

GUIDE

LEARN HOW TO
SCALE YOUR BUSINESS
WITHOUT HIRING MORE PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

Imagine ramping up productivity to meet growing business demands without increasing headcount. This is possible with a strategically implemented robotic process automation (RPA) project.

There are many reasons why robotic process automation (RPA) is growing faster than any other technology sector right now. RPA's software robots can be configured to execute routine tasks much faster and more accurately than any human worker. And once the RPA solution has been deployed and refined, it can be scaled up or down to create an agile digital labour pool.

These and other factors all contribute to this technology's ROI.

This guide presents a more in-depth discussion on why it makes good business sense for organisations to augment their existing workforce with RPA software robots – as a strategy for growing the business without increasing labour costs.

RPA IS GROWING, FAST!

Robotic process automation (RPA) is the fastest-growing enterprise technology on the market today. As more companies invest in this cost-efficient business optimisation software, Gartner predicts that RPA revenue will reach \$1.3 billion during 2019.

RPA's appeal lies in its ability to digitally transform business processes without the need to replace existing, mission-critical IT architecture. RPA software robots operate at the user interface of the same applications and software assets that employees currently use. There's minimal impact on the underlying systems, allowing companies to benefit from automation without having to undergo major IT change projects.

With an RPA platform in place, an enterprise can deploy software robots to automate the repetitive, rule-based tasks that consume countless employee working hours. And once it is configured to execute a specific process, an RPA solution can complete this robotic work much faster, more consistently and more tirelessly than a human can.

As an example, we recently set up a live process demo, which showcased how a software robot was able to carry out two customer address detail changes in 28 seconds, compared to the 1.45 minutes it took for the experienced human worker to complete the identical task steps.

This represented a substantial time saving, which could have an even greater impact in a real back office setting where this process is carried out routinely, and at high volume.

INCREASE PROCESSING AND MAINTAIN HEADCOUNT

Given the accelerated speed at which RPA is able to execute processes, this automation approach gives organisations the potential to increase productivity and scale up operational output without going to the expense and effort of recruiting more people.

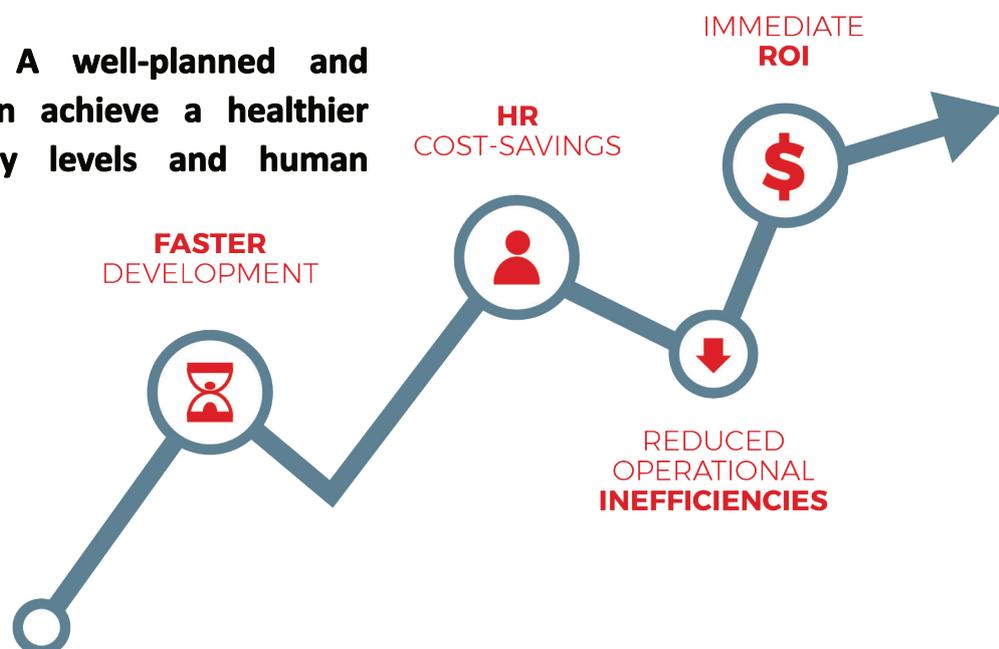
With this approach, companies can keep their labour costs level while avoiding the complexities associated with sourcing, training and managing a new team of employees.

Typically, when a company needs to deliver services faster or increase production to keep pace with growing demand, the organisation hires (or outsources) more staff to manage the extra work.

For each member of staff added to the workforce, the company ideally wants to see a proportionate increase in productivity levels. Unfortunately, this is not always the case; and headcount rises with only a slight uptick in productivity.

Sometimes, this is due to the fact that processes work across various departments and rely on siloed line-of-business systems. A fragmented approach to data management and collaboration slows productivity down. Also, without a structured workflow in place that defines duties and manages milestones, delayed hand-offs between staff members and departments can cause bottlenecks.

Luckily, there's a solution. A well-planned and implemented RPA project can achieve a healthier balance between productivity levels and human resource costs.



THE POWER OF HUMAN-BOT COLLABORATION

Most processes, regardless of what function they belong to, include a range of repetitive manual activities that can be delegated to software robots. If the company breaks each process down into its individual steps and passes the well-defined, business as usual (BAU) transactional tasks on to an RPA solution – skilled human workers are free to focus on higher value tasks within the process.

Working together, existing staff members and the new digital workforce can process work faster and more effectively than either resource would alone. The result? The organisation is able to increase revenue generating activities without hiring extra people.



RPA TO ENHANCE CUSTOMER ON-BOARDING

For example, one common process that can benefit from this approach is customer on-boarding. Skilled human agents can handle the complex human-to-human interactions that are required to convert prospects into customers. Then, an RPA solution can be pulled in to manage the routine on-boarding process.

Bots can seamlessly interact with multiple data sources and systems to collect and verify customer information – and then transfer this into the relevant database without making errors. Additionally, the RPA solution can easily scale up or down to manage fluctuating customer volumes during peak season and other circumstances.

INJECT MORE FLEXIBILITY INTO THE “LABOUR” POOL

Once a process has been structured for automation and the software robot has been configured to execute this process, it can be scheduled to run when needed on as many robots as are required.

The flexibility and scalability of a robotic workforce builds a strong business case for RPA, because it provides any organisation with an agile digital workforce that can grow or shrink painlessly and efficiently to meet new opportunities – or challenges.

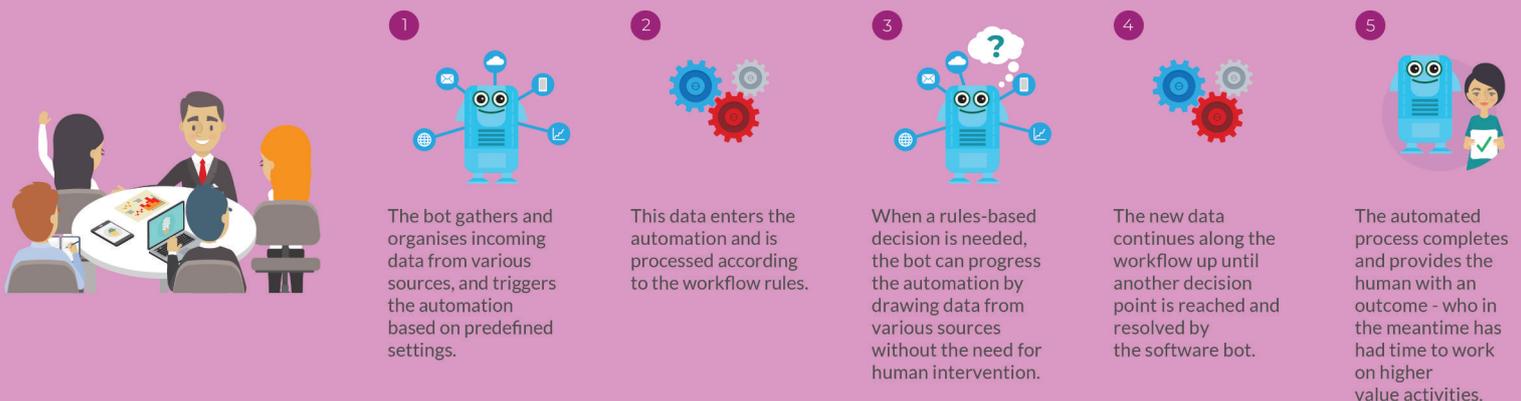
This may seem similar to outsourcing – except for the fact that RPA allows the company to manage all its resources in-house. This improves process governance and control, while supporting business continuity and knowledge retention.

Therefore, any business that has already outsourced tasks which are well-suited to automation could leverage RPA to bring this work back in-house.

The result? Outsourcing costs are eliminated without the need to hire any additional staff internally.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

velocity



IN SUMMARY: KEY REASONS TO AUGMENT YOUR HUMAN WORKFORCE WITH AN RPA PROJECT



INCREASE PROCESSING CAPACITY

When implemented effectively, RPA can increase productivity levels rapidly and continuously. If software robots are applied to straightforward, BAU processes, productivity gains can be achieved in a short timeframe, sometimes in a matter of weeks. And once bots are up and running, they can work around the clock, without feeling drained.



REDUCE RISK

Human error can disrupt business and lead to security or compliance violations that impact worker safety and the bottom line. Automating key tasks reduces this risk; and enhances the consistency – and therefore quality – of output.



CONNECT AND COLLABORATE

Many processes rely on large volumes of content, as well as multiple systems that store and manage that data. RPA makes it easier for enterprises to connect their content management and collaboration tools, so that processes are not delayed by gaps between these resources.



SUPPORT COMPLIANCE

RPA software logs every action, making it easy for managers and compliance teams to monitor whether processes comply fully with rules and regulations. These records can be handed directly to auditors and authorities, if necessary, to provide evidence of regulatory compliance.

HUMANS STILL ADD VALUE

As mentioned, the human workforce still has immense value to add in an RPA-augmented environment. The approach to business optimisation discussed in this article does not focus on reducing headcount, but rather on increasing output without ramping up human resource costs.

Introducing RPA will, however, encourage business leaders to rethink traditional job roles, modernise their processes and reorganise their departments so they can gain optimum value from both human and digital resources.

With RPA handling the easily definable, rule-based processes at high volume, humans can apply higher value skills to tasks to move business forward.

THE WAY FORWARD

When RPA is not implemented strategically as part of a sound process transformation strategy, this technology may not deliver the expected results. By collaborating with a business optimisation expert, however, organisations can position themselves to optimise the ROI of the RPA project.

As a vendor-agnostic organisation, Velocity can act as an independent technology and process automation advisor, providing guidance on how to implement RPA successfully in the most relevant process areas.

References: (1) <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2019-06-24-gartner-says-worldwide-robotic-process-automation-sof>



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