

Forbes insights



Accelerating Business Value With Intelligent Automation

The 2019 Kofax Intelligent Automation Benchmark Study

IN ASSOCIATION WITH:

KOFAX

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Intelligent Automation (IA) is the next generation of Robotic Process Automation (RPA), a combination of point solutions that includes:

- ✓ Robotic Process Automation
- ✓ Workflow orchestration
- ✓ Advanced & mobile capture
- ✓ Analytics
- ✓ eSignature
- ✓ Digital messenger solutions

Based on the first-of-its-kind formal survey of 302 senior executives around the world, “Forbes Insights Presents: The 2019 Kofax Intelligent Automation Benchmark Study” establishes benchmarks and best practices for companies looking to drive efficiencies and productivity gains through investments in Intelligent Automation.

Teams of bots or “digital workers,” created via Robotic Process Automation, have become the new digital workforce, capable of acquiring data in myriad forms from anywhere, using it to make decisions, triggering actions by other bots, and learning from humans to improve over time. More than robots, they’re “co-bots”: digital collaborators that free humans from manual, repetitive tasks and let them perform more valuable work.

Intelligent Automation platforms enable enterprises to build bots that automate critical business processes that are menial, redundant and boring for human workers. Beyond that, Intelligent Automation also enables enterprises to realize the value and ROI that RPA promises by aggregating the complementary technologies RPA requires to manage bot teams and scale them to the enterprise. As a result, Intelligent Automation is helping organizations work like tomorrow, delivering a better customer experience and a better employee experience by helping workers shift from being data gatherers to data users.

Feedback from the 302 senior executives surveyed reflects positive sentiment towards the concept of IA and its ability to drive operational enhancement:

- **90% OF RESPONDENTS AGREED** that “our leadership recognizes the importance of process automation to our future success.”
- **MORE THAN THREE-QUARTERS OF RESPONDENTS** said that 60% or more of process work could be automated; almost half said that 80% or more could be automated.
- **THE LACK OF PROCESS AUTOMATION EXACTS A TAX ON ORGANIZATIONS.** Executives value time savings over cost savings, preferring to reallocate the time saved to higher-value work to drive additional improvement to customer experience, employee morale and organizational growth opportunities.
- **EVEN COMPANIES THAT ARE IMPLEMENTING** solely RPA to automate processes are realizing significant benefits. Organizations are seeing the greatest improvements (25%+) in the areas of employee satisfaction, efficiency and customer retention.

This report is organized into three main areas:

- 1 The state of enterprise automation and how to assess its value and potential impact within your organization**
- 2 Best practices for getting started, realizing the full benefit across the organization and addressing change management issues**
- 3 Next steps in the journey, including the need for continuous improvement**

You'll learn what to consider when getting started with Intelligent Automation, the opportunity to enhance even current-state “optimized” processes, and what to focus on as you scale.

INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION BEST PRACTICES

Best practices emerging from the research:

- Interviewees expressed that Intelligent Automation, as a new and innovative solution, is typically launched within a single function—often finance, but also HR, procurement, supply chain and shared services. The first success begets others.
- It is critical to involve IT early in the procurement process, so they are aware of and can evaluate software used. As an automation program scales, it is also well advised to establish a center of excellence or “digital management office,” to educate and support scalability. Among the executives surveyed, 92% had either already established a center of excellence or planned to do so.



Do you have a center of excellence for process automation?

Yes

51%

No, but a center of excellence is planned

41%

No, and a center of excellence is not planned

8%

INTRODUCTION

Automation is defined as “any method that eliminates or reduces manual work.” The concept of automation is well known; in fact, for many years organizations have integrated automation as a change lever to improve operations, from lotus scripting and simple macros to BPM workflow automation tools.

This raises the question of what is different now, and how should the enterprise position and take advantage of automation moving forward? Advances in software and technology have made automation even more accessible to the business user. No longer does it take advanced coding knowledge and/or extended implementation periods to bring such capability in-house.

Intelligent Automation represents the next generation of enterprise automation solutions. It is the bundling of capabilities within an automation toolbox to extend the scope and degree to which processes can be optimized, while also maintaining the natural balance between work allocated to machines and people to maximize productivity. Furthermore, Intelligent Automation can be understood and designed by business users, positioning the enterprise not only to drive productivity with a collaborative machine/people workforce, but also to operate automation technologies in a transparent manner.

Drawing on a survey of 302 senior executives around the world, “Forbes Insights Presents: The 2019 Kofax Intelligent Automation Benchmark Study” establishes benchmarks and best practices for companies looking to drive efficiencies and productivity gains through

investments in the next generation of enterprise automation solutions.

In order to realize return on investment (ROI), business users must strategically identify how and where to apply Intelligent Automation, along with the appropriate capabilities to leverage. During early/exploratory stages, thinking about processes via the lens of a simple Acquire-Process-Analyze-Deliver (APAD) framework can initially inform what automation capabilities to focus on while maintaining an appreciation for the business problem at hand:

- **ACQUIRE:** If a process begins with input data, how is that data ingested? Is it typically scanned in? Is it received in digital format via email? Is it in a standard format? Or is there variability? Asking these questions can illuminate whether it makes sense to use a capability like RPA to handle data ingest versus cognitive capture, or even a virtual voice agent.
- **PROCESS:** Once data has been ingested, what needs to happen with it? Does forms entry take place across multiple systems? Does it need to be moved into a specific database? Answers to these questions will suggest the extent to which BPM workflow capabilities or RPA make sense within the Intelligent Automation solution.
- **ANALYZE:** After initial processing of data, or even during processing, is there a requirement to synthesize information from many sources to draw an insight or make a prediction? Is it necessary to measure the sentiment or tone within processed data to influence what happens downstream? Clarity here

“Robotic process automation is helping us work more efficiently,” says Steven van Uffelen, lead process automation at Rabobank in the Netherlands. Adds Max Cheprasov, chief automation officer at the U.S. advertising network Dentsu Aegis, “At least 75% of repetitive, rules-based tasks can be automated. This will give our people the chance to do less robotic tasks and let us succeed as humans.”

At Coyote Logistics, a subsidiary of UPS, compliance was an initial use case for automation. The company automated a review of compliance requirements, such as violations on record and insurance requirements. It implemented a decision tree to allocate shipments, looking at available carriers and capacity.

will inform the degree to which a machine learning and advanced analytics capability is needed.

- **DELIVER:** How should information be delivered back to the business user or the customer? What information points are most important to them, and what action do they need to take? This will inform not only what is delivered back to the appropriate personnel, but also *how* activity that takes place within an automated process is reported in order to drive transparency in automated processes and foster greater integration between automation and people.

“When automation gets intelligent, it includes cognitive AI agents and robots that understand where they fit into the entire workflow. It’s not just OCR, not just automating keystrokes, not just narrow AI,” says Max Cheprasov, chief

automation officer at Dentsu Aegis. “It’s a powerful set of tools.”

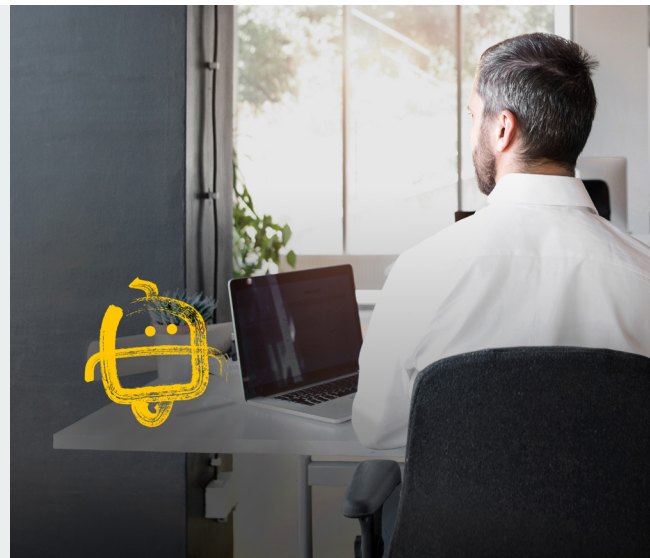
Intelligent Automation is radically changing the future of work. Previous periods of industrial revolution have focused on humans and physical machines working together, coupled with advances in technologies like steam power and electricity. The next revolution is marked by enterprises that can intelligently and successfully deploy multifaceted automation solutions that work closely with their people to improve how services are delivered, how ideas are generated and how customers are served.

Whether Intelligent Automation is leveraged directly to improve service levels to customers, or more internally to recapture time for employees to spend focused on more mission-oriented work, the results can propel the enterprise ahead and strengthen its competitive advantage.

“

We shouldn’t call them [cognitive AI agents] robots. We should call them co-bots—because what they’re really doing is collaborating with humans. They cannot do anything without human input and participation.”

MAX CHEPRASOV,
CHIEF AUTOMATION OFFICER, DENTSU AEGIS



ABOUT THE SURVEY

In July of 2018 Forbes surveyed 302 senior executives who have, in some capacity, implemented enterprise automation solutions. The survey sought to understand how respondents:

- Gauge the progress of adoption across countries, industries and functions
- Discover how companies assess the benefits of adopting automation
- Estimate the ROI of automation initiatives and what factors drive it

The survey was global, covering 16 countries across three broad regions: the Americas, Europe and Asia/Pacific.

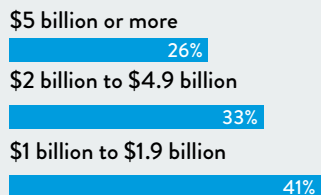
Respondents held senior positions at large companies. Director was the most common title, almost one-fifth were CIOs, and over a quarter were CEOs and CFOs. Finance and IT were the most common functions for lower-level titles. All companies surveyed had annual revenue in excess of \$1 billion.

In terms of industries, the financial service sector (banking, insurance, asset management) was the largest group, with 37% of the respondents. Manufacturing was next with 27%. Two service sectors comprised the rest: retail and transportation/logistics.

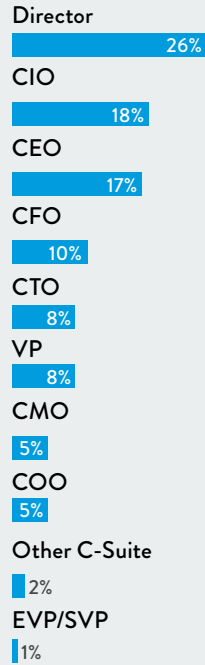


Figure 1: We surveyed 302 senior executives from large companies around the world and across industries

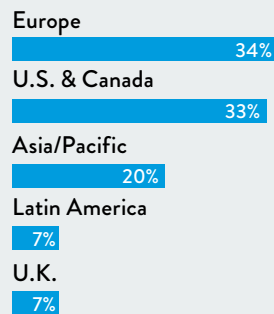
A quarter over \$5bn in revenues, another third over \$2bn



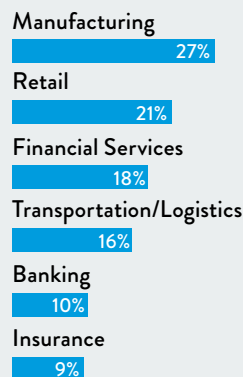
Three-quarters C-suite



One-third each in Europe and North America



Broad range of industries



WHERE TO START: UNDERSTANDING IF, HOW AND WHY YOU SHOULD BEGIN TO EXPLORE AUTOMATION

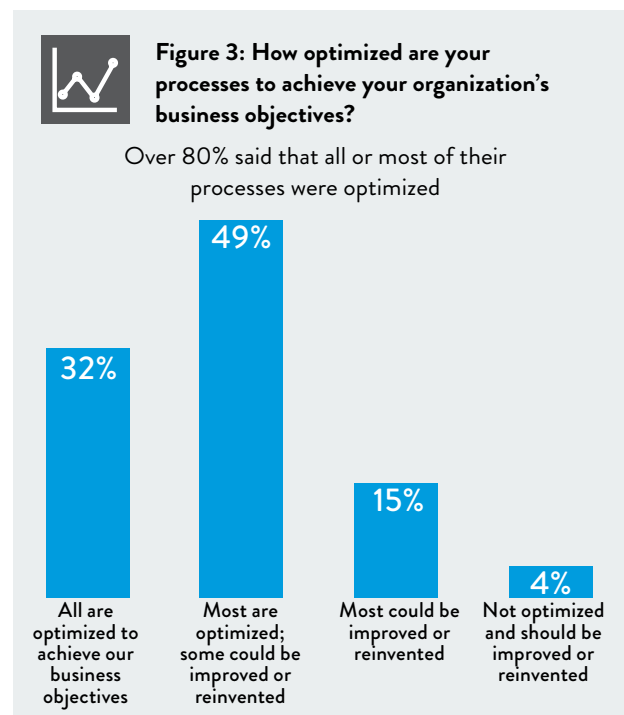
For every business objective, there's a process—usually multiple, complex, legacy processes—that supports the objective, drives it and helps others understand if it's working.

According to our survey, the most frequently mentioned process considered for implementing enterprise automation was quality control (43% of respondents), i.e., maintaining or improving the quality of the company's products. Technology enhancement (42%), followed by financial transactions/reporting (35%), customer experience (32%), and delivery of products and services (32%) round out the top five most frequently automated processes. The complete list is below:



EXECUTIVES ARE (MOSTLY) CONFIDENT THEIR PROCESSES ARE STRONG

With their top processes identified, we asked how efficiently the respondents thought that processes were executed. Almost one-third claimed that all of their processes were optimized to achieve their goals, and another half said that most were optimized.



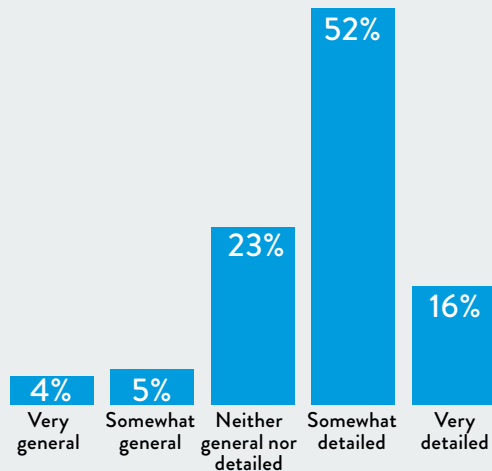
Most executives said that their processes were executed in a precise and consistent manner. Sixty-eight percent indicated that their process execution is either somewhat or very detailed, and 75% remarked that their processes are either consistently or very consistently executed.



Figure 4: Between two-thirds and three-quarters said their processes were...

...somewhat or very detailed, and

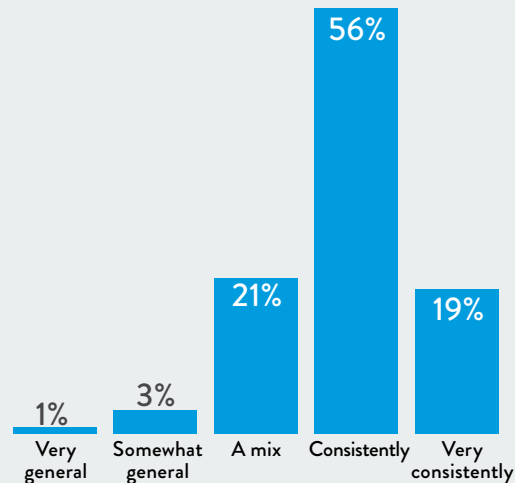
To what extent do you believe your execution follows a detailed series of steps as opposed to an idealized, conceptual procedure?



Average of 6.9 on a scale of 1 to 10

...consistently or very consistently executed

How consistently are your processes executed? Exactly the same time after time, or in a more general and less consistent way?



Average of 7.3 on a scale of 1 to 10

As might be expected, the opinions varied by type of respondent. Not every type of executive had the same level of confidence in their processes:

- CEO: "GREAT!"** The most positive group was CEOs at the largest companies, and the least positive were VPs and directors at the smallest companies. In other words, the people furthest from the trenches tended to be more confident that processes were precisely defined and consistently executed.
- CFO: "GOOD!"** CFOs were still positive, but not quite so positive as CEOs. CFOs live and die by process, responsible for regularly consolidating and reporting vast quantities of detailed records to the most important stakeholders. (The IT function was also not as positive.) Because CFOs are so close to high-stakes, high-pressure processes, they are acutely aware of process flaws. Says the CFO of a major consumer



Figure 5: Who is most positive about processes?

	Most Positive	Not as Positive
Position	CEOs	CFOs
Region	Americas	Asia-Pacific
Size	>\$5 billion	\$1 billion to \$2 billion

packaged goods company, "We've added all kinds of software in the finance department, but we haven't fundamentally really changed the way we do things."

KEY TAKEAWAY

The enterprise must approach process automation holistically rather than in silos in order to achieve the biggest impact.

THE TAKEAWAY: Survey responses show the need for collective alignment around which processes will result in the largest impact once automated. It is critical that the enterprise approach process automation holistically rather than in silos to achieve success. Although it initially seems like an obvious point, we've observed that it is easy to miss this in the effort to move quickly and achieve results, only to run into speed bumps, or later realize that other processes might have made for stronger candidates.

OPTIMIZED PROCESSES BENEFIT MOST FROM AUTOMATION

When Henry Ford perfected the assembly line over 100 years ago, it reduced the time needed to assemble a car from a day to a few hours. However, although the process was fully optimized, it remained largely manual. Although many organizations have optimized

their processes through experience, research and/or trial and error, there may still lie opportunity to realize further improvement via automation. The next wave of productivity lies in evaluating optimized processes to determine which can be automated to further enhance service levels, reduce operational costs and drive productivity.

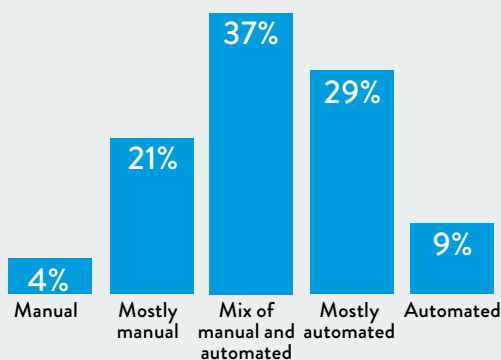
"We created a video of an employee doing the work on one side, and the robot doing the work on the other," says Cheprasov, describing a presentation at an annual meeting of CEOs and CFOs of agencies within the Dentsu Aegis group. "By the time the employee is half-finished doing the process once, the robot has done the same process 220 times. We knew there would be major efficiencies by combining the two. That 30-second video told the whole story of taking a process from three hours to five minutes. It made a huge impression."



Figure 6:

Our processes are a mix of manual and automated...

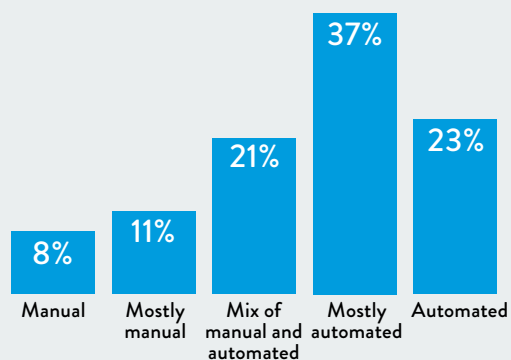
On average, where do the processes you are involved in fall on a scale from completely manual to 100% automated?



Average of 5.8 on a scale of 0 to 10

...and we want them to be less manual and more automated

How automated would you like them to be?



Average of 6.6 on a scale of 0 to 10

The consensus around the need for more automation is consistent with Cheprasov's experience at Dentsu Aegis: "When we started, we took as our benchmark some McKinsey Institute research that said close to 50% of today's menial work can be automated. But based on what I've seen across all of the functions and agencies in our network, we're closer to 75% when it comes to rote tasks."

Not every optimized process requires automation—but what's the ideal mix? The survey found a gap between the current and the ideal mix of manual work and automation. While 60% of respondents wanted their processes to be automated or mostly automated, only 38% said they had achieved that benchmark.

What's the takeaway? Companies still have a long way to go to both optimize their key processes and then automate them. Although many organizations have already optimized processes, there is still much room to automate the numerous manual steps in them. Intelligent Automation is uniquely positioned to help organizations to optimize and automate their processes.

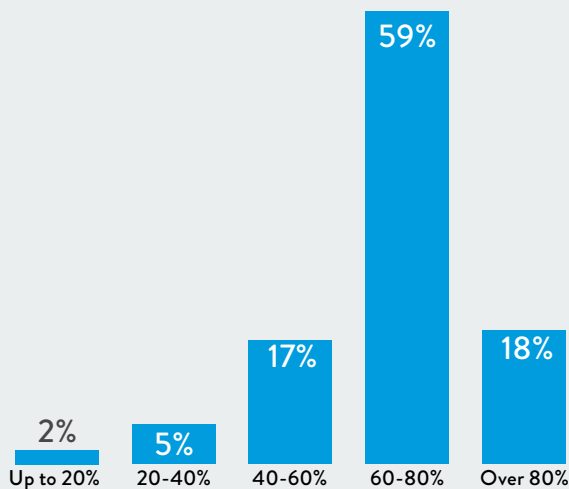
CLOSING THE GAP WITH INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION

Survey respondents believe there is broad opportunity for Intelligent Automation. More than three-quarters said that 60% or more of process work could be automated, and almost one in five said that 80% or more could be automated.

At Rabobank, very simple robots requiring minimal efforts to set up automated up to 98% of an existing process. "We created simple mailbots—no cognitive or AI-related features. They simply screen emails based on client number, then pull in client activity and route the emails to the right places," says Van Uffelen. "Now we only handle 2% by hand."



Figure 7: What scope exists for more automation of processes?



OUTSOURCING VS. BOTS

In recent years outsourcing has enabled companies to cut costs by hiring workers in lower-cost countries to undertake less-skilled, repetitive work. But as technology has evolved, the calculus has changed as to when outsourcing makes sense.

According to Cheprasov, the cost of an employee in India is four times the cost of a bot in the U.S. "We may outsource initially," he says. "But as soon as we build a bot, we bring that work back to the U.S." Cheprasov is in discussions with his company's Indian outsourcing group to deploy automation in India.

HOW INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION EXPANDS ACROSS THE ENTERPRISE

According to the survey results, automation solutions spread across the enterprise in a predictable pattern—starting locally at a point of need, and expanding across the organization as news of its success spreads to other areas. Ultimately, any enterprise automation capability should be managed via a center of excellence or digital management office with both IT and business stakeholders.

For example, the vast majority of survey respondents have taken steps to automate processes, including:

- **INVENTORYING AND DOCUMENTING THEIR PROCESSES (95%)**
- **RANKING THEM BY IMPORTANCE (93%)**
- **INVESTING IN AUTOMATION SOFTWARE (96%)**

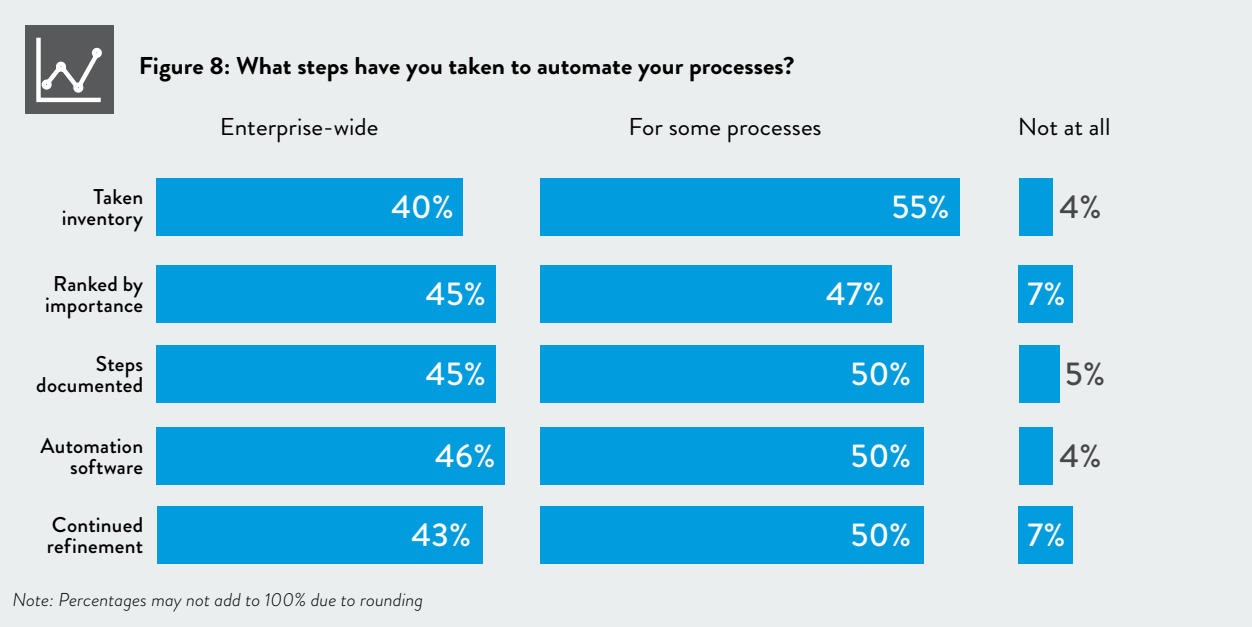
Of those who had taken steps to automate, in most cases the initiative started locally within a specific business function, such as finance. Given this model for how Intelligent Automation usually takes root within the enterprise, best practices dictate that the business should collaborate early with IT to establish proper guardrails while partnering on the

proof of concept and implementation plan.

WHO OWNS WHAT? HOW BUSINESS STAKEHOLDERS AND IT SHARE RESPONSIBILITIES

As more and more business processes become automated, best practices dictate that IT remains consulted and informed to ensure that the automation solutions work securely, consistently and in a scalable manner. For instance, IT will assume responsibility for hosting of enterprise automation technologies, making sure there’s enough memory and processing power to run them, and integrating automation within the security framework.

In other models, business stakeholders can be empowered to build automation solutions within a framework established by IT. “In the rapidly changing world of banking, our bank now uses RPA as an intrinsic tool within our overall business,” says Jill Marks, general manager of business transformation at P&N Bank, a mutual bank based in Western Australia. “We’ve taken a slightly different approach than other banks





BEST PRACTICE

The Dentsu Aegis center of excellence provides automation services centrally and implements them locally. “My group is responsible for uncovering opportunities, educating people on automation techniques and brainstorming with them on what can be automated,” says Cheprasov. “Then we come up with the architecture and design and sometimes do rapid prototyping—a proof of concept. We see our job as enabling, training and transferring skills so that the business can operate and maintain automation, but can still escalate issues through the center of expertise.”

who have gone into RPA, with a software solution that has been particularly effective. At P&N we only automate the parts of our processes that afford us maximum benefit. Instead of hiring a team of IT developers to build and manage robots, we have worked with our software solution partners to train business users from P&N. These business users design, build and monitor the performance of our robots themselves, working closely with IT, who then ultimately deploy the robots. We’ve found this approach to be very successful, as it’s allowed the business to really take ownership of RPA and work in a way that best fits our needs.

“Now that our Robotics Center of Excellence is established, P&N is driving a collaborative approach to RPA, bringing together business and IT teams to shape our automation strategy across the entire business to deliver real value.”

Marks concludes, “Automating a process requires translating what is basic logic for a human into a set of standard rules the bot needs to follow. In some cases, what is easy for a human to apply requires a complicated set of rules for a bot to use. We have already demonstrated that our business experts within our Center of Excellence are able to greatly improve the accuracy of translating these human requirements into bot rules, ultimately improving the efficiency of our builds and thereby providing a much better outcome overall.”

STARTING, SCALING AND EXPANDING INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION

To date, the CFO has commonly been the first convert

in many organizations, and financial reporting has often been a common initial focus area for automation. However, enterprise automation technologies are “function agnostic,” and opportunities to enhance processes can be identified across the enterprise. “We use RPA everywhere: finance and accounting, customer operations, carrier development, marketing,” says Diana Rudha, senior manager, automation and software development at Coyote Logistics, a subsidiary of United Parcel Service. “Every department at Coyote has some type of RPA solution.”

Coyote launched its automation initiative in the front office, where customer interaction took place, and only then moved into back-office processes. “We started on the revenue side, and our first project made a big impression. We got rid of the repetitive and mundane work and freed up a lot of hours,” says Rudha. “The business loved it. They became big fans. Our sales team immediately realized, ‘This is a huge competitive advantage.’”

At Dentsu Aegis, transactional work around client invoicing was automated first. But then automation moved to middle-office operations, closer to the revenue-generating client work. Says Cheprasov: “We looked at our media buying, media planning and media actualization areas and built two proof-of-concepts where CFOs signed off and said, ‘We need this. We’re constantly investing in the team, people complain constantly, there’s lots of turnover, and we have to do something to fix it.’”

STAFF TALK: ADDRESSING EMPLOYEE APPREHENSION

Some employees are initially cautious when it comes to considering enterprise automation solutions. “In the media, you see that the robots are coming to take your job,” says Rabobank’s van Uffelen. “Some may be hesitant when they hear about a robotics initiative. Eventually, we see that our employees are actually very happy with the robots, because they can now focus on the real, worthy tasks.”

According to the survey, employee satisfaction is consistently the most improved “post RPA implementation” metric. In fact, **92% of respondents indicated improvements in employee satisfaction as a result of their automation initiative. More than half, 52%, indicated employee satisfaction increased by 15% or more.**

Respondents indicated that automation also makes them more efficient (the second most improved post-implementation metric), increases customer satisfaction (the third most improved metric), lowers costs, increases market share, increases revenue and widens operating margins.

One reason that employees embrace RPA is that only the most routinized of jobs are replaced with bots, says Chris Huff, chief strategy officer at Kofax. These account for a small minority of jobs, and they tend to be jobs that are not particularly rewarding. Once manual processes are automated with bots, most organizations redeploy existing teams to higher-value activities, such as giving personalized service to customers and guiding them through the process more quickly or more accurately.

Organizations should note employees’ apprehension around automation and address those fears head on. A common method by which Huff helped executives address fears within their respective organizations was via fun and positive testimonial videos where affected employees would articulate the results and value of automation post-implementation.

At first, Huff says, employees were guarded, thinking, “Is it going to take my job?” Subsequently, they began to realize that automation was there not to replace them, but instead to serve them by performing tedious tasks that consumed much of their time and prevented them from focusing on other critical efforts.

“In addition to understanding operational improvement opportunities, they also began to understand how it might help them on a personal level. Most employees feel as though they’re cramming 11 hours of work into an eight-hour day. With the low-level transactional work taken off their plate, not only can they focus on more impactful initiatives, but they also get home sooner to spend time with their families,” Huff remarks.

Huff advised executives he consulted with to show these video clips in employee town halls, conferences, training sessions and to management. “Everyone buys in. It’s Change Management 101, and it has to start early in the project,” he said.



Figure 9: How survey participants viewed the results of RPA initiatives

	Negative	No change	< 5%	5-15%	15-25%	25%+
Employee satisfaction	1%	6%	10%	31%	30%	22%
Efficiency	0%	4%	10%	31%	34%	20%
Customer satisfaction	1%	5%	7%	31%	35%	20%
Costs	1%	1%	11%	35%	36%	15%
Market share	0%	4%	11%	41%	25%	19%
Revenue	0%	4%	13%	34%	30%	18%
Operating margins	1%	3%	13%	40%	26%	17%

NEXT STEPS ON THE AUTOMATION JOURNEY

Beyond automating rules-based tasks with RPA, Intelligent Automation enables the end-to-end automation of more-complex processes. The survey uncovered opportunities in three key areas:

1. DOCUMENT AND DATA PROCESSING:

Only 13% of companies claim to have fully automated the interpretation of unstructured content, and one-quarter simply turn text over to humans. The rest fall somewhere in between, with automation ranging from keyword extraction to sentiment analysis.

RPA with integrated intelligent optical character recognition (OCR) creates a complete workflow for automating document-heavy processes such as invoices, contracts, and sales and purchase orders.

2. AUTOMATING TASKS INTO AN END-TO-END SEQUENCE:

Just 25% of survey respondents are able to automate a larger business process, with humans intervening only in the case of exceptions.

At Dentsu Aegis, natural language processing (NLP) has been applied to save the sales team up to 60 hours of manual labor on individual RFPs. Previously, RFPs were a scramble

of finding previous versions, collecting information and retooling an RFP for the client’s specific requirements.

The company created a bot that ingested 20 of the best and most recent RFP responses. Now a program reads the incoming request, uses NLP to understand the questions and their context, matches them to previous responses, creates the draft, and converts it into a PowerPoint presentation.

Because the AI can’t identify every question or match it to a previous answer, human interventions are necessary. “We create a workflow,” says Cheprasov. “The bot categorizes the question and routes it to a person who knows how to answer it based on the information we have in Workday or Salesforce. The draft is modified and distributed to reviewers. The bot then looks in Microsoft Outlook to find availability and schedules a review meeting.”

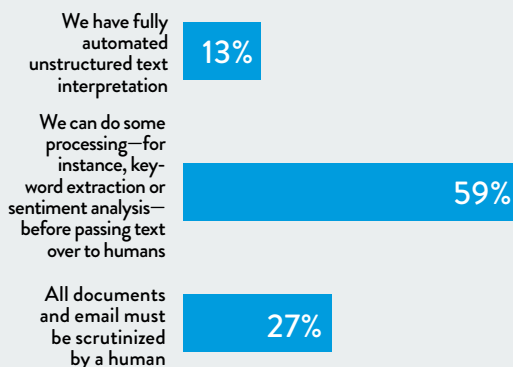
3. JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING:

Artificial intelligence tools like natural language processing and machine learning can enable robots to make decisions. At Coyote, according to Rudha, “now we’re building what we call cognitive RPA, where the processes require judgment and decision making. We are starting to use natural language processing and machine learning to create



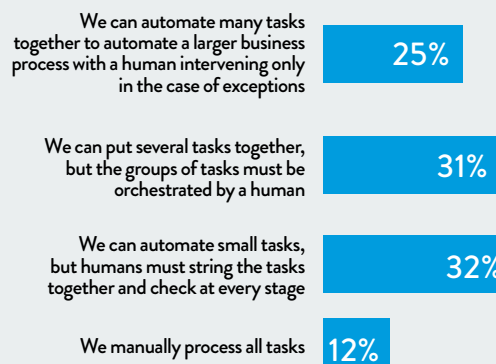
Figure 10:
Making sense of free text is a work in progress...

To what extent are you able to automatically extract and use information in documents?



...and many firms need humans to link small processes into a longer sequence

To what extent are you able to orchestrate many automated tasks into a longer end-to-end business process, such as customer onboarding or customer due diligence?



decision-making robots. We process free text in real time and apply machine learning algorithms to make a judgment that directs the robot on a particular course of action.”

That said, true “next steps” for the enterprise of the future aren’t in automating in small pockets with point solutions, but in successfully implementing Intelligent Automation across the enterprise. We’ve seen many companies get lost in the allure of trying to drive exceptionally high straight-through processing rates or establish automation programs with the core aim of replacing people.

Not only does Intelligent Automation identify and automate operations work, it also helps your organization find a healthy balance between machines and humans. The foundation of a sustainable automation program is the realization that there are things machines will inherently do well and things humans will inherently do well. Intelligent Automation is about integrating technologies and striking that balance, while also bringing transparency to the state of automated processes via responsive and innovative reporting.

CONCLUSION

Executives have overwhelmingly voted in favor of Intelligent Automation solutions. They check every box—time savings, collaboration, cost savings, employee satisfaction, customer experience, competitive advantage and increased revenue.

The survey data supports the real value that automation is already having within the enterprise. Notably, nine out of 10 executives agreed with the statement that “our leadership

recognizes the importance of automation to our future success.”

“The domains that are most successful in automating their processes are those where the complete organization is committed, not just the people in operations, but also senior management. That’s the biggest secret to success,” says van Uffelen.

A second requirement for success is a sense of urgency. “When I talk to the operational domains, I always say, ‘You’ve got to create your own sense of urgency. If you don’t have that, I don’t believe it’s really going to work,’” Huff says.

At the same time, it’s important to keep the future in mind. An enterprise-ready platform combined with the right stakeholders from the business and IT allows companies to scale from a single robot to thousands.

“We started small and made sure our way of working was robust,” says van Uffelen. “But we also made sure that we had a stable infrastructure that allowed us to grow. We started out focusing on operational back-office work. But now we are free to expand to other operational domains with lots of repetitive manual work, such as client service and customer due diligence.”

The results are clear. Forward-thinking enterprises harness automation to drive operational benefits, like time and cost savings and increased capacity. These companies also understand at a fundamental level that automation delivers strategic benefits—like higher customer and employee satisfaction, competitive differentiation and deeper profit margins—essential to sustainability, scalability and success in the digital age. The time is now to work like tomorrow.



Figure 11: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

- Our leadership recognizes the importance of process automation to our future success
- We are satisfied with our time savings due to process automation
- Our IT and LOB executives are in sync when collaborating on process automation initiatives
- Our employees are satisfied with how their jobs evolved thanks to process automation
- We are satisfied with our cost savings due to process automation

	Disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
Leadership recognizes importance	10%	37%	53%
Satisfied with time savings	15%	36%	49%
IT & LOB in sync on process automation collaboration	16%	39%	45%
Employees satisfied with job evolution	16%	40%	44%
Satisfied with cost savings	20%	40%	40%

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