
The Agile Approach to Realising a Big Idea

European Public Service Organisation adopts RPA
to Accelerate Digital Transformation



UiPath

Atos

Introduction

With Digital Transformations underway, organisations may have considered Robotic Process Automation (RPA) but be unsure of what it means for them and their existing operations. There are many reasons for this, but generally it is down to the uncertainty of scale, the complexity of change, the magnitude of implementation costs and more largely to questions around realisation of returns.

Organisations are also under pressure from customers. Today's customers are expecting costs to be minimised, service to be quicker and digitally accessible. In this context, organisations are considering how RPA can simplify customer interactions and speed up service delivery.

There remains some mystique about the term "Robotics" in RPA. Pictures of physical robots are prevalent. Yet an RPA robot is simply smart software that mimics a human user's work on a computer; interacting with the system's applications as a user would. An RPA Robot can be seen as a virtual worker doing the mundane, repetitively boring rule based tasks that human employees normally undertake.

% of Job Transformation

% of tasks which will be automated
Cumulative Percentage Of Job
Tasks Cannibalized

Employment categories	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Management, business, and financial	11%	21%	33%	45%	58%	72%
Professional and related	10%	19%	30%	42%	54%	67%
Protective service	6%	13%	21%	30%	39%	49%
Nonprotective	7%	14%	22%	30%	40%	51%
Sales and related	8%	16%	25%	35%	46%	58%
Office and administrative support	8%	16%	26%	36%	46%	58%
Farming, fishing, and forestry	6%	13%	21%	30%	39%	50%
Production	6%	12%	20%	28%	37%	46%
Construction and extraction	6%	12%	20%	28%	37%	47%
Installation, maintenance, and repair	6%	12%	20%	28%	37%	47%
Transportation and material moving	6%	13%	20%	29%	38%	48%

The Future Of Jobs, 2027: Working Side By Side With Robots, Forrester Research, Inc., April 3, 2017

Organisations are at different stages of maturity and are running at different speeds in their adoption of RPA. This article follows the story of one such organisation, in the early days of its journey. The story should be of inspiration to anyone looking to automate because it reflects how the benefits of RPA can be realised in a smooth and low impact way.

The situation

Our use case follows the story of a large European Public Sector body and how it delivered quick wins with process improvements. Improvements meant a reduction to 25% of original time being spent on processes and reduction of the human error rate of 7%.

This has set in place an industrialised RPA approach to streamline a dynamic backlog of additional processes.

The organisation provides crucial central government services upon which the general public is reliant on a daily basis. They were faced with the need for pressing and immediate cost reduction and were looking to shift from a legacy way of doing things to a digitally empowered operation. Their digital transformation involved migrating from outsourced IT suppliers to in-house delivery and shifting their services from largely paper-based processes to online and self-service.

The challenge

The organisation has a large number of manual administrative processes. Many of these involve transferring data to and from different applications.

Teams on the ground were feeling the frustration of their time being consumed by clerical tasks rather than having the freedom to focus on higher value responsibilities and better serve the general public. Moreover, the Digital Transformation itself was being delivered over phases with an elongated transition between legacy and new applications. This was delaying ROI and benefits realisation.

Starting the conversation

Having delivered a breadth of Consulting and IT services across all areas of the Public Sector, Atos benefits from deep sector and industry expertise, contributing a good understanding of stakeholder expectations, business processes and overall priorities.

The initial conversation stemmed from a review of the current situation. With new technology being established, a bridge was required from legacy systems to new systems. Two choices for the bridge were either a set of new APIs which were expensive, or reverting to manual workarounds that would be labour intensive.

Given these suboptimal choices, Atos introduced the idea of RPA as a third solution. And to demonstrate the business benefits of this technology, an initial Proof of Value was proposed; a short demonstrator to outline RPA's potential returns on investment. The Proof of Value ended up being the first of a five phase journey; it set the foundations by generating early enthusiasm, excitement and momentum among key stakeholders from both the IT and the business side of the organisation behind what could be achieved.

Phase 1. The RPA Proof of Value. Showing the possibilities in a short, sharp sprint.

“The desktop-based automation was delivered and showcased in 3 days.”

As a starting point we wanted to work with the client and show them what was possible; a simple Proof of Value, demonstrating how an RPA solution could transfer data from

online application forms to legacy systems. This involved installing RPA software on client desktops, taking a dummy process and applying automation to it. The desktop-based automation was delivered and showcased in 3 days. The benefits of this approach for the client were that there were no upfront hardware or software costs; trial software could be used on a “show me don't tell me” basis.

The demonstration helped to demystify RPA and show how it could potentially be used with other processes.

With the benefit of this insight and “quick win”, the organisation were keen to go further and start thinking about tooling, creating an automation strategy and applying it to live business processes.



Phase 2. The RPA Capability Study. Identifying the best technology for the project.

The capability study was conducted over a 5 week period and delivered a rigorous assessment of potential RPA vendors against the organisation's needs. It involved reviewing requirements and developing a qualitative and quantitative list that could be used for vendor selection.

In line with the Atos approach, the selection process was technology agnostic, opening up possibilities with a range of vendors. A bespoke assessment model was developed which enabled adjustment of requirement weightings, evaluation criteria and other model parameters so that a dynamic view

of the results could be flexed. 7 parameters for assessing vendors included:

Architecture - notably the ability to operate in a cloud environment (future proofing), the ability to 'learn' and make judgements based on data trends and logic conditions, the ability to support server deployment and proof of a mature and established product with proven use cases;

Data extraction - notably the ability to extract data from a variety of sources;

Processing - the ability for attended operation to allow manual intervention via prompts;

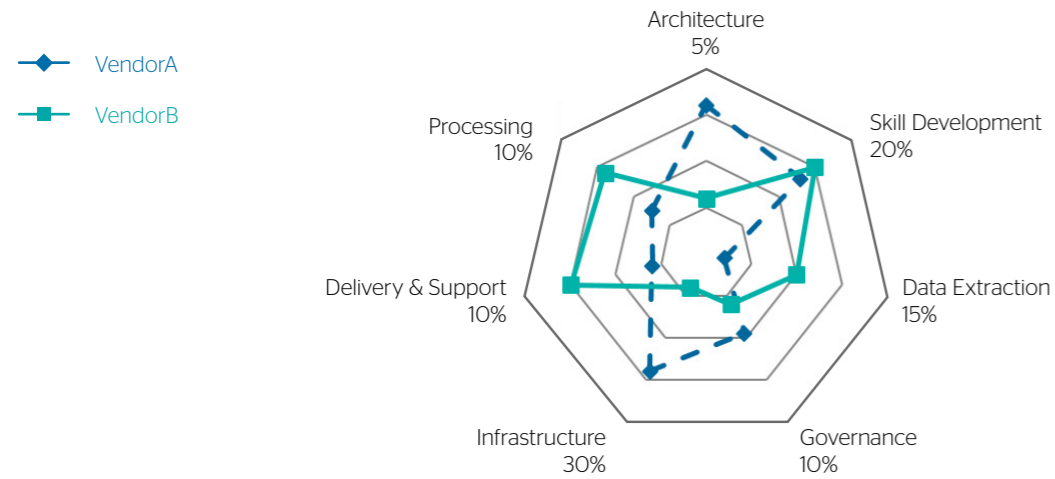
Delivery & support - the ability of partnerships, collaborations and resources to deliver the solution;

Infrastructure - the ability to operate in a Microsoft Windows Server and to support and operate with Mozilla Firefox desktop browser;

Governance - the product should be listed (or can be procured under) the appropriate procurement framework;

Skill development - the application should be easy to use and navigate, and the vendor should offer high quality training and certification.

The 7 parameters for vendor selection



The top-four vendors were all recognised market leaders in a cost versus fit view and provided the organisation with a number of suitable options. UiPath was the vendor product that scored highest against the requirements frameworks as a strong capability fit. It also had a favourable Total Cost of Ownership, considering all direct and indirect costs. A variety of data sources fed into the assessment and included analyst

reports, Atos Subject Matter Expert (SME) insights and vendor responses. UiPath was also shown to have some notable features including an approach - UiPath offers a trial version to test the solution freely - that meant early impact studies could be done within 2 weeks, and an intuitive user interface that made it simpler to learn and create bots. The license model from UiPath was also shown as flexible and scalable, offering

additional benefits of either onsite or online training, a certification pathway and a 24/7 support team. The Capability Study was rapid but rigorous. It provided assurance that a suitable RPA vendor and product were selected, not only for current but also anticipated future requirements; including in areas such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cognitive capability and the ability to interact with data analytics.

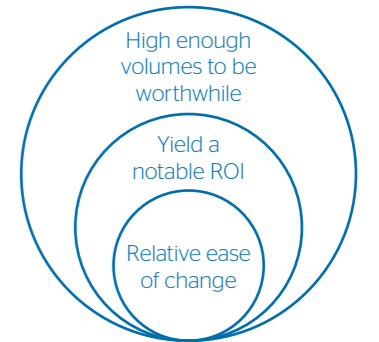
Phase 3. RPA Discovery Insights. Striking the balance on the optimal processes to address first.

With an RPA Proof of Value completed and the Capability Study identifying a suitable vendor product, the next phase was to single out and prioritise candidate processes. The RPA Discovery Insights study took place over a 6 week phase.

Selection criteria were applied against current processes to maximise the impact from those chosen. It included targeting:

- processes with high enough volumes of activity to be worthwhile and show a benefit;
- processes that would yield a notable Return on Investment - accruing a tangible and quantifiable business benefit;
- ease of change - striking a balance between a quick fix that was easy to implement but had relatively low returns and a more complex fix with greater returns.

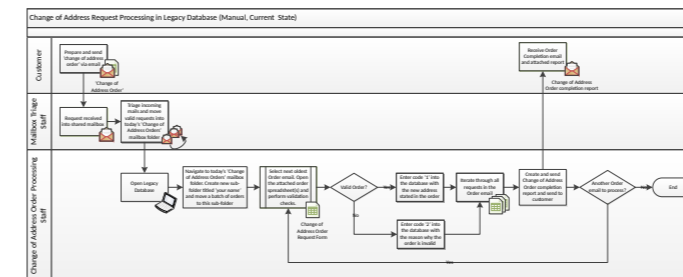
Process criteria targeted for automation



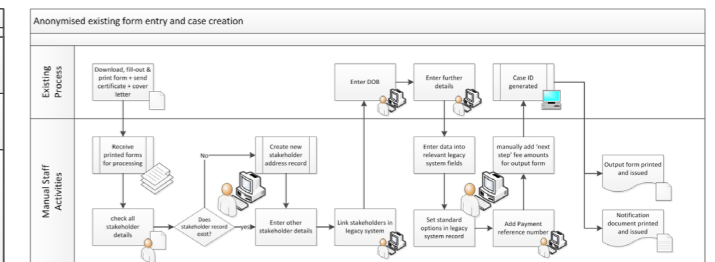
Two candidate processes were identified:

1. The first was a relatively standardised, highly repetitive, high volume process involving a largely manual activity of processing 1200 orders per day into a legacy system and informing the requestors of successful (or unsuccessful) input into the system.
2. The second was also manually intensive with 200 documents per day in scope but was a more complex and fragmented process. The views before and after automation are shown below:

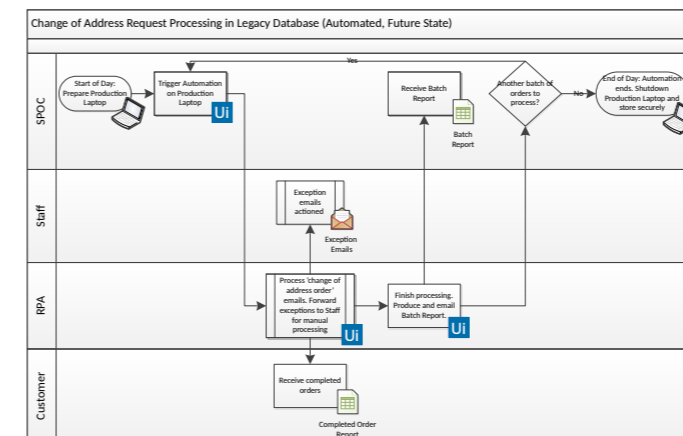
Process 1, before automation:



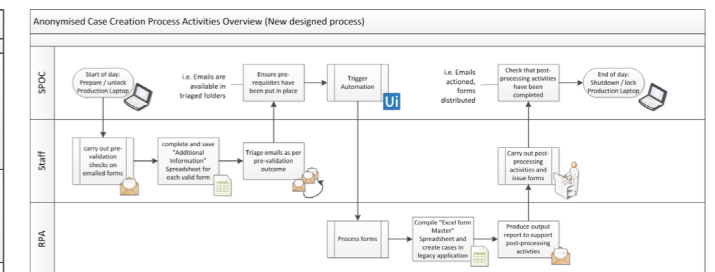
Process 2, before automation:



After automation and working with the organisation and UiPath



After automation:



Phase 4. RPA Implementation. Making it happen in an Agile way.

The fourth phase consisted of a series of sprints over 10 weeks.

For the implementation, the organisation's requirements had to be fully addressed by assessing the situation, undertaking iterative

design, development and testing. For design to be fully realised, automations were created in UiPath Studio, the automation development tool, with the process steps then clarified back with the owner before iterative release and testing.

The design was modularised. For example, if changing inputs were recognised, the approach could be reconfigured. The mechanics behind this approach remained flexible to changing input scenarios, supporting greater adoption by the organisation.

The implementation was supported on a number of fronts. A core team of trained developers and business analysts had to be available to support the organisation and a comprehensive Training Plan was put in place to take the organisation forward. On licensing, a way forward was agreed between all parties to ensure adequate coverage.

Webinars were also organised to support change inside the organisation - demystifying what RPA was, the likely benefits, and what was required from stakeholders. These assisted in wider organisational buy-in.

Measurable outcomes

“As it is the case most often with RPA, benefits are not - and should not be - limited to quick fixes and immediate cost improvement.”

On the first process, time spent on it was cut to 25% and this freed up 100 hours per week. On the more complicated process run time was also cut to 25% of the original and a commensurate freeing up of 140 hours a week was achieved.

As it is the case most often with RPA, benefits are not - and should not be - limited to quick fixes and immediate cost improvement. The freeing up allowed teams to move on to more value-add activities such as more efficiency tending to customer needs. Using iterative sprints and process standardisation also contributed to improvements in service quality and reliability.

The collaborative nature of the approach encouraged a rich backlog of further RPA opportunities to be uncovered. With automation in place, the respective processes would be easier to transition to new digital solutions by minimising APIs.

Phase 5. RPA industrialised solution. An approach to creating and working through a backlog of candidate processes.

Once the first two processes were implemented, we were able to identify steps for isolating likely future candidate processes and how implementation could be both standardised and continually improved.

These first two successes highlighted the benefits of using an Agile Minimum Viable Product (MVP) approach and engendering the incremental philosophy of 'learning by doing'. After just 10 weeks, both processes were live and registering a tangible benefit. The organisation could stand to benefit either by saving FTEs in due course, enabling a reduction in ongoing admin costs, or by redeploying resources to focus on more complex tasks and improve the service delivered to the general public.

To identify future candidate processes, decision criteria included prioritising processes that were:

- manual and repetitive, with the same task being repeated with little variation;

- largely rules-based, requiring little or no human judgement or intuition and being able to be executed by a set of standardised rules that could be written down;
- with low exception rates, the same process happening in exactly the same way every single time with few deviations;
- having standard and readable Digital Inputs and ideally low complexity;
- suitably high volume.

Taking into account the parameters of the decision criteria and having a view on where benefits would most likely accrue, a backlog of candidate processes could start to be assembled. Benefits were noted as more likely on processes that were user error-prone and that happened on mature and stable systems.

Based on this approach, the next two processes were quickly identified. These involved creating financial claims cases and lodging of assessment claim appeals.



“After just 10 weeks, both processes were live and registering a tangible benefit for the organisation.”

Reza Khalesi,
Managing Partner, Head of Business Performance Improvement Solutions

What's Next

The organisation now have teams upskilled and on training pathways in the appropriate methodologies, empowering and enabling them to take forward the industrial solution. The next two processes identified are the start of forming an Agile backlog - a prioritised list of work to be completed. Employing an Agile way of working, with rapid planning and retrospective assessment, relevant areas will be moved into development through iterative sprints. In tandem, Atos is working with the organisation to explore further options that are available in scaling up. The onus is now on the organisation's delivery teams to identify and develop new entry points.

Atos are delighted to have been and continue to be the trusted partner for the organisation in realising their growth in adoption of RPA. This has been powered by UiPath technology, which was instrumental in getting the organisation to a more mature adoption of RPA and excited to realise future possibilities.

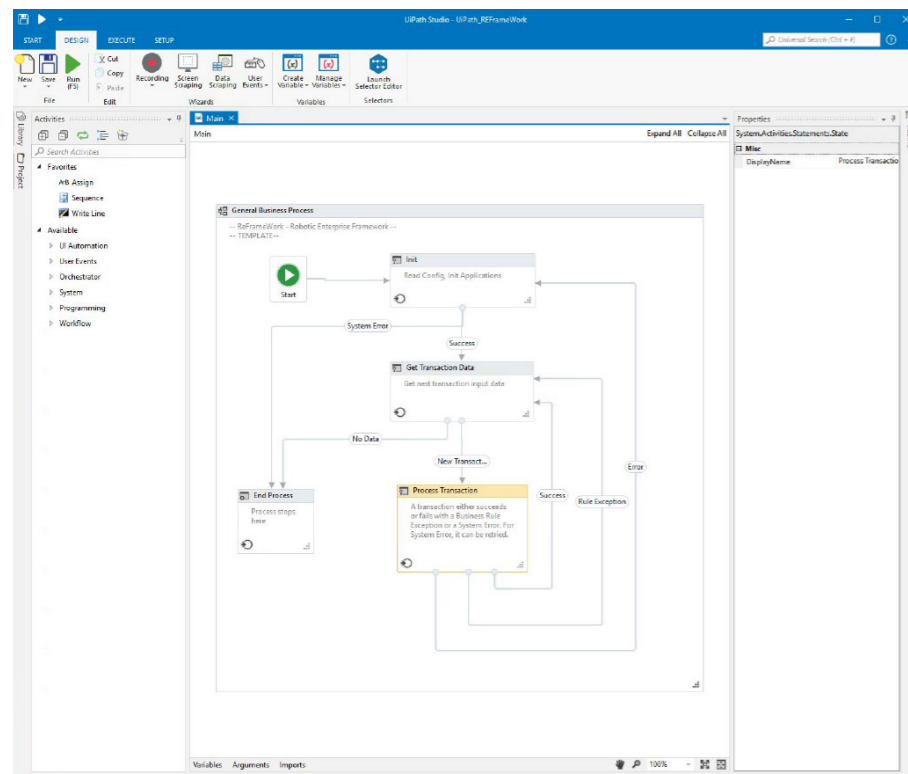
We have a joined-up approach to Robotics - an approach that not only reduces costs but also creates differentiation with real-time intelligence. It utilises lean methods and supports the organisational change journey,

with full consideration of different software platforms and being further enriched by a deep functional experience of our client's processes.

The evolution is towards intelligent automation - empowering organisational decision making by bringing data and RPA closer together. It doesn't happen overnight, but the story at our Public Service organisation proves that with the right approach, small steps can compound into a giant leap forward.

Contributors

Nicolas Baghdadi, Head of Global Marketing Operations, UiPath
Reza Khalesi, Managing Partner, Head of Business Performance Improvement Solutions
Cameron Orr, Principal Consultant



UiPath Studio, the workflow designer where automation can be configured in a visually intuitive way.

Repetitive Process

- 25% of original time spent
- 100 hours freed up per week

More complicated process

- 25% of original time spent
- 140 hours freed up per week

About Atos

Atos is a global leader in digital transformation with approximately 100,000 employees in 72 countries and annual revenue of around € 12 billion. European number one in Big Data, Cybersecurity, High Performance Computing and Digital Workplace, the Group provides Cloud services, Infrastructure & Data Management, Business & Platform solutions, as well as transactional services through Worldline, the European leader in the payment industry. With its cutting-edge technologies, digital expertise and industry knowledge, Atos supports the digital transformation of its clients across various business sectors: Defense, Financial Services, Health, Manufacturing, Media, Energy & Utilities, Public sector, Retail, Telecommunications and Transportation. The Group is the Worldwide Information Technology Partner for the Olympic & Paralympic Games and operates under the brands Atos, Atos Consulting, Atos Worldgrid, Bull, Canopy, Unify and Worldline. Atos SE (Societas Europaea) is listed on the CAC40 Paris stock index.

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atos.net

Let's start a discussion together



About UiPath

Built for both business and IT, UiPath is the leading platform for Enterprise Robotic Process Automation (RPA). The company is at the forefront of the digital business revolution achieving over 500% yearly revenue growth since 2015. A global community exceeding 30,000 users and over 450 enterprise customers and government agencies use UiPath's Enterprise RPA platform to deploy attended and unattended software robots quickly and accurately resulting in better business outcomes, stronger security and compliance, and higher job satisfaction.

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