

Replace or Reinvent? The ROI of Control Upgrades

WHEN "STILL RUNNING" QUIETLY BECOMES A LIABILITY

Control panels are rarely replaced because they fail—they're replaced because the risk of failure grows too high. Obsolete hardware, lost support, and evolving safety standards increase the cost of outages and compliance issues over time. Full replacements reduce that risk but bring downtime, long lead times, and rework. Targeted panel modifications offer a practical alternative, reducing risk now by modernizing critical components within the existing enclosure—without committing to a full replacement.



MODERNIZE WITH PURPOSE

The line between legacy and modern isn't a reset—it's a transition.

Purpose-driven upgrades connect proven equipment to safer, more reliable, and supportable systems built for today.

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MODERNIZING WITHOUT THE MELTDOWN: REAL RESULTS

To support expansion while minimizing risk and downtime, Copper Fiddle partnered with Craft Automation to modernize their controls. The original panel was re-engineered into a larger enclosure, eliminating the need for auxiliary panels or new field electrical work while adding upgraded agitator VFDs, control for two heating elements, and compliant safety interlocks—resulting in increased capacity, improved safety, and a future-ready platform without a full panel replacement.

THE HIDDEN TAX OF OUTDATED CONTROLS

Every time you buy new equipment, ask yourself whether you're choosing what you want or what your PLC can handle. One client spent six years buying outdated hardware—serial VFDs, low-resolution HMIs, and proprietary controllers—just to stay compatible with a 1990s panel, paying more for fewer features and harder maintenance. The total cost: \$130,000 more than upgrading the panel first. Modern PLCs support modern protocols—stop paying the compatibility tax.

READY FOR AN UPGRADE

Not every panel should be saved—but most can be evolved. The key is knowing where risk, obsolescence, and downtime intersect before failure forces the decision. Use our assessment tool to evaluate whether your system is better served by targeted upgrades or a clean-sheet replacement. Click This Link:

[Panel Upgrade vs Replace Advisor Tool](#)

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