

The next threshold in high performance with Robotic Process Automation

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Extended Abstract

In recent years, we have made rapid advancements in technology-enabled innovations – that can cost effectively and seamlessly scale by virtue of being ‘born in the cloud’, under the right conditions, design and execute on correlation of structured and un-structured inputs on par or better than human processing and ultimately create an exponential impact on how organizations design and deliver services using these technologies. To many technologists, we have entered the cognitive era where machines can be developed to perform a number of tasks just like humans, at an industrial scale. Some factors influencing the rise of these technology-enabled innovations include –

- A continuous pursuit for the next threshold of productivity – as traditional levers run their course or potential and in many instances, do not deliver on the investment – ROI equation.
- The creation of large digital data pools requiring service delivery or process design to consider multiple points of truth in an organizational eco-system, therefore increasing processing complexity.
- Complex systems and process architectures not being able to cope with dynamic process paradigms and user behaviours/expectations.
- The modern worker in organizations demanding we take the ‘robot out of their day’s work’, so the focus can be on creating higher value for the organization and personal growth.

We are experiencing the emergence of an entire spectrum of technologies that can operate on the surface of these organizational ecosystems i.e. people, process and technology and create value from the outside; that can have a material influence on overall performance and therefore productivity of process value chains. There are multiple ways for businesses to capture the high performance/productivity dividend from these technologies but largely they manifest themselves through addressing two broad categories of tasks in any process value chain –

- The work of the hands – deterministic, rules based and sometimes repetitive set of tasks.
- The work of the minds – probabilistic, involving subjectivity and requiring the derivation or creation of decisions.

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Robotic Process Automation (RPA) is one such technology activation in the ‘work of the hands’ space that is rapidly making its mark in businesses – at scale, across all industry sectors. The RPA industry is expected to be well over USD 5BN by 2020. Through the course of the presentation, we will explore the world of RPA through the lens of 5 key questions:

- Robotic Process Automation – What is it, how does it work in relation to process and why all the hype now?
- What types of scenarios (industry examples) lend themselves to take advantage of RPA and who are the key product vendors?
- What is working and what is not working- what are some of the challenges looking ahead?
- What are the organizational design considerations when RPA operates at scale e.g. at 100+ bots?
- What are the different ways to get involved in the universe of RPA?

We will close the discussion with some thoughts on where the journey of RPA is evolving to next and any questions and answers from the participants.