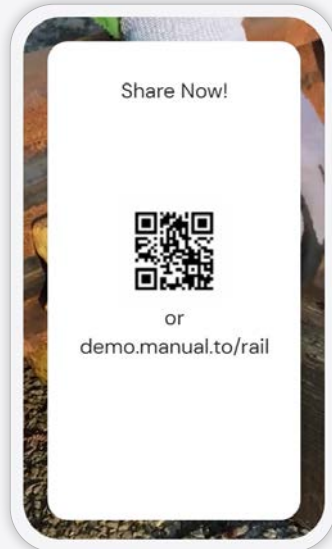
1

Take photo or video



2

Add text



3

Share

Companies that use Manual.to



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