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Strategies to increase automation potential in DSP's RPA implementation

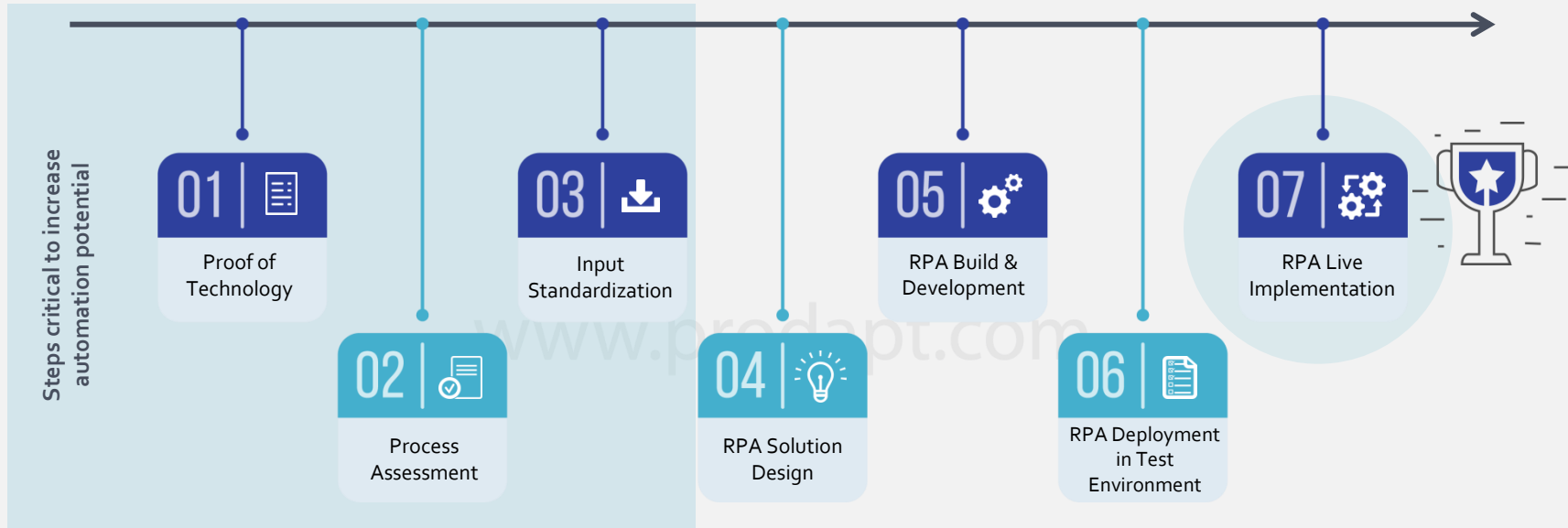
Credits

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Recommended implementation approach for digital service provider's (DSP) RPA adoption



Right methodology for Proof of Technology, process assessment & input standardization will directly result in an increased automation potential by up to 25%!

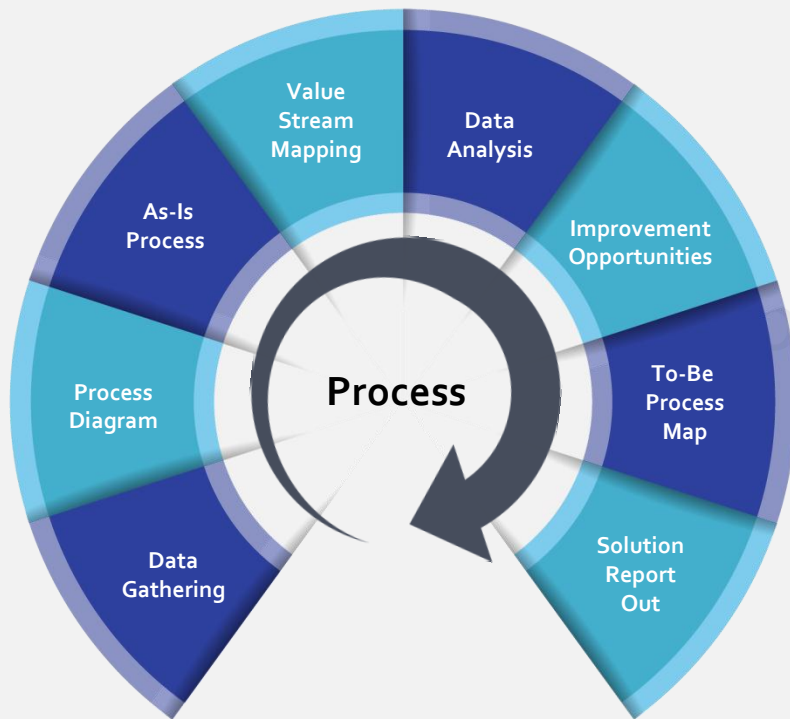
One of Prodapt's earlier insights titled "**Transforming Telecom Business Processes Using RPA**" discussed the application and benefits of RPA in the communications industry. In this insight, the focus is on bringing out few techniques, methods & tools in the first 3 phases – "Proof of Technology, Process Assessment & Input Standardization", to increase the automation potential.

Proof of Technology (PoT)

The primary objective of PoT is to test if an RPA tool can be connected to target applications, in order to navigate, obtain and update information. The recommended approach for a successful PoT is illustrated below:

Kick-Off Meeting	Knowledge Gathering	Target Applications	Smoke Test	Development of Bot	Execution of Proof of Technology
Kick-off meeting with whiteboard session where the RPA solution partner along with client organization decides the course of action for RPA implementation journey.	RPA developer has to gather end-to-end understanding of the process from the process SMEs.	Based on the evaluation, targeted applications are identified. It is important that the PoT covers the most critical/ niche applications involved in the process (e.g. the bot should be able to work in mainframe or legacy COBOL or CITRIX environment).	To check whether all the pre-requisites are installed in the identified system for bot installation (hardware & software requirements).	Development and installation of the chosen RPA software (bot) on the test system.	Bot accesses the target systems. It navigates through a few main screens and fetches/updates the required information from target systems.

The success of PoT, signals that the chosen RPA tool is the most appropriate choice for client environment as it is able to access, navigate and update/fetch information with their target systems.



Process assessment is the step where deep dive analysis of all the aspects of a process is done to improve the automation potential. Key factors to review automation potential are:

- Input & output format
- Various scenarios from the process
- Types of applications
- Time spent on each application and process step
- Execution frequency of each step per day
- Level of complexity of the process
- Current exception and accuracy levels
- Average handling time & average daily volume
- Security levels

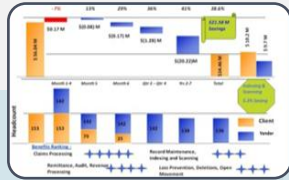
Enablers for efficient process assessment



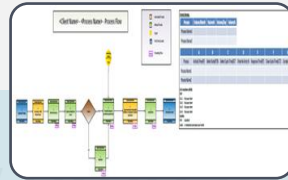
Wastage Analysis - Assess the process and divide the steps into 'value-added (VA)' and 'non-value added (NVA)'. These steps are identified by doing the wastage analysis and categorizing them under three categories – simple, regulatory and business wastage. The simple wastage can be modified/removed whereas steps falling under business and regulatory wastage can't be changed.

Process Assessment Enablers – Develop enablers based on Six Sigma methodologies to improve the efficiency of the assessment.

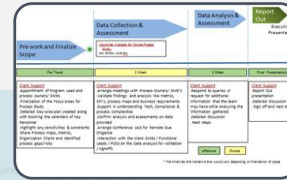
Process Assessment Tool
Excel-based tool/template that helps in recording process steps and categorizing wastage classes.



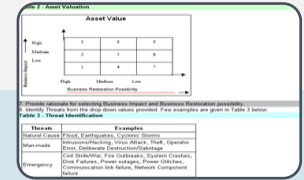
ROI Calculator
Helps to get a snapshot of expected ROI, cost and savings through RPA implementation.



Process Maps (As-Is and To-Be)
Helps to understand the end-to-end process by defining and segregating the steps done by bots and humans.



Implementation Roadmap
Helps to visualize and plan as per the timeline for project completion. Helps to prioritize the identified automation opportunities and process improvement.



Risk Analysis Report
Takes into consideration all the high-risk scenarios and defines the fail-safe options. Focuses on threat identification (natural calamity, virus attack, power outage etc.), business impact and mitigation plan.

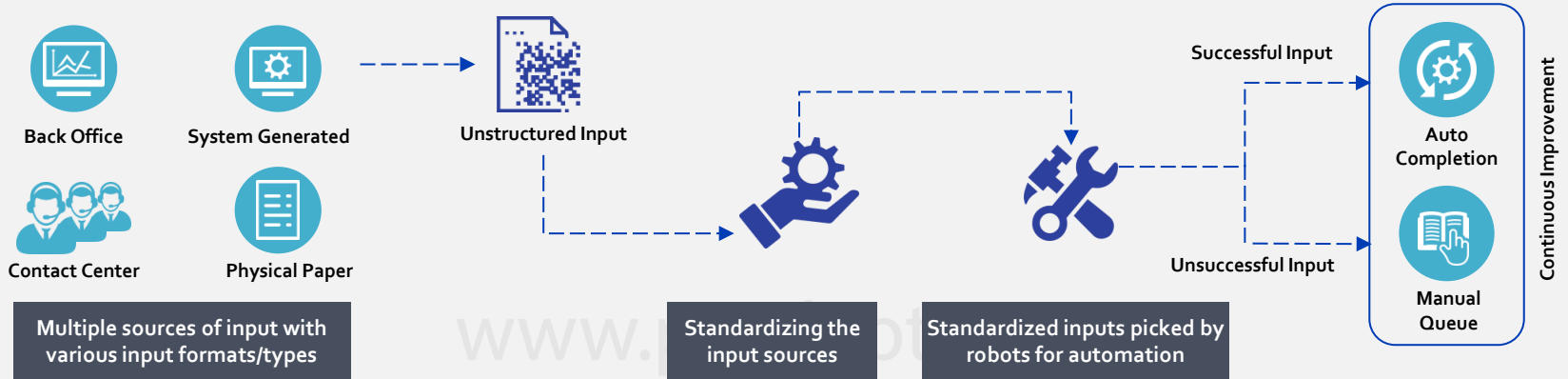
The following documents are the output of the process assessment:

Process Definition Document: It captures the **As-Is** flow of a business process chosen for RPA implementation

Solution Definition Document: It captures the **To-Be** flow of the business process using RPA solution

While process assessment streamlines the process, the data entered in these processes should also be standardized, in order to make it more receptive for bots.

Key considerations for input standardization phase



Lightweight standardized webpage – Typically, bots need to access multiple systems with multiple formats. This increases their operating time and reduces efficiency. It is recommended to create a tool that can pull relevant information from various applications and populate it on a custom lightweight webpage.

SOAP/Webservices API – With digital transformation, many applications in DSP environment are exposing APIs (e.g. SOAP/Webservices/XML). Build an API wrapper for bot to make API calls into source/target applications. While extracting information from source application or feeding information into target application's webpages, the bot needs to access multiple tabs through GUI, which is time consuming. In such scenarios, it is advised to access the source/target applications through SOAP/XML API calls.

Key considerations for input standardization phase



Defining the templates makes the format uniform. This makes it easier for the bots to understand data.

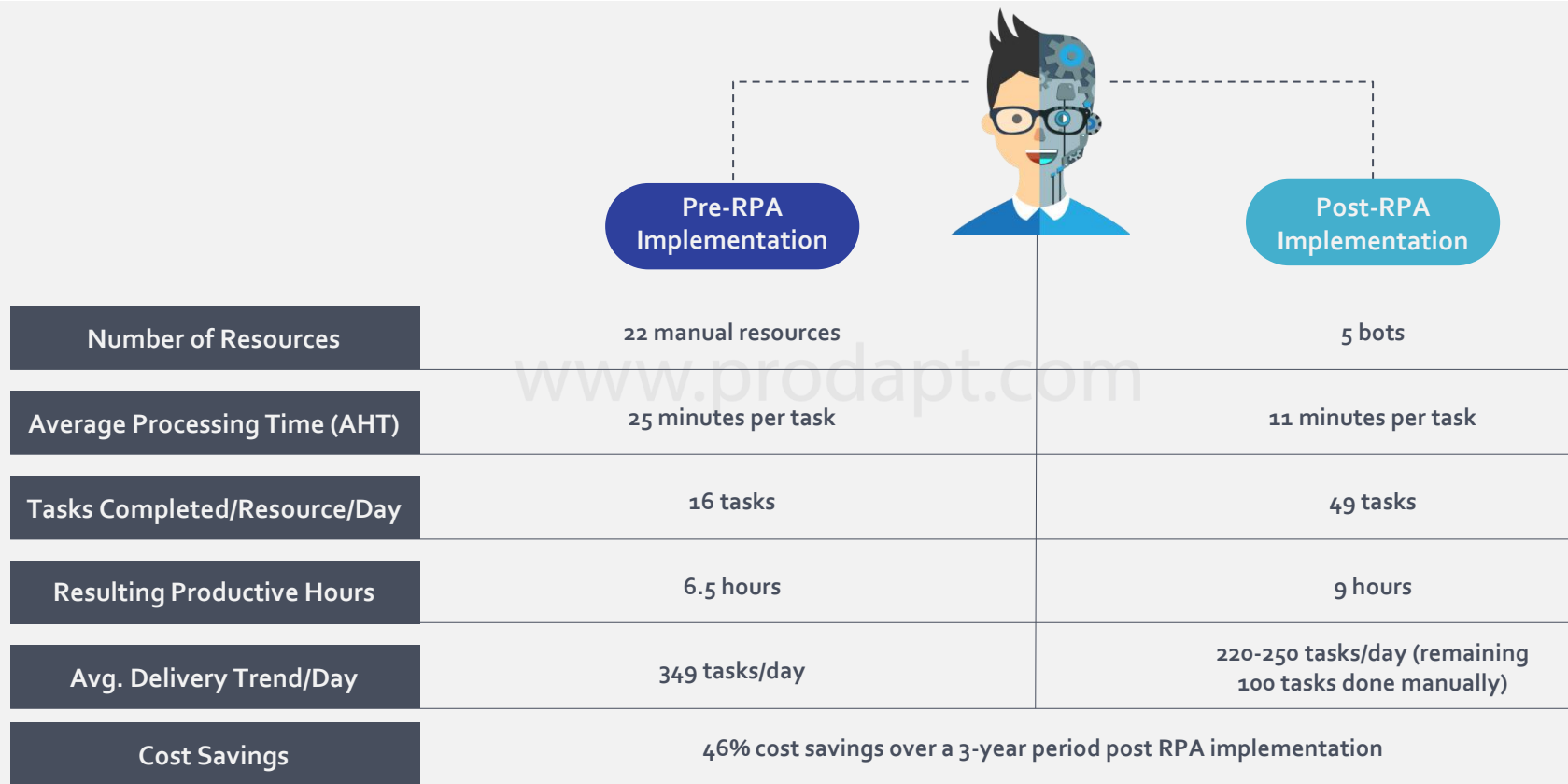
Templatize – Defining templates and keywords for every scenario and using them across customer care teams can make their notes bot-comprehensive.

- Using standard keywords that can be selected by simple drop-down
- Keeping the templates easily accessible by using help page or template menu

GRP02=010318/USER1234/DISCONNECT OLD TN/***	
GRP02=010318	This represents the group that worked the order and the date that the Directory Listing order was assigned (MMDDYY)
USER1234 / ABC	This represents the user id / name of the Assigner.
DISCONNECT OLD TN	This indicates to the CST that the order was dispatched for Disconnecting the old Telephone number
***	Enter a note if MIROR record not built because COE can't be determined - "COE UNKNOWN-NO MIR REC"
GRP02=010318/USER1234/*** /SUCCESS SMS CSTM	
GRP02=010318	This represents the group that worked the order and the date that the DCRIS order was assigned (MMDDYY)
USER1234 / ABC	This represents the user id / name of the Assigner.
***	Indicates the distribution of information via Directory Notes(DN): if applicable DN TO RF – indicates a directory note was sent to the Record Finder DN TO OES – indicates a directory note was sent to Order Entry System DN TO COMPLEX - indicates a directory note was sent to Complex Service Activation DN TO HLR – indicates a directory note was sent to the Home Location Register
SUCCESS SMS CSTM	Send SMS to customer on successful completion of task

Standardizing keywords across the workforce for specific actions will increase the automation potential for bots.

How RPA helped one of the leading tier 1 operator in the US to reduce average processing time by 56%





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