



# Meet the New Workforce

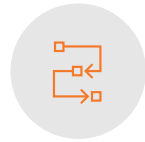
A guide to using intelligent automation to accelerate transformation

# Meet the new workers driving change

Readying your organization for business transformation requires moving away from imbedded legacy technology to new, modern systems. Robotic process automation (RPA) and intelligent automation (IA) can help you get future-ready. Think of them as part of your new workforce, allowing your biggest asset, your people, to focus on higher-value, more impactful activities.



**RPA and Virtual Agents**



**Machine Learning and Cognitive Services**



**Intelligent Automation**

RPA and IA, increasingly with the support of artificial intelligence (AI), can enable an intelligent “Future Ready” enterprise. With RPA, IA and humans aligned, organizations are accelerating transformation, maximizing business process productivity and achieving competitive differentiation.

## The new division of labor

The full benefit of RPA and IA requires rethinking the roles of robots, customers and employees. Forrester<sup>1</sup> calls it the new division of labor, where some tasks are more suited to humans and others to machines.

- **Robots.** These include physical robots, intelligent software, and related autonomous and semi-autonomous mechanical and digital entities.
- **Customers.** Aided by automation technologies, and more intelligent self-service technologies, some tasks can now be undertaken by customers rather than employees.
- **Employees.** Where does that leave workers? Automation technologies can augment human capabilities to help employees do their jobs more effectively. This can include decision context (give me data and insights to make better decisions), task execution (take rote, routine, predictable tasks off my plate) and human-managed machines (I become a botmaster managing highly automated business processes).

<sup>1</sup> “The Future Of Jobs, 2027: Working Side By Side With Robots,” Forrester Research, Inc., J. P. Gownder, April 3, 2017

# A guide to get you there

This guide provides practical advice about adopting RPA and IA to help business confidently move away from legacy environments that hinder progress. It outlines the key challenges, recommends 10 steps to get started with RPA and IA, and identifies the benefits you can realize, including:

- **Improved operational efficiency**
- **Safeguarded transformation**
- **Faster time to market**
- **Enhanced morale**
- **Improved compliance**

## 68%

of business leaders are currently investing or planning to invest in intelligent automation/robotic process automation/cognitive automation in the next 12 months.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Avanade and Vanson Bourne: Intelligent Enterprise research, March 2019



## The challenges: Integration, the skills gap and the importance of remembering your people

Historically three key challenges have slowed the adoption of RPA and IA.

**1. Enterprise transformation is less effective without careful consideration of how to integrate RPA and IA as part of a longer-term transformation vision.** With most businesses today embracing digital transformation, companies need to look toward their next opportunity for differentiation. This means preparing the organization to be a truly agile company with the capabilities to identify opportunities and deliver exactly what customers want, when they want it, and understand how and where RPA and IA can add value. For example, there is a risk of keeping legacy systems in place and using RPA bots as a bridge to connect them. Automation is not a “one and done” proposition – it can provide immediate solutions to persistent legacy challenges, but it will not solve for overall process re-engineering issues that cause manual intervention in the first place.

**2. Today's skills gap can impact decisions to invest in RPA or IA.** Employers today are empowered by a constantly growing set of capabilities made possible through technology. Yet, while employee working practices are rapidly evolving, the enterprise itself may not be optimized for the workforce of the past. Companies are looking to close this gap, applying the same technology strategies that

successfully created the next-generation workforce to their new enterprise needs. The barrier for entry to build POC's for automation is quite low. However, without proper methodology, skill-sets and experience for choosing the right process that can deliver effective ROI, most automation efforts will stall. It is imperative to set realistic expectations of RPA's functionality, deployment timelines and process evaluation criteria so that automation can be a lever for long-term enterprise transformation vision.

**3. If you forget your people, you may hinder your company's transformation.** When automation takes over routine tasks, your people gain more freedom to focus on complex exceptions and decisions requiring real-time intervention. This can include handling difficult issues such as sensitive interactions with customers or tackling ethical decisions. In their book, “Human + Machine: Reimagining Work in the Age of AI,” Paul R. Daugherty and H. James Wilson warn that “When people simply accept an existing process and then use AI to automate it, they can achieve incremental improvements, but little more.”<sup>3</sup> Companies may miss transformational opportunities and end up with less than expected.

<sup>3</sup> Daugherty, Paul and H. James Wilson. Human + Machine: Reimagining Work in the Age of AI. Harvard Business Review Press, 2018.

# The potential: RPA and IA can make your business future-ready

RPA has been one of the fastest-growing markets in enterprise technology. Forrester Research raised its market guidance for RPA to a \$2.9 billion market by 2021.<sup>4</sup>

There's a reason for that growth. RPA and IA are key to turning businesses into intelligent future-ready enterprises by displaying three important elements: efficiencies, experiences and innovation.

**Efficiencies.** RPA and IA are all about automating manual tasks to improve efficiencies. For these digital workers, the workday doesn't end at quitting time. They are able to handle several times the number of transactions in an hour compared to a human; data collection and accuracy are greatly enhanced; and employees are more efficient and often more engaged, adding value. Don't think of it as a limitation of human ability but rather a strength of RPA and IA. In fact, the more mature a data platform, the more opportunity there is to realize the full potential of RPA and IA.

**Experiences.** Intelligent technology is helping to meet the demands of both customers and employees.

- **Reshaping customer experience (CX).** Automation can reconfigure back-end, operational technologies in the service of customers. For example, one major manufacturer of airplane parts has used robot drivers for faster just-in-time parts delivery. Robots can also directly reshape customer experiences. For instance, we partnered with Softbank Robotics America (SBRA) and ATB Financial to bring the humanoid robot "Pepper" to select ATB branches to greet customers and recommend products and services.
- **Improving employee experience (EX).** Employees can serve customers faster, more effectively and with a better attitude when they feel as if they can get their work done, that their companies do a good job of facilitating their success, and that they have a strong personal connection to their work. Companies that implement automation poorly will lose the powerful opportunity for EX to drive better CX.

**Innovation.** Market disruption, competitive differentiation, and the need to bring new products and services to market quicker are factors leading organization to become future-ready. These pressures are driving new, innovative solutions that require quality digital inputs and analytics. In the financial services sector, for example, a new credit or loan application requires numerous manual processes: data accessed from a hand-written form, various bank documents viewed in PDF format, a credit score accessed online, etc. When these steps are automated through RPA and IA, credit applications can be processed faster, leading to higher efficiency and lower costs.

**94%**  
of business leaders who have invested in intelligent technologies believe Intelligent Automation and Predictive Analytics will provide the greatest lift in business results.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> "RPA, DPA, BPM, And DCM Platforms: The Differences You Need To Know," Forrester Research, Inc., Craig Le Clair, March 1, 2019

<sup>5</sup> Avanade and Vanson Bourne: Intelligent Enterprise research, March 2019

# Make the most of your RPA and IA investment

Business and technology considerations:



**Develop a holistic automation strategy.** Siloed automation efforts introduce project risk and fail to leverage best practices. Evaluate your automation operations to coordinate projects and help align with the right business goals.



**Encourage a culture of immersive IT.** Automation requires experimentation, agile methods, and a culture that supports investing in new technologies. Put in place an active user group community across business units to encourage a culture of positive change.



**Take a fresh look at employee experience.** Extensive progress has been made on designing better experiences through techniques like journey mapping. Apply these same principles to employees who will collaborate increasingly with machines.



**Adapt your internal training programs.** Automation will transform or eliminate positions and give rise to new roles. Skills assessments, working practices, certification and resourcing goals will be major considerations in the era of automation.



**Governance should be front and center.** Automation introduces transparency and accountability risks. Decision management will move to machines and create “black box” issues leading to ethics and data privacy concerns. Governance will be a key to success.



**Align technology with the right business case.** Develop a framework to categorize automation technologies. RPA may be the answer for highly structured and repetitive processes. AI building blocks may require different levels of learning, transparency and human understanding.



**Consider build versus buy decisions carefully.** Automation options include small software providers, large platform integrators and open-source alternatives. Assess trade-offs between fit-for-purpose versus more general solutions with higher customization costs.



**Develop, integrate and orchestrate.** Integrating RPA and IA into existing processes and systems will be part of your development journey. We find that proof-of-concept and proof-of-value projects are useful to test different software tools and environments.



**Adopt an agile approach.** Ensure that cultural impact remains positive throughout your user adoption, communication plans and acceptance testing. Automation design includes data models and algorithm development that must be validated centrally.



**Support a dynamic and decentralized infrastructure.** Technology innovation will be driven by the mega-cloud vendors with open-source environments playing a starring role. Management of this infrastructure requires new processes and technology support. A fully supported environment and stable infrastructure make it easier for solution integration into a wider ecosystem which includes the consideration of future changes.

# 80%

of executives agree that AI without human ingenuity will leave business results on the table.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Avanade and Vanson Bourne: Intelligent Enterprise research, March 2019

# The benefits: Front and back office united as one

Bringing your people together with your digital workers through RPA and IA can augment your transformation, resulting in several key benefits.

- **Improved operational efficiency:** Enhanced business process productivity for customer and back-office systems can drive cost reduction. Mundane repetitive tasks can be completed in a fraction of the time of the hardest-working person. The potential exists to reduce processing time by up to 80%.
- **Safeguarded transformation:** RPA and IA can help eliminate simple human error and avoid catastrophic business consequences and delayed change by focusing workers on high-value work rather than manual tasks and processes.
- **Faster time to market:** Better-quality data integrated with highly productive, 24/7 processes and systems can reduce handling and production time. This allows new products and services to be brought to market faster.
- **Enhanced morale:** RPA and IA can help you reduce pressure on your high-value employees. RPA and IA love doing many of the tasks that people hate and can be key enablers to improve the employee experience.
- **Improved compliance:** Improved visibility and auditability can help you achieve greater accuracy and a smoother path to regulatory and statutory compliance.



# Key to success: Take a balanced approach

RPA and IA are delivering success when adopted in a balanced manner based on the key steps outlined in this guide. When undertaking digital transformation, successful organizations are looking at RPA and IA across all of their business operations, customer services and future innovations.

This kind of balanced approach is key to success. Embrace, don't fear, your new workers. Your enhanced workforce can accelerate your transformation to an intelligent future-ready enterprise by handling mundane tasks and empowering your people to perform at a higher level. It's all about bringing your people and intelligent technology together to drive change.

## Case studies:

### Insurance claims made easier

A multinational insurance company was looking for a way to remove manual processes from its email-based insurance inquiries while incorporating the intelligent thinking that a human would perform. We worked with the client to implement a combination of RPA from Blue Prism and Microsoft Azure Cognitive Services. The result: faster customer resolution and the start of a comprehensive journey to business improvement through intelligent automation.

### Breaking through the "productivity plateau"

A large energy company wanted better control of the processes in its financial operations for a large volume of providers, such as procurement and payment. Implementing RPA across back-office functions has delivered reliable processing and more than a 30% time savings, compared with the previous manual processes. As a result, business productivity related to processes such as procure-to-pay has increased and business operations are more robust.



# 82%

of executives believe that investment in AI technologies is critical for their organization but putting employees and customers second to such activities will result in failure.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Avanade and Vanson Bourne: Intelligent Enterprise research, March 2019



# Why Avanade?

## Global expertise in intelligent automation at scale

Formed as a joint venture between Accenture and Microsoft, Avanade brings the best in strategy and technology to unlock more value from your IT investments and maximize business results. We provide proven methodologies, deep expertise and leading-edge technology, and we have been the Microsoft Alliance SI Partner of the Year for 11 consecutive years.

## Strength in numbers

Together with Accenture, we can provide you with access to intelligent automation capabilities at scale.

### We have:

- Completed 6,000-plus successful automations for over 350 clients across a range of industries
- 4,200-plus business excellence and automation experts, including 1,250 supported by an industrialized automation factory
- 400 AI practitioners
- 1,000 data engineers
- More certified professionals for Microsoft Azure than any other Microsoft partner
- Partnerships with the leading intelligent automation technology providers, including Blue Prism and UiPath

**Contact us** to get started with a strategic advisory workshop to discover your path to **intelligent automation** and augmenting your workforce for successful digital transformation.



## About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud-enabling services, business solutions and design-led experiences, delivered through the power of people and the Microsoft ecosystem. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation and has 35,000 professionals in 24 countries.

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