From pilot to full scale RPA deployment

A comprehensive guide to the business transformation journey

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After a successful RPA pilot, many organizations struggle to define a path forward to a successful ramp-up and a sustained roll out of an automation program. They face some sort of “chasm” wondering how to move forward, what level of resources to mobilize, what level of benefits to expect and also what pitfalls to avoid or best practices to implement. To help decision makers cross this chasm and shed some light on the issues they are confronted with, we’ve invited Vargha Moayed, Chief Strategy Officer at UiPath, to share his expertise as former EY advisory partner heading the RPA Center of Excellence based in Bucharest, and offer practical guidance.

We will first describe the steps and the parameters decision makers need to consider to move from a pilot to a full roll-out and then we will share with you the most common pitfalls that may hinder a successful roll-out from the tactical/operational ones to the more strategic ones.

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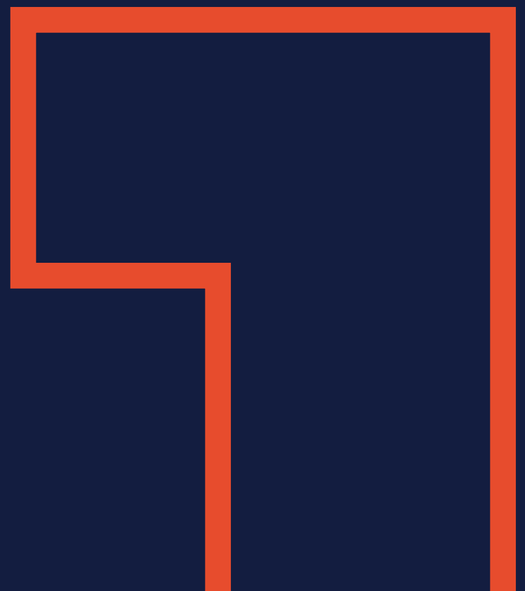
Preparing for an RPA roll-out



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The roll-out preparation phase

Pilots are usually limited efforts whereby organizations experiment with the RPA technology, test if it actually “works” and, when put into production, if it “works” in their specific environment. Pilots come in different forms and flavors. Some are initiated at a lower level in the organizations and/or within a single entity of a global organization, with or without the knowledge and explicit backing of the C suite. In most cases, they are limited in scope (1 to 3 processes automated), involve modest budgets and last between 6 to 12 weeks.

However, while a successful pilot can demonstrate that RPA indeed works and provides the expected benefits, it does not suffice to prepare an organization for the full roll-out. To do so, organizations need to go through a phase which, for a lack of better word, we will name the “roll-out preparation” phase.

This phase’s main objective is to prepare the roll-out plan and elevate the RPA program into its necessary strategic dimension (see the danger of failing to do so in pitfall #1).

Ideally, not to lose the momentum a pilot might have provided, it is recommended to either start this phase before the pilot comes to an end per se (some organizations combine the two phases into one) or to extend the pilot by automating another batch of “quick wins” processes as the organization gets its ducks aligned.

During the roll-out preparation phase, an organization needs to engage the C suite in the RPA program if it has not done so already in order to give the RPA deployment a strategic dimension.
In addition to the socialization of the RPA concept with key stakeholders, the champions of the RPA deployment will need to prepare a plan that takes into consideration several key dimensions:

a. Scope

An organization needs to decide on the scope of the RPA program. Will it cover only a few functions (e.g. finance, HR) or will it potentially be extended to all functions? Will it concern only a few entities/countries or will it be global? If so, what will the timing of the roll-out be for different functions/entities? Will it be a single global program or will the organization allow for multiple RPA initiatives?

b. Sourcing

An organization needs to make up its mind relatively soon in the process on how it wishes to proceed as to the mix of in-house versus outside help. Many other decisions relating to cost, talent build-up requirements, speed of deployment etc. will depend on this initial choice.

c. Business plan

Based on the scope and sourcing decisions, a high-level business plan needs to be developed, fed by a high-level process automation potential assessment in order to secure the proper level of funding for the program.

d. Operating model

The type of internal organization that is required will need to be assessed, again depending on the sourcing choice and also by differentiating between a build-up phase and a steady run phase.

e. Change management

Last but not least, stakeholder and change management plans need to be prepared and funded.

a.

For large multinationals, the scope of the RPA roll-out is a topic that requires careful consideration as it will impact the overall success of the program.

The first question companies need to ask themselves is which functions to include. Companies in the financial services industry have been the early adopters of RPA. The technology matured at a time when these companies were faced with increased non value added compliance requirements (business-wise) that created a lot of extra manual processing work. Naturally, then, RPA was first chosen in compliance related processes at these firms. Today, all industries are embracing RPA, and generally back office functions (e.g. finance, HR, procurement) are the areas most ripe for the technology. We generally recommend that clients start with back office functions while quickly considering also client facing functions that might be error prone.

The second question for large corporations is the one concerning entities. How many entities should be included? For instance, if back office functions are partly centralized in a shared service center and partly still processed at the individual company level, should RPA only be deployed in shared service centers? Our recommendation is to include both from the start, while processes at shared service centers might have more volume and be more standardized (both good attributes for automation), often the cost savings and standardization opportunity at individual entity level might be higher. So, we recommend to include both in the scope and the RPA program could even become an alternative to further offshoring of back office activities.

The third dimension is one of geography. Should the program include all geographies or should each region/country have its own program? We clearly advocate a global program from the get-go otherwise an organization could be faced with multiple RPA initiatives failing to capture the economies of scale and having to deal with complex future maintenance and management issues regarding its virtual workforce.

So while a company should start its roll-out in countries, entities and functions that clearly offer the most potential, the program itself should be thought through with the largest possible scope and communicated as such to avoid RPA “chaos”.

Furthermore, the initial effort (build-up phase) needs to be substantial, otherwise, it will become increasingly difficult to keep “at bay” countries and entities that will, rightly so, wish to benefit from the technology and might consequently start their own programs.

b.

As mentioned earlier, one of the key questions organizations will need to answer is how much of the build-up and run phases they wish to do on their own, versus how much of all that they would need support for. It is hard to imagine given the extra effort required that any organization could manage alone the entire build-up phase. Nonetheless, even if they are supported by an outside professional firm, we strongly recommend that some internal skills be developed to better leverage the outside help.

At a minimum, organizations should have their process owners become “RPA conversant” so that they can by themselves understand what should or should not be automated. Organizations that have a continuous improvement/lean group, could, for instance, envisage to train them in RPA as RPA business analysts.

Also, after having gone through a relatively short training (two to three weeks in most instances), a couple of people from the IT department could also join the RPA team as solution architects. It is debatable whether organizations should develop their own developers especially if they are based in high wage countries.

Regardless of whether they do or not, it is advisable to centralize development skills to serve all business units rather than peppering them throughout the organization.

c.

The business case will obviously be impacted by the scope, ambition, speed and sourcing option of the program.

While a business case is necessary, it is important to keep in mind that several key variables will be "refined" as the roll-out progresses. As such, some "tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty" is necessary like with all new technologies.

If the business case relies on increased productivity by repurposing or reducing FTEs, two variables have the utmost importance:

1. Number of FTE "liberated" per process automated
2. Number of robots used per automated process

The first variable depends on the processes chosen to automate and can be estimated up to a point through process assessments prior to deployment.

Both variables will improve over time as scale is reached (see pitfall #1). As more processes are automated, it is easier to "repurpose" an FTE that was working partially on several sub-processes.

Likewise, as more processes are automated, it becomes easier to optimally assign robots to different tasks at different times of the day or moments of the week hence improving the ratio robot to automated processes.
Some key figures are important to keep in mind, the cost of a Robot's annual license is a fraction of most countries' fully loaded average annual compensation cost per FTE; however one should realize that the total cost of implementing robots in a build-up phase is about 10 times the cost of the technology itself. Furthermore, later on, one should also consider the cost of maintaining the virtual workforce.

d.

COE vs ROC

In these early days of RPA deployments, one often hears about the necessity for organizations to build Centers of Excellence or Expertise, also known as COE. There is a fair bit of confusion about them.

The first confusion comes from the fact that because we are, for the most part, in a build-up phase, many organizations are being advised to build COEs as some kind of internal special task force. By doing so, they may fail to fully realize yet that RPA is not a “project” but something that once deployed is here to stay (e.g. a virtual workforce) and as such will require a full-fledged operating model or as we call it a “Robotic Operation Center” (ROC).

Let us contrast for a moment the difference between a COE and a ROC. A COE is predominantly a nimble, project based type of organization to be used in a build-up phase with little to no ongoing operational responsibilities; a ROC, on the other hand, needs to be an organization with clear governance principles, and operational responsibilities towards its internal clients, the business lines it serves.

In practice, organizations can indeed start with a COE that will eventually morph into a ROC but it is important to understand the difference and start planning for a ROC which is the essential organizational unit needed for a sustained RPA program.

There is no one size fit all solution in designing a ROC and it will depend in part on the sourcing model that an organization would have chosen. Nonetheless, there are some key dimensions to consider:

What kind of skills will be required?

What type of structure will the ROC be (e.g. fully centralized, hub and spoke)?

What are the governance principles and detailed procedures and SLAs for its day to day functioning?

d.

Required skills

To better understand the skills requirements for running a ROC, let us briefly review the functions of a ROC. They can be divided into three large categories.

First, there is continuous process automation development and change management which consists of continuing to develop new automated processes as well as supporting the changes required in existing automated processes. These changes could be driven by changes in business requirements and/or updates required because of changes in the underlying applications.

Second, the ROC needs to provide operational support which consists of several tasks: 24/7 monitoring and troubleshooting of robots, capacity management to make sure that robots usage is optimal across processes, performance management, constant liaising with IT and security departments and ad-hoc reports such as audit trails for instance.

And finally, technical support is required, which consists of troubleshooting any technical issue that may arise and providing first and second level technical support and, when necessary, escalating technical issues to the RPA vendor's support team.

The ROC functions can be from entirely in-sourced to entirely outsourced. Any of the three main functions: development and change management, operational support, and technical support can all either be done internally or externally.

d.

Required skills

Looking specifically at the automation process itself, we can distinguish seven steps (see page 15) and throughout these steps, a series of skills and roles will be needed, namely:

A process Subject Matter Expert who will provide his/her input in steps 1&2.

A Scrum Master, in effect an automation Project Manager who, according to the agile terminology will supervise the overall implementation from step 1 to 7, combining both good technical knowledge, business understanding as well as project management skills.

An RPA business analyst' who deals with understanding in detail the process and business requirements, and some technical requirements (supported by the Solution Architect) and having a good knowledge of RPA to be able to spot what can be automated and redesign, if necessary, the process to best fit automation.

A solution architect who works hand in hand with the business analyst and RPA developer to ensure the design of the RPA workflows are solid and incorporate all technical constraints.

An RPA developer who, based on the chosen technology, develops the workflows under the supervision of a solution architect, participates in the User Acceptance Testing step and is in charge of the hypercare.

In practice, some of these roles can sometimes be embodied by the same individual.

In addition to the skills and roles described for the automation process itself, there will be a need for:

Process controller, who is tasked to perform the second and third function of the ROC (i.e. operational and technical support) and whose role is to monitor the robots, to alert for problems, to perform root-cause problem analysis with the help of solution architects, to actively perform capacity management and to provide ad hoc reports. The skills set required are similar to the one of a senior RPA developer.

An IT infrastructure specialist dedicated to RPA is necessary to interface with the organization's IT function in order to establish and maintain the environment required for testing and developing robots. She also needs to be the prime liaison person with the IT department to know about changes and the future release of underlying applications.

A Security specialist (depending on the size of the virtual workforce) needs to be assigned, either part time or full time, to the RPA team to make sure that all of the organization's security requirements are followed and any future security breaches are prevented.

RPA trainers may finally be required if an organization is growing very fast and wishes to insource its RPA training capabilities.

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d.

Structure

Looking at the 7 steps process (see page 15) required for automation, the first 3 steps can be either performed by the ROC or by RPA business analysts embedded in different departments/divisions and that have intimate knowledge of the processes in the department they belong to.

The input for the assessment of processes to be automated can either be fully centralized according to a clearly defined methodology applicable to an entire organization or partly decentralized and performed by trained RPA analysts embedded in the most important divisions or departments. It is recommended however that the prioritization itself be centralized.

The other ROC roles can either all be located in a single location or be dispatched in a hub and spoke model in different geographies for a global company or entities if some entities are large enough to justify it. Regardless, we recommend for the ROC to be under a single leadership and be managed as a single team. This will allow for economies of scale, ease of knowledge transfer and better balancing of workload.

d.

Governance principles and procedures

The last crucial question to answer is whom should the ROC report to. This is a non-trivial question as automation activities will at times require strong backing especially when they will start re-engineering processes. While there is no definitive answer to this question as every organization is unique, it suffices to say that the reporting should be at C level and not simply IT.

Finally, a ROC will need to develop clear procedures in terms of change management, security, compliance, and establish SLAs towards its internal clients. For instance clear procedures will need to be in place to clarify who has the authority to request and approve a change in an existing automated workflow; when and how the risk functions have to give their approval before automating a new process; how the IT communicates with the ROC about application changes, IT applications decommissioning, new roll-outs, etc.

e.

During this preparation phase, the RPA promoters need to socialize and educate top management about the RPA in order to secure their backing. In addition to the C suite, they need to pay special attention to some key stakeholders upfront. They will need the collaboration of the IT and security departments, the backing of business line managers who are going to be the beneficiaries of RPA and who need to give their blessing to some of the process re-engineering and also assuage the fears of internal risk and internal audit teams.

These are the major stakeholders that need to be on board upfront. However, as the RPA program unfolds, there will also be a need to develop a broader change management and communication program to address the anxiety that the deployment of robots may cause people who will be directly affected by them. Last but not least, there will be a need to collaborate with the HR department to develop a plan for the people whose jobs will be impacted by the automation.

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The seven steps of process automation

1.

Process identification and prioritization

This exercise involves applying a methodology by which the right processes are chosen and prioritized according to their potential and complexity vis a vis automation. In other words, it's about processes being assessed for their RPA compatibility.

2.

Detailed process assessment

This second step consists of examining a process in more detail in its components to see if the potential and complexity assessed at first still hold and also what percent of this process can actually be automated. During this closer examination, some of the processes chosen at first will probably be discarded.

3.

Process redesign

Invariably when the time to automate comes, organizations will discover that their processes are not as standardized, optimized, documented or followed as they thought. We highly recommend them to take the opportunity to optimize the process before proceeding to automate it.

4.

Defining detailed user stories & business requirements

This crucial step consists of describing the process to its most detailed steps and understanding as much as possible all the potential exceptions (technical and business) in order to develop robust RPA workflows that will be passed on to RPA developers.

5.

Development

In this step, based on the work done in step 4, actual RPA workflows are programmed and the process is automated.

6.

User Acceptance Testing

During this step, the automated process is tested to observe its behavior and to correct potential bugs and catch potential exceptions that might have been missed during step 4 & 5.

7.

Hypercare

It is recommended that for a period of 2 weeks, the process be carefully monitored by the person who has developed the automation to be able to intervene and quickly correct any remaining issues that may appear until a high level of reliability is reached.

Common pitfalls to avoid for a successful ramp-up

Often the best practical form of guidance consists of clearly stating pitfalls that might derail an endeavor and provide some solutions to avoid them.

Having helped already multiple organizations in their efforts to ramp-up automation programs, we have come up with a list of common pitfalls ranging from strategic to tactical/operational that have proved to be the main culprits of failed or difficult ramp-ups. Recognizing them upfront and avoiding them will help organizations increase their chances of a successfully large RPA roll-out.

Based on our observations, there are 10 such commons pitfalls to avoid in order to be able to successfully ramp up an RPA program after a compelling pilot.

Having a solely tactical approach to RPA

With its “presentation level” integration capabilities (as opposed to data and application layer integration), its agility and relative user friendliness, it is tempting to see RPA as only a tactical solution for an organization. A solution that would allow practicing “swivel chair” integration among legacy applications, easily fill in the automation gaps left by all other enterprise applications and ultimately unburden people from repetitive, copy-paste type of tasks.

Undoubtedly RPA does all of the above and a quick product demonstration would suffice to convince people of its attractiveness and to entice organizations into running a pilot on a couple of sub-processes that are particularly repetitive and manual.

However, while the notions of “quick wins” and “low hanging fruits” are worthy and necessary devils of corporate life, it would be a mistake to choose processes based solely on their stand-alone merit, or in other words to tactically multiply the “quick wins”. Instead, a strategic approach to RPA is required, and this for at least 3 reasons:

1.

Theoretically, a robot could replace 5 to 6 FTEs by virtue of working 24/7, processing tasks on average 20% to 30% faster than a human and eliminating idle time between process steps, especially when handled by multiple people.

Often business cases are built around the promise of at least a ratio of 1 Robot to 3 to 4 FTEs. Unfortunately, a tactical approach to RPA deployment will fail to deliver such results and will instead lead to disillusionment and potentially to a stop of the RPA roll-out.

Why is that so? For robots to replace 3 to 4 FTE, there need to be enough subprocesses to automate so that the RPA can spread its benefits among many such automatable instances that can then be managed in a complementary fashion. For instance, what would be the benefit of having a tool that can work 24/7 when none of the processes chosen can be performed at night?

With a strategic deployment of RPA, processes will be chosen more wisely and management would have been informed that a certain scale and time are required to see the full benefits of RPA. This strategic support of the C suite is crucial to fully benefit from RPA.

2.

As organizations embark on RPA deployment, it quickly appears that the processes to be automated are more often than not, not optimal, not documented, not standardized and even not followed. Of course, one could automate processes as is, i.e. suboptimal. That approach would be missing an ideal opportunity to really increase the productivity of an organization.

However, to be able to simultaneously perform automation and process re-engineering, the team in charge of the RPA deployment needs to have received the strategic mandate to do so with the backing of top management who accept that the automation effort can thus last longer but, ultimately, be much more powerful.

3.

Finally, having a tactical approach to RPA deployment runs the risk of missing the strategic importance of RPA from a technological standpoint. What is RPA fundamentally? A technology that connects all other IT applications non-invasively and seamlessly. As such, it is possible that RPA solutions are going to become the “platform” or “backbone” through which all other automation technologies will eventually be connected/organized, be it ICR, chatbots, Artificial Intelligence and of course existing automation solutions such BPM or ERPs. Understanding this upfront will allow integrating RPA technology in the overall organization’s IT strategic roadmap.

Considering RPA as an IT only topic

At first, many IT professionals manifest what we might call a “cognitive dissonance” reaction to RPA

RPA was “invented” initially to respond to the frustration of business people in large organizations with what they perceive (rightly or wrongly) as the inertia of their IT colleagues toward pressing business driven demands. To implement RPA, one needs to intimately understand a process at its lowest level (i.e. working instructions) and all its exceptions, the actual word used for it being “user story”.

With its relative (compared to traditional IT solutions) ease of development and user-friendly interface, RPA tilts the balance of required knowledge towards process understanding much more than IT. It actually empowers business people to be able to finally build a required automation relatively quickly.

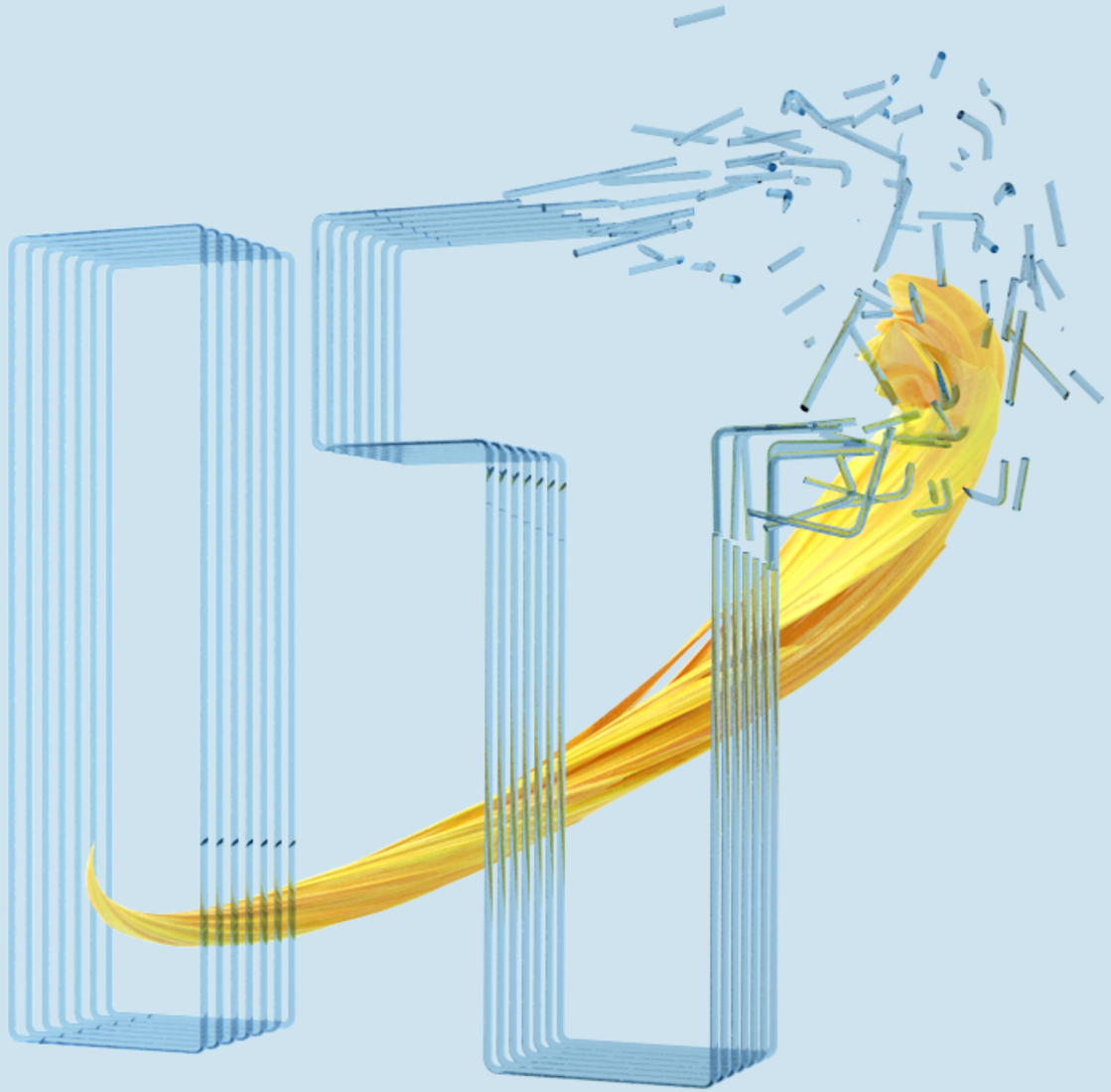
At first, many IT professionals manifest what we might call a “cognitive dissonance” reaction to RPA. It appears too easy, hence threatening their hard earned and cherished skills. Their first reaction is similar to how European drivers, who have painstakingly learn to drive a stick shift car, react when they are first confronted with an automatic car: ”It does not drive as well” they say. Perhaps...

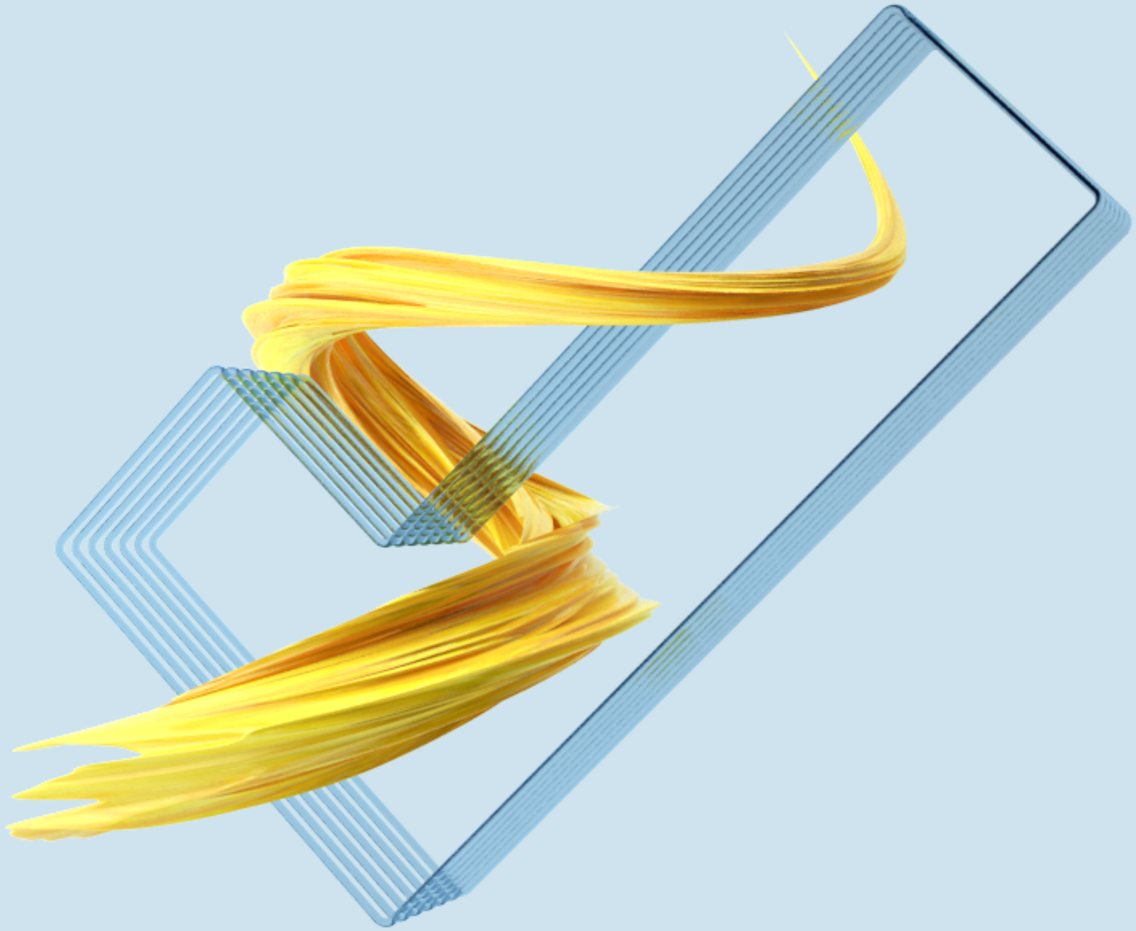
Rarely have IT professionals been the trigger to start an RPA pilot in an organization. The agile approach of RPA development makes them sometimes uncomfortable, and they remain at first suspicious that RPA could indeed be a non-invasive technology. So, by and large, organizations should not expect their IT divisions to be champions of this new technology and hope that they will be the driving force in pushing for RPA implementation. They neither have the full set of required skills nor, in many cases, the motivation to do so.

Forgetting about IT

As detrimental as believing that RPA is an IT issue, is forgetting to involve IT. Both from a practical and strategic perspective it is crucial to have the IT department on board. Practically to deploy RPA there is a need for close interactions with the IT department. From the more mundane but crucial issues of RPA infrastructure set-up and access rights for robots, to more important issues such as future application roll-outs, changes and de-commissioning, all of which can affect the performance of robots.

From a strategic perspective it is also essential, as argued earlier, for the IT leaders of an organization to fully understand the current and future capabilities of RPA solutions in order to integrate them in the overall IT roadmap of their organization. While RPA is business driven, it most certainly needs to be IT governed. Hence, taking the time to “onboard” the IT professionals in your organization is a key success factor for being able to build a sustainable RPA program.





This ‘let a thousand flowers bloom’ approach might be good from a change management perspective, but it runs the danger of not delivering the value that top management expects from an RPA program.

Not selecting carefully enough the best processes to be automated

Once the potential of RPA is demonstrated during a pilot, often with a WOW effect, the danger can be that the team responsible for the RPA may be overwhelmed by the demand for automation. Requests may be driven by users that wish to automate the least pleasant processes and/or by people that have the most heft within the organization. This ‘let a thousand flowers bloom’ approach might be good from a change management perspective, but it runs the danger of not delivering the value that top management expects from an RPA program.

Indeed, not selecting processes to be automated carefully and not prioritizing them methodically, runs the risks of automating them with low potential for productivity gain versus the expected benefits, or even worse, it runs the risk of automating processes using underlying applications that might be scheduled for decommissioning.

To avoid this situation, it is advised to implement a rigorous methodology that will examine processes according to their potential for productivity gain, the complexity of development and complementarity. To do so, one would need to look at criteria such as level of human judgment involved, volume, number of FTEs involved, number of exceptions, variability, number of underlying IT systems, the current level of process standardization and documentation, number of steps in the process, data quality, etc.

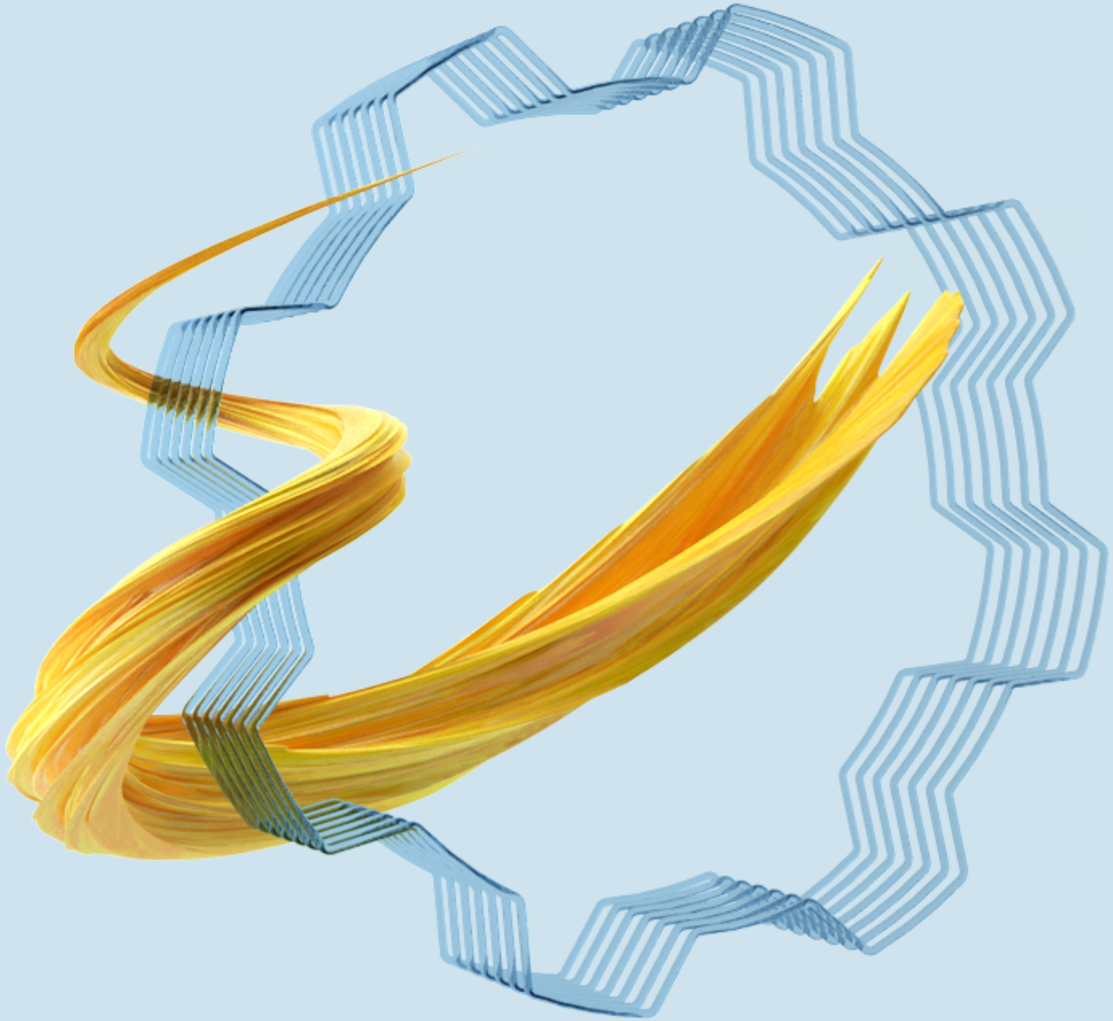
In addition to a rigorous process assessment methodology, organizations should implement clear and semi-transparent prioritization procedures (“semi” because quite frankly some room for corporate politics might be necessary). Having developed a good methodology for process assessment, an organization can proceed to build a deployment roadmap for the months ahead with a clearer view of the potential costs and benefits of such an exercise.

To balance this approach for a “strategic roadmap driven” roll-out of RPA and content other divisions that might be miffed at not getting their priorities considered, one could create some slack automation capability and make divisions pay for automation. This can be an elegant way of addressing and regulating internal demand.

Wanting to automate too much of a process

One of the common pitfalls in these early days of RPA is wanting to systematically automate 100% of a process. While there are cases where that might be possible, more often than not 70% to 80% is the optimum number. Trying too hard to cover all the potential exceptions of processes may lead to complex RPA workflows that are time-consuming to develop and hard to maintain or change in the future.

Perhaps, in the next generation of RPA tools when some cognitive capabilities are added based on machine learning reaching close to 100% automation could become an achievable goal. For now, it is recommended to know when to still leave some steps of a process to human intervention. Sometimes, doing so may require a process re-design versus how things are done today but it ultimately remains a more effective approach.



A large enough team needs to be built to automate enough processes so that the organization can start seeing the benefits of automation.

Underestimating the skills required for a full roll-out of RPA

Given that RPA is a relatively new technology there are very few trained professionals and most organizations do not have any readily available RPA talent. The basic technology appears simple to learn and someone with some IT background could learn the basics of RPA development in a two to three-week training which coupled with few weeks of hands-on practice would allow her to muddle through building a simple Proof of Concept. Running a comprehensive RPA program, on the other hand, requires another order of magnitude of skills from a qualitative and quantitative perspective.

Deploying RPA as described earlier requires a diversity of skills; to name but the most important ones: RPA business analyst who understands the processes very well and knows how to optimize them for RPA development, scrum masters who develop and coordinate the overall implementation effort, developers themselves and finally solution architects

In addition to a diverse and complementary team, there is need for at least some experience. Experienced solution architects and developers will know how to correctly build optimal RPA workflows that can handle all exceptions, thus considerably reducing user testing and acceptance time.

Finally, there is the notion of quantity. A large enough team needs to be built to automate enough processes so that the organization can start seeing the benefits of automation. It is naïve to believe that an organization can move alone from a successful pilot to a full roll-out. If it wishes to see results quickly, it needs to be supported in the build-up phase by an outside professional firm while simultaneously having a comprehensive talent built-up program if it aims at building in house capabilities. An alternative could be to go for a managed service approach which some firms have started to offer.

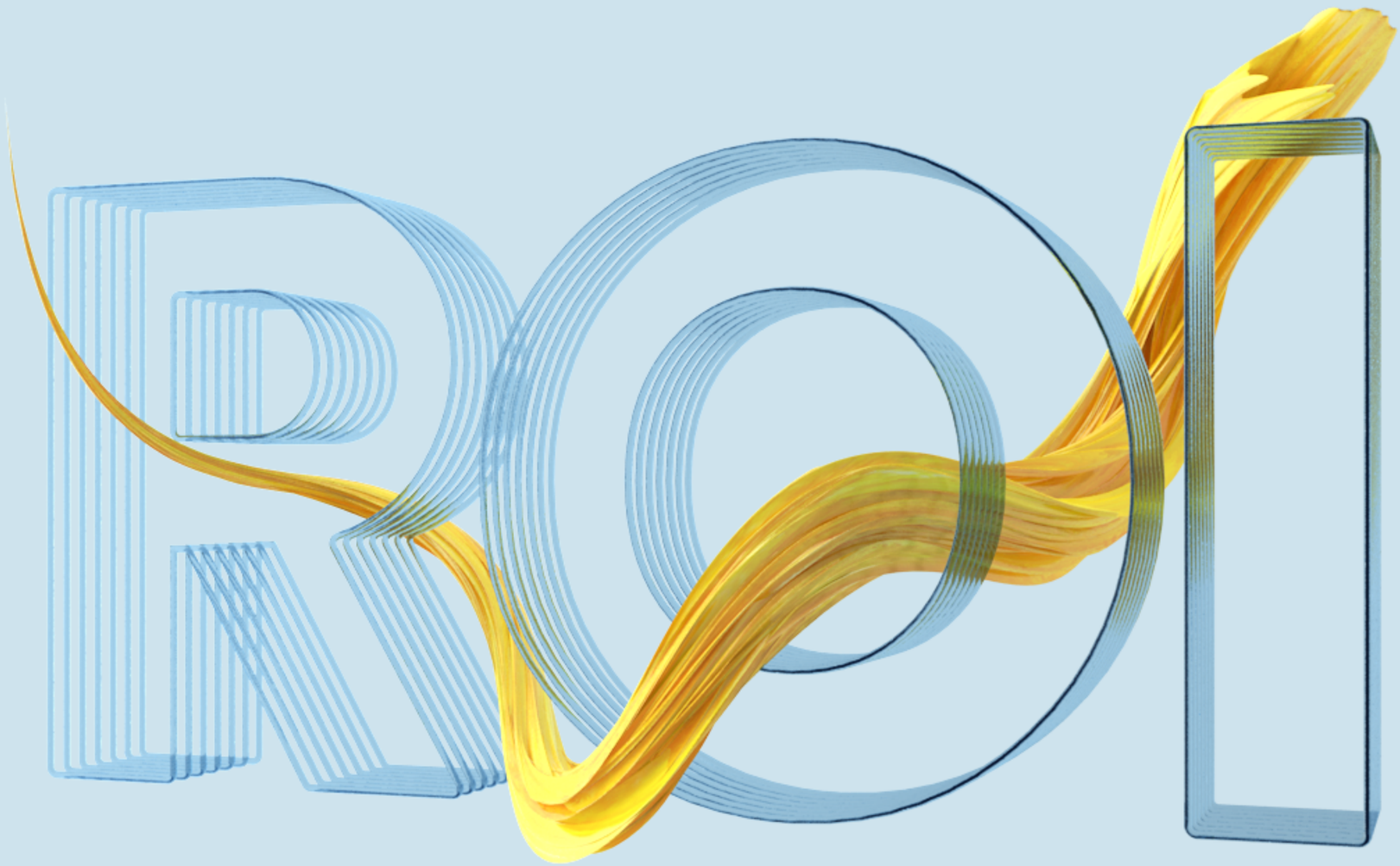
Overstating the ROI and justifying it solely on FTE reductions

There is natural tendency to overstate the short term ROI of an RPA deployment by extrapolating a bit simplistically the often encouraging results of a pilot, and have it rely solely on time saved (e.g. FTE reduction).

Most likely the short term ROI will be less than what most organizations calculate, while the long term benefits will be larger than what they would have anticipated. This has been the case time and time again with almost every wave of new technology that, after a period of experimentation and adjustment, has taken organizations to another level of productivity.

Furthermore, much more difficult to quantify but nonetheless real is the ability of RPA to eliminate human error. For some organizations, this alone can justify automating some error prone customer facing processes.

Each organization has its own dynamics, tolerance for experimentation and funding approach; managers will ultimately choose the narrative that best serves them. Regardless of the approach to funding, no doubt that the medium term payoff of an RPA program is irrefutable.



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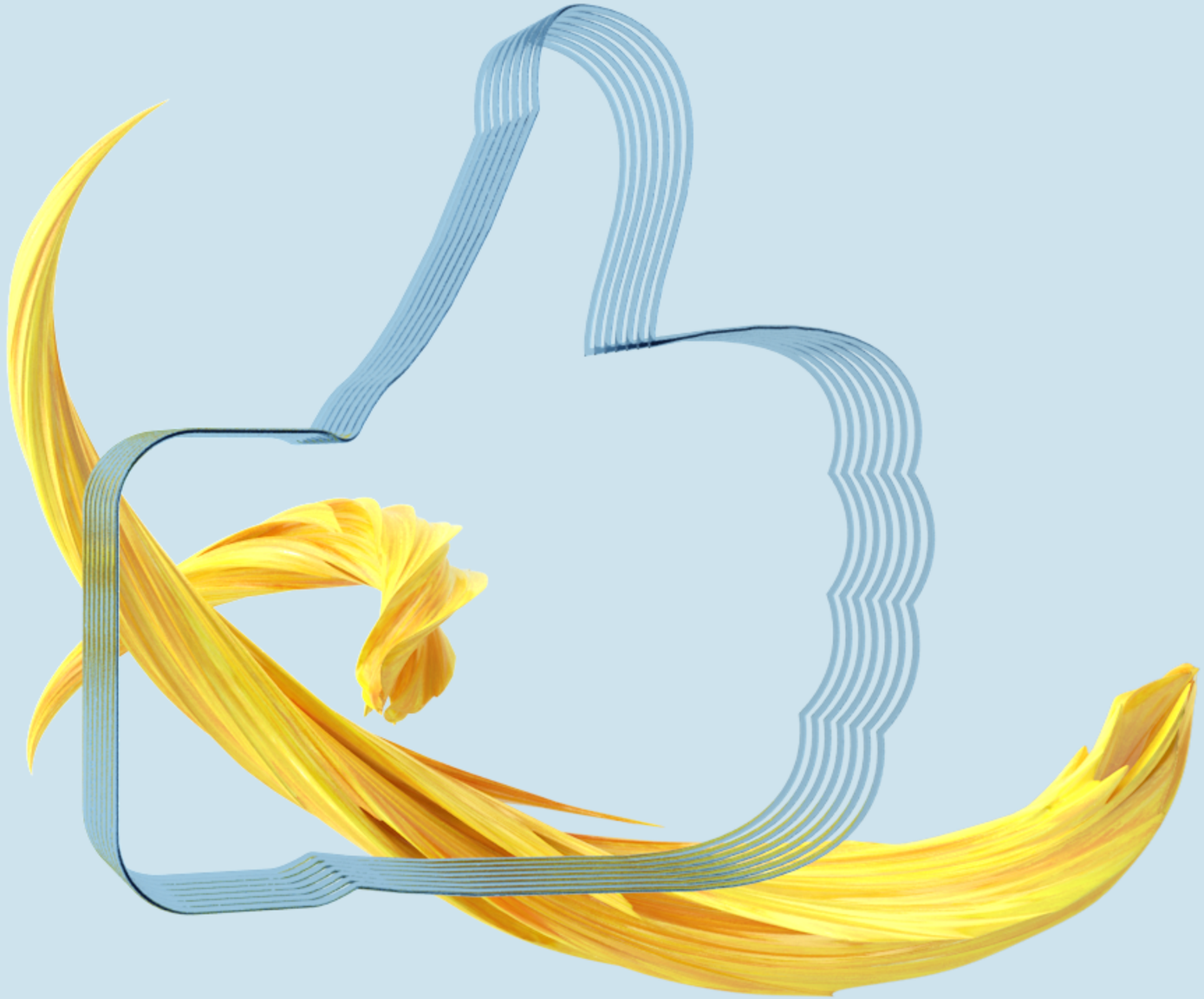
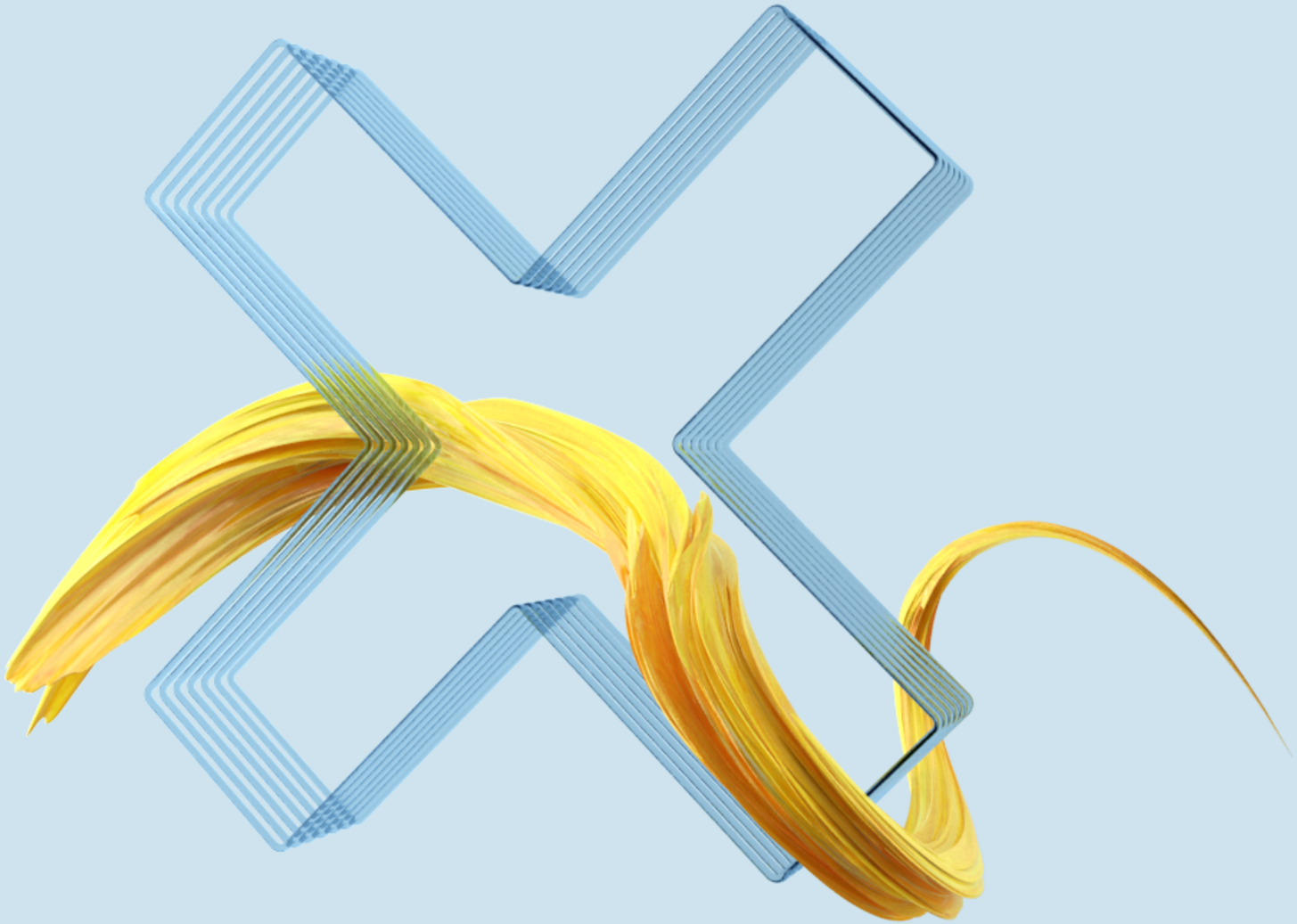
Underestimating the stakeholder management effort

Rolling out a full RPA program requires of course first and foremost the backing of top management to be able to fund the effort properly and understand its strategic value. Once that is done, the promoters of RPA need also, as mentioned earlier, to have the full collaboration of the IT and security departments, the backing of business line managers who are going to be the beneficiaries of RPA and who need to give their blessing to some of the process re-engineering and also assuage the fears of internal audit teams.

Last but not least, a broader change management and communication program needs to be thought through to address the anxiety that deploying robots may cause to people who will be directly affected by them.

Underestimating the time investment required to manage stakeholders could be fatal to the success of an RPA roll-out as IT can sabotage the deployment, business line managers, and process owners can refuse to agree with the required changes in the processes and auditors ask for ever more information thus infinitely slowing down the RPA deployment.





An agile delivery methodology needs to be adopted allowing ideally to develop automated processes in three to five-week cycles depending on complexity.

Using an inappropriate delivery methodology

We have observed that many organizations have a tendency to apply traditional software delivery methodology to RPA. Thus, requiring low-value documentation tasks and gates, and expecting detailed business requirements; all of which contribute to unnecessarily extend the delivery time.

The traditional software governance and delivery methods are over-engineered for RPA. We do not mean that organizations should dismiss all project documentation, but rather recommend that they consider documenting only the most relevant details which contribute to implementation quality assurance and those which are crucial for support and maintenance mechanism.

An agile delivery methodology needs to be adopted allowing ideally to develop automated processes in three to five-week cycles depending on complexity.

Not having a plan in place to roll-out and sustain automation

This last pitfall to a certain extent encompasses several of the previously described ones and is in essence what we suggested a company should do in the first chapter of this white paper in the preparation phase. If an organization that has run an RPA pilot tactically without the knowledge and backing of the C suite chooses to move on without a full understanding of the strategic importance of RPA and without having built a comprehensive plan to do so, then more likely than not, it will at best fail to rip all the benefits that this technology could have brought and at worse the effort will peter out.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we hope that this white paper has shed some light on how to optimally deploy an RPA program and that by applying some of its recommendations, you will be able to avoid some of the common pitfalls. Many of the recommendations are similar to the requirements of some other strategic initiatives your company may have deployed in the past, but several are specific to this new exciting and transformative technology.

About the author

As UiPath's Chief Strategy Officer, **Vargha Moayed** is responsible for ensuring strategic plans are implemented rapidly and that all operational areas are informed, aligned and accountable. Vargha joins from EY, where he was a partner leading advisory services in Romania. Early to recognize the transformational opportunities with RPA, he also built EY's RPA Center of Excellence for EMEA. He championed the technology with clients across the oil and gas, energy and utilities, financial services and public administration markets. A graduate of the Wharton School, he is a seasoned international consultant, entrepreneur and top management coach, accumulating 28 years of work experience serving large corporations as well as high tech start-ups.

vargha.moayed@uipath.com

UiPath

Built for both business and IT, UiPath is the leading platform for enterprise Robotic Process Automation (RPA). More than 1.100 enterprise customers and government agencies use UiPath's Enterprise RPA platform to rapidly deploy software robots that perfectly emulate and execute repetitive processes, boosting business productivity, ensuring compliance and enhancing customer experience across back-office and front-office operations.

Our offices

New York
311 W 43rd Street, Floor 13,
New York, NY 10036,
United States
+1 844.432.0455

London
83 Baker Street,
London, W1U 6AG,
United Kingdom
+44 800.802.1249

Paris
33 Rue La Fayette
75009, Paris
+33 673.984.005

Bucharest
4 Vasile Alecsandri Str. and
11 Daniel Constantin Str,
Building A, floors 5 and 6
010613, 1st District,
Bucharest, Romania
+40 316 305 141

Tokyo
Otemachi 1-6-1 Otemachi
building 2F Chiyoda ku,
Tokyo , 〒100-0004, Japan
+81 345.400.059

Singapore
80 Raffles Place
UOB Plaza 1
Singapore 048624,
+44 800 802 1249

Bengaluru
3rd Floor, VRR Royal Commercial Complex, 21st A Main, 17th Cross Road, 1st Sector, HSR Layout, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560102, India
+91 973.918.4310

Munich
Luise-Ullrich-Str. 14,
NOVE-Building, 80636 Munich, Germany
+49 160 277 84 84

Amsterdam
Weteringschans 165 C,
1017 XD Amsterdam, The Netherlands
+31 615 247 477

Dubai
Dubai World Central, Dubai
+97156 20 22 999

Washington
1775 Tysons Blvd.
Tysons, VA 22102
703 969 7313

Huston
2700 Post Oak Blvd.
Houston, TX 77056
+33 673.984.005

San Jose
75 E Santa Clara St.
San Jose, CA 95113
+33 673.984.005

Seattle
10400 NE 4th St.
Bellevue, WA 98004
+33 673.984.005

Melbourne
Level 2, 696 Bourke St
Melbourne VIC 3000,
Australia
+61 477.342.470