



# Embrace a modern approach to automation



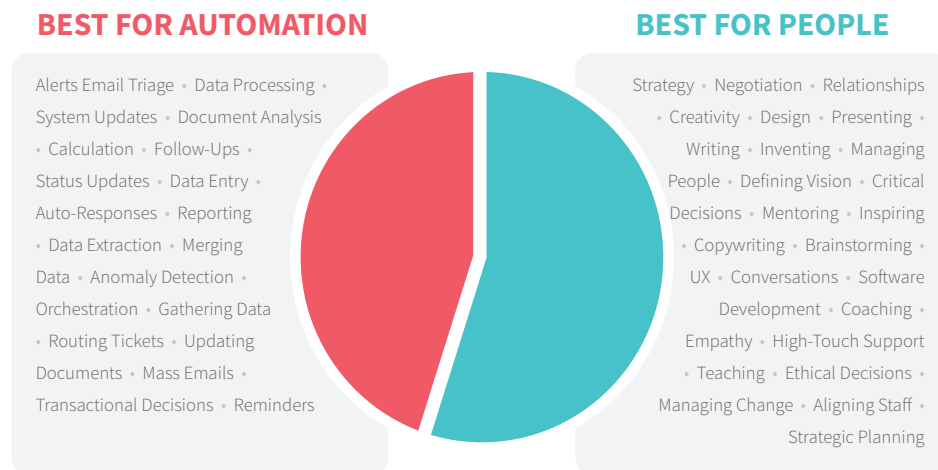
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# Embrace a modern approach to automation

Innovate or be left behind. That's what it boils down to in today's business environment, and why almost all companies are in some stage of digital transformation. We think of this evolution in terms of what it can enable, allowing companies to be agile, innovative, and customer-oriented. To do that, internal operations and processes must be efficient, streamlined, and intuitive to employees.

Enter automation, but where and to what extent? According to McKinsey, almost half of all work can be automated with current technology. That's more than \$23 million in labor costs for every 1,000 people.

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While the cost of manual work is high, the expenses also add up in terms of time and inefficient use of your employees. In our digital world, people simply can't keep up with technology that can do in seconds what it takes people to do in days or even weeks. And they shouldn't have to. Technology automates the work that prevents employees from the high-value, strategic initiatives that represent a better use of their time.

# Moving Into the future with Catalytic

Automation is a far cry from being a “nice-to-have.” It demands a spot on the priority list, because time is of the essence. Here’s why.

## 1. Mind the gap.

Newer businesses are creating massive market gaps. There’s no shortage of venture capitalists out there backing the latest start-ups, and these new entrants are efficient from the ground up. Those savings are being funneled right back into research and development, allowing them to out-innovate their larger competitors and gain market share at a faster pace.

## 2. Incremental automation fails.

Technology innovation significantly outpaces most companies’ capacity to adopt it. Corporate improvement is almost always incremental, while technology innovation is exponential. That disconnect widens over time. Businesses with manual processes simply can’t keep up and are left spinning their wheels making incremental process shifts that don’t move the needle enough.

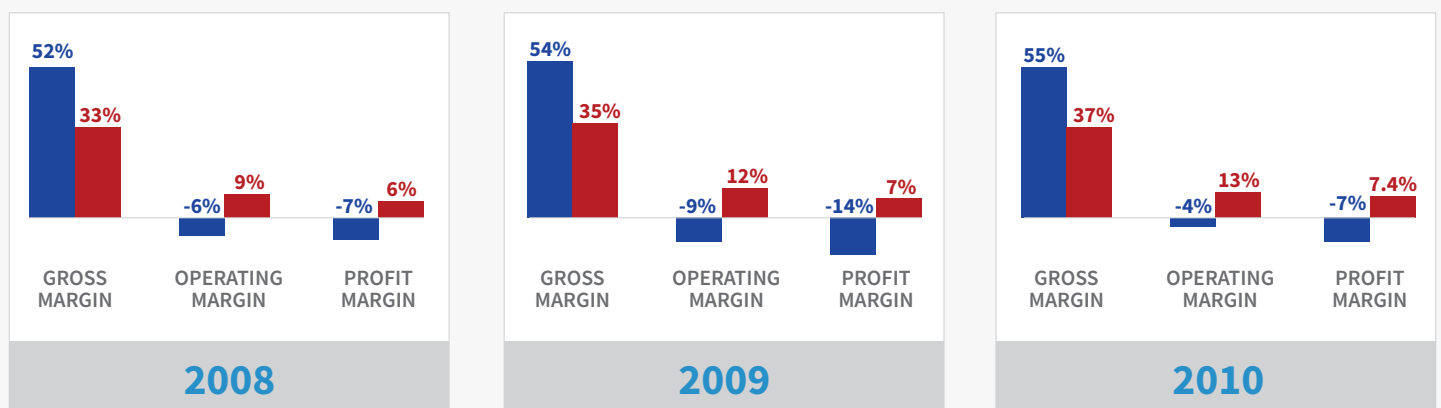
## 3. Employee experience matters.

With a widespread talent shortage, companies are paying a premium for employees without taking advantage of the skills that make them valuable. While businesses aren’t exactly getting their money’s worth, employees aren’t happy either. When smart people are tasked with mundane work, day after day, their experience suffers and engagement levels fall, along with retention rates.

There’s a growing divide between the haves and have-nots, spinning wheels instead of gaining ground, and disruptive turnover that sits over your brand like a dark cloud. With inefficient, manual business operations, it’s not the lost time or extra work that sets you back. Automation is really about business survival.



It’s not about what you do, it’s also how you do it. An example of this is the demise of Blockbuster amid Netflix’s rise to the top. We all know how the story ends. Blockbuster’s long-held industry dominance ended in bankruptcy in 2010, while Netflix is now a \$28 billion company.



One of the reasons Netflix was able to innovate and grow at such a rapid rate is due to its operational efficiency. Netflix funneled its savings from superior operational efficiency into product innovation and customer experience, and the rest is history.

# NETFLIX

## Why true automation success eludes most businesses

With so much at risk and so much more to be gained, why haven't more companies transformed their operations through automation? The reality is that most aren't making progress and have only scratched the surface of their potential, through no fault of their own. While there's a long list of processes that could be automated, a lot of automation technology falls short on execution.

Why? There are three characteristics of business processes that act as roadblocks for traditional automation solutions.

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1. Humans are integral to so many processes, whether that's to sign off on certain tasks or handle exceptions.



2. Often times processes are too variable for automation, with anomalies that must be factored in.



3. Many processes involve unstructured business data and cannot be handled within the standardized workflow of some technologies.

While they have the technical skills to solve these issues, IT teams don't have the resources to do custom development for every process. This is especially true in today's environment. It's not easy to find and retain qualified and cost-effective resources during our current skills shortage, even in a consultant capacity.

## Cracking the code on scaling automation

Today's business processes require a completely different approach to technology.

- 1. Simple technology.** Enterprise technology has a bad reputation for being complicated and difficult to use, but it takes more than tweaking older tools with the user experience in mind. Today's start-ups are developing platforms from the ground up that are simpler, lighter, and easy to learn and use. Building automations today, in many cases, is closer to using Excel than dealing with tricky code, which lowers the dependency on expensive consultants.
- 2. Humans in the loop.** A world with no employees? Of course not. People are central to the success of businesses, and they're also essential to the success of automation. While RPA bots easily handle repeated, mundane tasks, almost all end-to-end processes require the knowledge or actions of people. Today it's possible for your employees to be built into the automation process, whether that's to gather data via webforms to jumpstart a process, train a machine learning algorithm, or handle exceptions.
- 3. Data-driven.** You can't have analysis without data. The problem is most data has previously gone unused because of incompatible, varying data structures and formats. Now, with the evolution of automated information extraction technologies, database cleanup and consolidation is possible and efficient, so untapped data and unexplored analytics don't have to hold you back.

## Automation in action across the business

Across nearly every business process, there's an opportunity for automation to make a significant impact.

**Finance:** One company reduced its number of unpaid invoices by 50% by automating biweekly personalized emails to account managers for outstanding invoices.

**Human resources:** One company reduced the manual effort required to generate reports for capacity planning from 32 hours to 4 hours using automation.

**Legal:** One organization achieved 100% policy compliance and removed 10 hours per week of manual labor by automating its legal off-boarding requirements.

**Operations:** One retailer reduced several days of manual input to one hour by using a 100% automated process to update pricing data on 50-plus websites.

**Procurement:** One global manufacturing company saved more than 1,500 days of manual effort while completely eliminating the risk of human error by automating supplier contract compliance.

**Sales and marketing:** One company fully automated the audit process to run full SEO audits instantaneously.

## Ready to get started?

Contact us to learn more about how Catalytic can enable your team to do more meaningful work:

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