



Fact or Fiction? – The Truth about Robotic Process Automation



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Introduction

With all of the hype surrounding RPA, there are still many misconceptions over what it can and can't do. So how do you separate fact from fiction? This latest guide from The Robotic Workforce lists 10 of the most common misunderstandings and lays out the all-important truths...

1. It's a passing fad

Many may still be resisting the urge to adopt RPA in the belief that it's a fad which will never last. However, automation is not a new concept and has already been around for decades in shared services and global business services. With an ever increasing demand for organisations in every industry to find ways to maximise efficiency, minimise costs and remain competitive, RPA is only going to develop and evolve even further – it's here to stay.

2. Robots will replace the human workforce

One of the biggest misconceptions about RPA is that it will eliminate the need for human workers altogether... "Robots are going to steal our jobs!" This thought process has bred fear and uncertainty and has caused a great deal of resistance, particularly among those in the IT field and in more 'task based' roles. In reality, RPA is meant to complement human workers and make their jobs easier and more efficient. It's true, in some cases, automation can replace a fulltime position but the reality is more symbiotic, with robots tackling the more mundane and error prone tasks that humans often dislike, this allows the humans to focus more on complex, value-add activities. The adoption of RPA technology will actually create new and better opportunities for people to pursue, ultimately elevating the role of the human worker.



3. Different robots are needed for each functional department

A single robot can complete multiple different tasks and is not restricted to specific functions. A robot could be carrying out Finance admin tasks overnight and then be ready to complete password resets first thing on a Monday morning. Once a process has been defined as a series of instructions that a software robot can execute, as many robots as required can be quickly deployed to perform that process. Robots can be easily reassigned between tasks when more important processes arise, with each robot typically capable of performing many types of different process. It's a truly flexible solution.

4. RPA is expensive

RPA does have initial implementation costs, but the return on investment is tangible with rapid internal cost reductions and significant increases in ROI. RPA increases efficiency and dramatically reduces errors all within very short timeframes, resulting in organisational wide savings. It enables 24/7/365 execution of particular tasks and processes at a fraction of the human equivalent cost. A software robot can cost as little as one-third the price of an offshore full-time employee (FTE) and as little as one-fifth the price of an onshore FTE.

5. It's too complicated to even consider

RPA is actually fairly quick and easy to implement without requiring a great deal of in-house technical know-how. Once you've determined which processes are appropriate for RPA, software robots can typically be deployed in weeks. With the robots in place, processes can then be assigned to them in about the same amount of time. Using the services of a professional RPA partner eliminates the need for internal 'automation' expertise. A professional RPA partner will work with you, hand in hand, to scope, implement and develop your robotic or 'virtual' workforce and provide on-going support and maintenance at every stage of the process.



6. It won't work with older legacy systems

Existing legacy systems do not need to change in order to deploy RPA - the robotic workforce follows the same mouse clicks and data entry processes as your existing human workforce. As long as the processes in question are manual, rules-based and with standard inputs, RPA is a viable solution, regardless of the systems or platforms within which these processes occur. Quite literally, no digital transformation is required!

7. RPA is only for a limited market

RPA is often overlooked as an option by many as they believe it's only suited to larger organisations with dedicated IT departments. In reality, RPA can be applied to almost any repetitive, manual task, workflow or business process – regardless of whether it's IT related or not and can be of great benefit to smaller organisations, managing administrative functions that are often taken on as additional duties. There's also a common misconception that RPA is only productive in certain industries. However, RPA can be applied to almost any rules-based, high-volume business activity in any sector. RPA can be used, for example, to manage order processing in the retail sector, claims processing in the insurance industry, fraud detection by banks and even communication with customers in the manufacturing industry. The possibilities are endless.

8. All RPA solutions are the same

While the basic automation concept is consistent, the tools themselves can vary significantly, as can the organisations that develop and market them. The important consideration is finding a solution (and partner) that fits best with your specific organisational needs. Some key things to consider include ease of use, time to deployment, cost of ownership, scalability, ROI and the ongoing support provided.



9. You can automate everything with RPA

In order to fully appreciate the benefits of RPA, it's important to also understand its limitations. Some of the earliest adopters of robotic process automation falsely believed that 100% of the workload within certain functional areas of their organisations could be seamlessly transitioned from human to robot. Whilst it's true that some companies can automate the majority of their processes, there will always be some areas where human input is required. The role of the human, even in the most task based processes, will never be truly redundant.

10. RPA is 100% accurate

Believe it or not, RPA software robots are capable of making a mistake! As with any technology solution, robots are not 100% fool proof and are dependent on the process design and programming implemented by us humans. Sound process design up front is paramount, hence the importance of working with a professional partner who not only fully understands the world of RPA but who will also take the time to understand your unique business model and be on hand to monitor the software robots in the initial stages of automation. With robots not (yet) possessing the human characteristics of logic and reasoning (although some believe this is closer than we think), should there be a flaw in a programming instruction, this could be replicated potentially thousands of times before it's spotted.

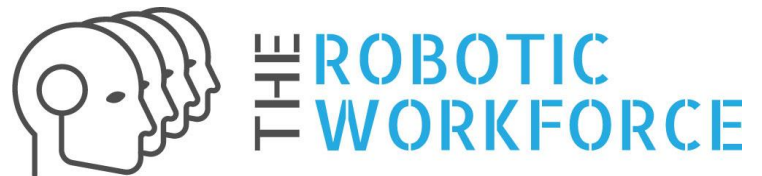
Conclusion

The myths and misinformation surrounding RPA can at best, confuse, and at worst, prevent organisations from adopting a technology that could ultimately streamline their business and operational processes, enhance productivity and provide that all important competitive edge.

The debates around RPA are likely to continue but one thing is unquestionable - RPA is most certainly here to stay. Are you ready to embrace it?

Next Steps

If you're looking to start your RPA journey or simply want to learn more, contact [The Robotic Workforce](https://www.theroboticworkforce.com) on [0333 005 0321](tel:03330050321) or email info@theroboticworkforce.com



The Robotic Workforce specialises in working with businesses to automate processes, eliminate costs and enhance productivity and efficiency through the adoption of Robotic Process Automation. We will work with you to scope, implement and develop your robotic or 'virtual' workforce and provide on-going support and maintenance at every stage of the process. Partnering with some of the world's leading RPA vendors, we're able to provide you with preferential rates on RPA software and tools and are here to guide you on your journey into the exciting world of Robotic Process Automation.

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