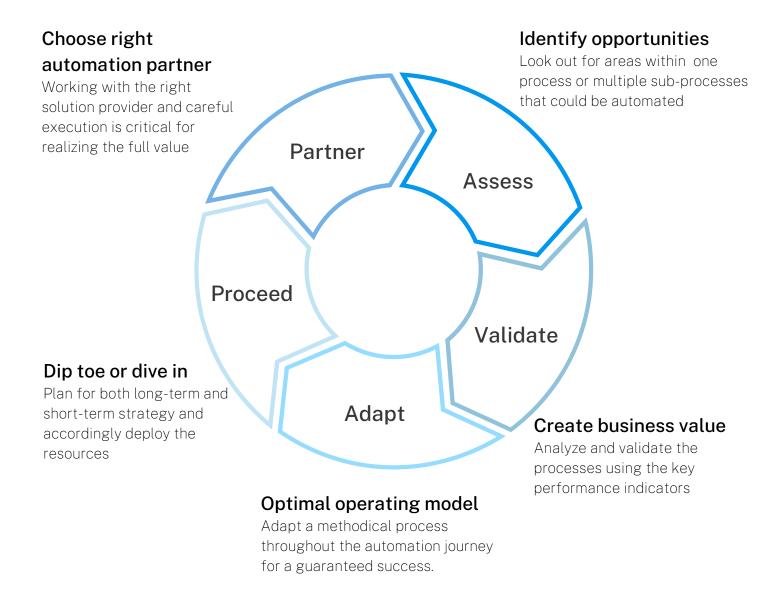


Technology is constantly evolving with innovative solutions and automatons enabling organizations to serve their clients more competently and efficiently. With growing customer expectations, dramatically shrinking margins, increased regulatory scrutiny, and heightened operational cost, today's revenue cycle managers are actively considering new strategic approaches to meet the constantly fluctuating needs of their customers. Traditional strategies for improvising operational efficiency previously had its own limitations urging business leaders to look for more advanced and innovative ways to optimize processes and increase effective utilization of resources. Some of the traditional approaches include upgrading the core applications to incorporate modernized automation, outsourcing to take advantage of the labor cost arbitrage, and process re-engineering using consultative approaches. Some of these methods are non-compliant or risky in nature, and most are proving ineffective in both cost and time.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) has come to the rescue and proved to be highly effective in yielding results in all possible ways – cost, turnaround, and compliance. More importantly, RPA has made inroads to address specific areas within operations and has been an effective tool in addressing the revenue leakage. For many growing organizations, RPA is part of their broader digitization strategy. RPA robots are non-intrusive without the need for any potential integration with third party systems. Since RPA deployments are fast, it can swiftly address the gaps that existing core systems present without going through traditional IT implementation projects.

Key steps in approaching RPA

Organizations even understanding the full potential of robotic process automation for their operations often caught struggling to get a jump-start with their automation journey. It is highly recommended to identify an automation partner who could guide them through the various steps that are critical for them to get started and have a successful implementation. Big or small, here is a guideline for methodically approaching the RPA projects:



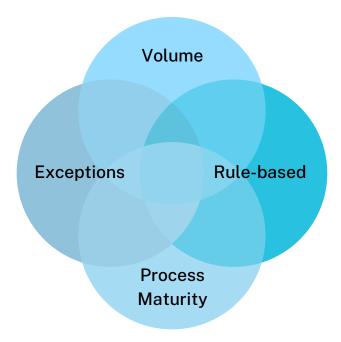
Whether it is proof of concept or a full-fledged automation engagement, it is imperative to ensure that the service provider understands your operation as much as they understand the automation.

Success of an RPA project depends heavily on its execution and working with a knowledgeable provider can make a difference in the yield.

1.Identify Opportunities. Assess

Whether starting with a proof of concept or an advanced automation of various processes, the key is to select the right process or set of processes for automation using RPA.

Here is a simple method to evaluate and qualify a process using a four-point scale:



Things to consider

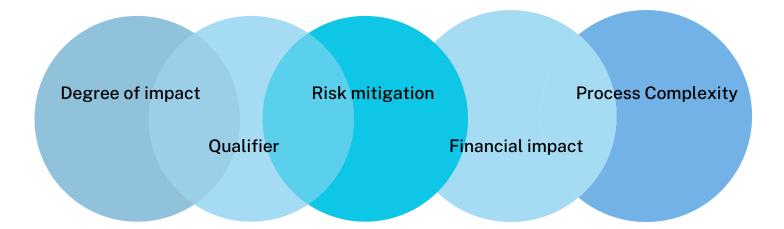
- Choose the process that would yield immediate returns in terms of time and cost savings and that would bring in the most tangible benefits.
- Certain processes that are more prone to human errors are the best candidates for automation, especially if any of the processes or sub processes will impact a repeated customer experience.
- Avoid processes that have many exceptions and are not well-defined or are, in some cases, even undefined.
- A process may not be a good candidate for RPA, but its sub-processes might be fitting for automation to bring in greater benefits in boosting the overall performance.

Considerations	What would be the volume of the process?	How well is the process is defined and rule-based?	What would be degree of exception?	How matured is the process?
Ratings	High – 10 Medium – 5 Low - 2	Fully defined and matured - 10 Partially defined process - 5 Undefined process - 2	Very low exceptions - 10 Medium number of exceptions - 5 High level of exceptions - 2	Well established and stable - 10 Maturing and developing - 5 Unstable and premature - 2
Total number of processes & subprocess identified				

Qualified or High priority processes: Scored between 20 to 30 **Unqualified or Low priority processes**: Scored lesser than 10

2. Consider the business case. Validate

Upon identifying all the potential processes for automation through RPA, validating them through a methodical approach is a good practice. Benefits of automation comes in different forms: time and money savings, efficiency, customer experience, and innovation. If the strategy is to do a pilot run on automation, measuring the outcome of the proof of concept (PoC) using metrics is important. Certain automation might yield immediate returns, whereas some might take a few months to show a measurable impact.



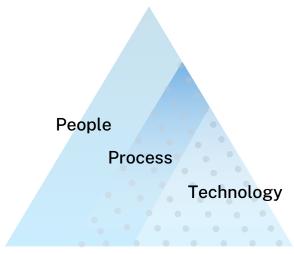
Even if these questions are subjective in nature, answering these questions and scoring them will help prioritize these automation's through RPA and accordingly line them up. As part of the evaluation, encourage the leaders to increase communication around the automation initiative and the overall organizational strategy.

Identifying areas where the higher skills of the displaced resources could be re-deployed and boost the overall efficiency. It is important to communicate to all the stakeholders – employees, team managers and leadership team – on the changes. Educate them to embrace the change within the organization.

Degree of impact	Qualifier	Risk mitigation	Financial Impact	Complexity level of the process
What would be the direct impact in terms of the FTE cost savings?	VolumeRuleExceptionMaturity	Will the automation aid in risk mitigation? Regulatory risk Compliance Accuracy of data Others	What are the benefits in terms of the revenue? New revenue Increase market share Other financial benefits	How matured is the process? Will the automation alleviate the challenges in handling the complexity of the given process?

3. Choose an optimal operating model. Adapt

"The Golden Triangle," is a framework of people, process, and technology adapted commonly across organizations. The most critical element in this is the people component because the success of any project depends on the team deployed to drive, manage, and monitor. This is true with any RPA projects too.



People. Adopting a bottom up strategy by involving the staff to drive the RPA initiatives has proven to be the most effective way for successful implementations. Since RPA is more targeted to bringing in efficiency, it is important for business leaders to identify the skilled users within the respective departments to carry out the testing and share knowledge around the process and best practices, if any. Bringing in the IT management into the project at an early stage of the automation journey to establish the common governance is significant.

Process. In depth understanding of the overall automation, its end goal, and the various stages involved in the conversion from manual to robotic is critical. Involving the right automation teams and solution providers who understand your business process well and including automation analysts and the bot developers as part of the automation journey is critical to streamline the process and have a successful outcome. It is vital to identify the right members within the organization to actively engage with the service provider and participate in various stages of the automation journey – prioritization, scoping, process assessment, process mapping, defining rules for bots, testing the bots, and monitoring. Like any other project management, it is essential that monitoring is embedded into the overall management of the automation. Continuous improvisation is part of the process.

Technology. Based on the type of process chosen for automation, opting for the right set of tools is integral. In case of RPA, the options are to use either an attended or unattended bot for various areas using a well-defined workflow and rules. There are additional developer tools that must be utilized based on the depth of automation. There could be processes where multiple bots need to be deployed and managed calling for implementing an orchestrator style environment through which users can control and monitor various digital workers.

4. Dip toe or dive in. Proceed

Business leaders must have a long-term vision versus short-term goal for their overall automation strategy, considering various components of the over-arching strategy. Consider how automation can take shape and drive the organization as a whole and choose the correct approach accordingly.

Depending on the overall strategy and goals, one can plan to take up automation as multiple micro projects within specific areas in each department or start with one functional area at a time. A stepup approach has proven to be the best for organizations deploying robots as part of their automation.

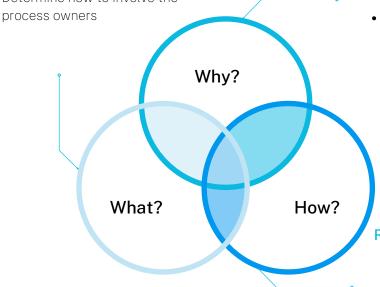
Three step process for emerging RPA programs:

Identify and define the process

- Evaluate and qualify the processes that needs automation
- Identify the candidates for pilot
- run • Determine how to involve the

Build your case

- Brief the need for automation
- Clarify the importance and benefits(long-term & short-term)
- Use the right KPI's to measure



Right approach & Model

- Carefully evaluate and choose the operating model that will yield success
- Involve the key staff members at the early stage

Change management is, the core of the automation project and timely communication to all stakeholders is critical. If the strategy is to carry out a pilot run, define the process that will be automated ("what?") through the proof of concept. Involve the staff early on by briefing the need ("why?"). Brief the chosen approach ("how?") to gain active participation with the involved team.

Most of the time, RPA project involves data fed from or fed to another system, therefore it is fundamental to ensure there is no challenge for a quality data. Otherwise, it is garbage in, garbage out. Accounting for all the dependent systems in the overall RPA journey is vital.

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A step-up approach has proven to be the best for organizations deploying robots as part of their automation.

Checklist for a successful RPA



- 1. Ensure proper documentations of the all the processes identified for automation
- 2. Build all the necessary rules and logic's for the developers to understand the process for building the right bot
- 3. Plan ahead and consider the complexity of the process to allow sufficient time for build, configure and deployment of the bot
- 4. Engage your IT management team at an early stage
- 5.Get a change management process in place. Create plan for communicating change and ways to mitigate any organizational resistance for change
- 6. Work with the service provider to have a test plan in place to validate all the steps of the process with test data.
- 7. Ensure there are no interruption for access or quality of data
- 8. Resolve data quality issues before deploying the bots
- 9. Train users and the leadership on the bot function and ways to manage and monitor
- 10. Plan for resource redeployment, if there are any potential displacement due to automation
- 11. Have a proper maintenance plan with the service provider for ongoing support

5. Choose the right automation provider. Partner

Success of an RPA project depends heavily on its execution and working with a knowledgeable provider can make a difference in the yield. Whether it is proof of concept or a full-fledged automation engagement, it is imperative to ensure that the service provider understands your operation as much as they understand the automation. Especially with domain intensive processes like accounts receivable, revenue cycle managers need to consider sourcing from an automation partner who understand the length and breadth of the A/R process.

Leaders are looking at alternate models for RPA projects and **RPA-as-a-Service (RPAaaS)** as an alternate approach to the traditional time and material (T&M). This seems to be especially appealing if the agencies are starting RPA projects for the first time or the size of the projects are varying.

Consider the overall budget for the automation project and opt for the best pricing model that would meet your overall objective in the automation journey. Though it might be difficult to identify the overall return on the investment, understanding the complexity of the process and determining the total number of bots involved for each automation can give a rough estimate of short-term returns within weeks or long-term yields in months. Dollars saved from full-time or part-time employee is crucial for an automation project. It is a fair expectation for the automation partners to provide this information and support in the decision-making process. It is also critical to understand if the service provider will be able to properly support the bots deployed and if they can maintain a certain degree of maintenance for successfully running these digital workers.

RPA as a service (RPAaaS)

- Minimal upfront fee for deployment and no huge capital investment towards automation project.
- Monthly subscription fee for the service provider for the various bots deployed.
- Pay for the annual licenses for the software purchased to automate the process and developer tools.

Value based service

- Onetime fee for building, configuration and deployment of the bot. Usually priced based on the complexity of the process chosen for automation.
- Pay annual licenses for the software purchased to automate the process and the developer tools along with any maintenance fee for managing, monitoring of the bots.

Guiding you through the RPA journey If done right, most of the robot deployments will yield results almost instantaneously and

Digital transformation is an ongoing initiative for every organization irrespective of their size and **StayAhead** is committed to be a true technology partner in bringing the extensive RPA skills at every step of this journey. With teams with strong domain knowledge in accounts receivable and revenue cycle management, we bring the needed skills and understanding in automating the process and enable the operations for success.

agencies can earn their ROI

earlier than expected.

Consulting and Strategy: Carefully craft the digital strategy to align the overall business goals that will deliver value and faster ROI.

Scoping and Opportunity Assessment: By understanding the overall process, identify opportunities to automate that will enhance customer experience, scale revenue and bring operational agility.

Deployment: Work closely to determine the right deployment strategy that would adapt agile practices, improvised governance models and build a center of excellence (CoE)

Sustainability: Ensure to have the necessary hand holding in training, extended support and continuous improvisation and enhancement to the deployed bots.



For more information, contact automations@thestayahead.com

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