

PAPER

# TRANSFORMING TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY with RPA

## Embracing the New Era of Travel & Hospitality Industry

*We will examine how automation has changed the way we live and do business. We'll also look at how an RPA-driven approach is revolutionizing the Travel & Hospitality industry and impacting it holistically along with, how automation and business processes influence to drive enterprise vision of transformation and disruptive business model.*

■ JULY 2023



## PAPER PREMISE

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This paper depicts the complete story of automation. We start by understanding the scope of RPA, the current challenges in the Travel & Hospitality industry, and how it impacts the major functional areas. Moving on, we gain an understanding of how implementing RPA solutions to the various subsectors of the T&H industry can be transformative and benefit the industry in multiple ways. Next, we skim through some important considerations while preparing to adopt RPA. Later, in this paper, we go through the emerging trends of RPA in the T&H industry while highlighting our expertise and approach for successful RPA implementation. We will look at some of our success stories and experiences that we have gained while implementing RPA successfully for our clients.

## AUDIENCE

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This paper aims at the C-suite of organizations, cross-functional decision-making leaders, and transformation consultants to define a unified platform roadmap, transform enterprises to fulfill the needs of the next generation of customers and align to the new norms of a changing business landscape.



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## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 About Travel & Hospitality (T&H)

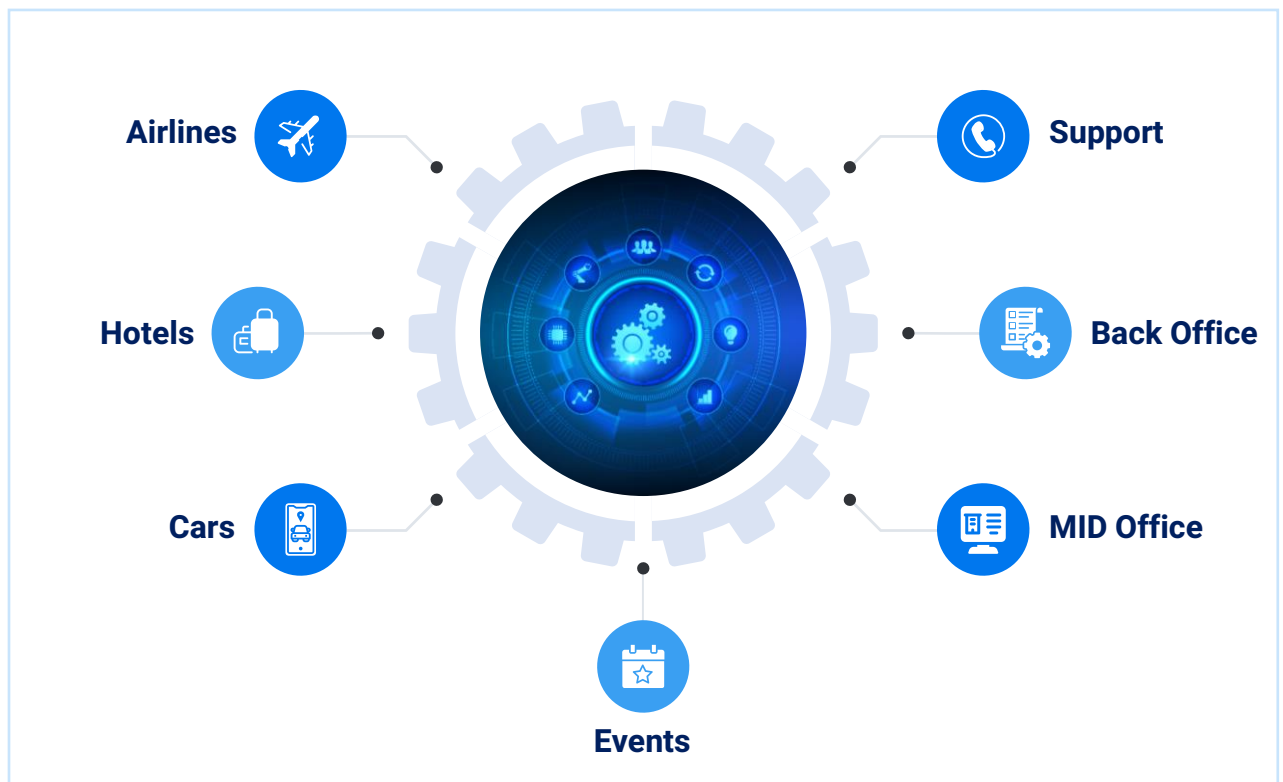
The Travel & Hospitality industry is a vast and diverse sector stretching across various businesses and services, such as travel, tourism, accommodation, and dining. It caters to both leisure and business travelers, offering an array of services to meet their needs and preferences.

### 1.2 About Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

Robotic Process Automation, or RPA, uses software robots or "bots" to execute repetitive and rule-based tasks automatically, allowing you to repurpose your employees to focus on more complex and value-added activities.

Enterprises worldwide are utilizing RPA to eliminate employees' Business as Usual (BAU) tasks to improve operational activities and open new windows for the workforce to think and act strategically.

The T&H industry, also a customer-centric industry, can utilize RPA extensively to streamline operations, boost productivity, enhance efficiency, and elevate the overall customer experience.

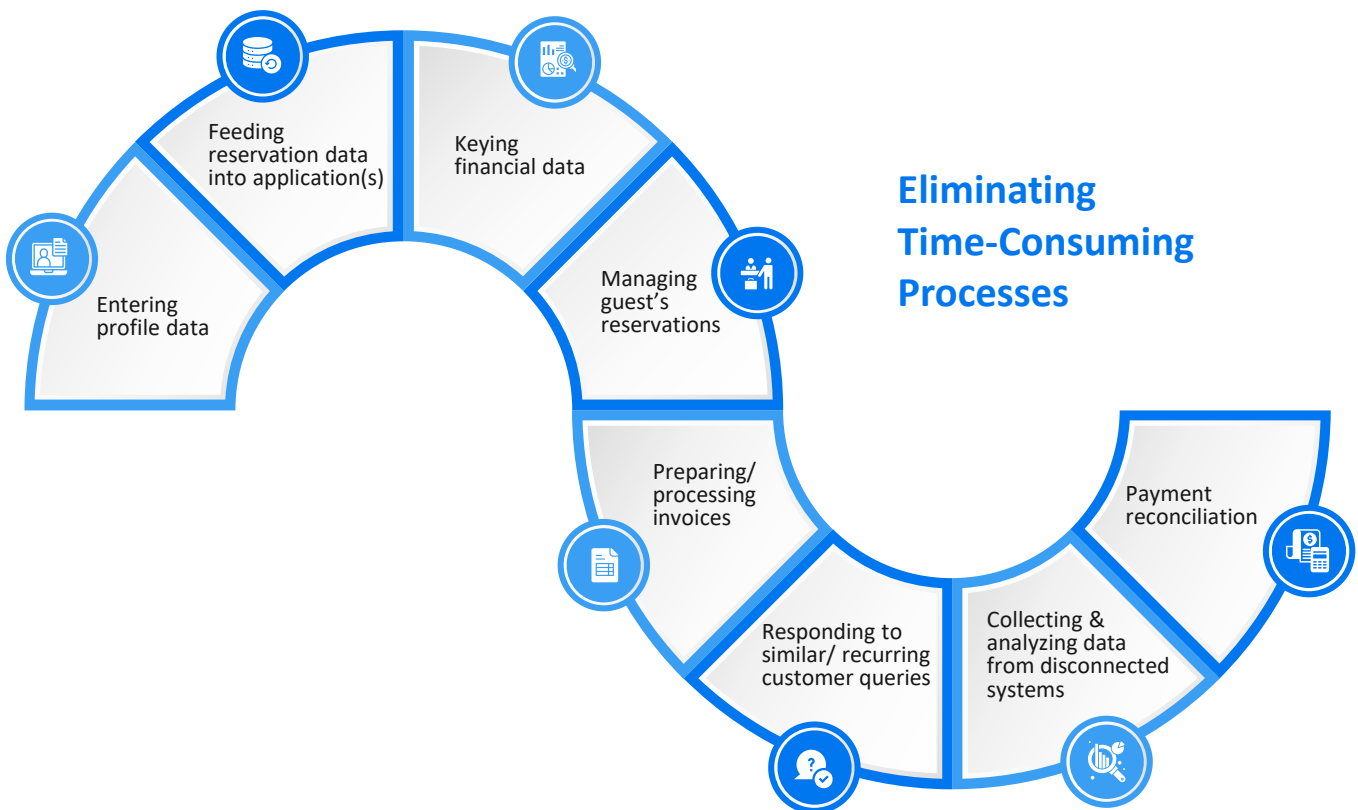


## CURRENT SCENARIO OF THE TRAVEL &amp; HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

## 2.1 Challenges

In the Travel & Hospitality industry, repetitive work is a big challenge. It can further lead to more challenges, particularly when it comes to time-consuming, error-prone, and manually exhaustive tasks.

Such tasks often lead to reduced employee efficiency, improper time management, errors, substantial quality control efforts, and reduced job satisfaction, and act as a roadblock to the employee's appetite to adapt to transformative changes happening in the industry.



## 2.2 Impact

Manual processes in the Travel & Hospitality industry significantly impact operational efficiency and customer experience and lead to:

- Inefficiencies, delays, and increased chances of errors
- Bottlenecks in scaling operations
- Increased dependency on physical documents or disconnected systems that hinder real-time access to accurate and updated information
- Inconsistent customer experience
- Obstructions to gather and analyze data effectively

## OVERVIEW OF RPA APPLICATIONS IN THE T&H INDUSTRY

### RPA solutions & benefits in the T&H industry

#### RPA can automate the process of making reservations and bookings

Access Multiple Systems, Gather Customer Information, Check Availability, Process Payments, Generate Booking Confirmations

**Benefits:** Improved Accuracy, Faster Bookings, Increased Efficiency, Enhanced Productivity, Cost Savings, 24/7 Availability, Improved Customer Experience, Streamlined Process

#### Bots are used to automate data entry tasks

Update Customer Information, Transfer Data Between Systems, Migrate Data from one platform to another.

**Benefits:** Reduced Manual Effort, Minimal Errors, and Data Consistency Across Different Systems

#### RPA bots can automate invoice processing

Expense Management, Accounts Payable Tasks, Extract Data from Invoices, Validate Information, Match Invoices with Purchase Orders, and Initiate Payment Processes.

**Benefits:** Increased Accuracy, Streamlined & Speedy Payment Processing, Reduced Manual Effort, Achieve Scalability

#### Bots can be used to engage with customers and answer their queries

Automate Responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), Handle Simple Customer Inquiries, and Provide 24/7 Support.

**Benefits:** Improved Response Time, Personalized Interactions, Reduced Customer Wait Time, Enhanced Overall Customer Service and Experience

#### Bots can be used for data analysis

Collect and Analyze Market Data, Monitor Competitor Prices, Adjust Pricing Strategies, Optimize Inventory Levels

**Benefits:** Maximize Revenue, Remain Competitive, Improved Data Accuracy and Efficiency, Optimized Revenue Management

### RPA bots can gather data from various sources

Perform Data Analysis, Generate Reports, and Provide Insights to Support Decision-making Processes.

**Benefits:** Saves Employees' Time and Laborious Efforts, Allows Employees to Focus on Interpreting Data and Making Strategic Decisions, Saves Cost

### RPA can automate back-office tasks

Data Reconciliation, Data Synchronization Between Systems, Generate Reports, and Update Databases.

**Benefits:** Improved Operational Efficiency, Reduced Errors, Data Accuracy , Smooth Compliance, and Regulatory Process Automation

## FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN IMPLEMENTING RPA IN THE T&amp;H INDUSTRY

**Implementation Considerations to Follow****Process evaluation and prioritization**

Look for repetitive, rule-based tasks with a significant volume of transactions and low complexity.

Prioritize processes that will have the most significant impact on efficiency, customer experience, and cost savings.

**Stakeholder engagement**

Engage key stakeholders, including process owners, IT teams, and business users, throughout the RPA implementation process.

Collaborate and clearly communicate the requirements, address concerns, and gain all parties' buy-in.

**Comprehensive process documentation**

Document the automation processes in detail, including process steps, inputs, outputs, rules, and exceptions.

The documentation is a reference point for designing and configuring RPA bots efficiently.

**Vendor selection**

Choose an RPA vendor with extensive experience in the Travel & Hospitality industry.

Consider factors such as the vendor's track record, expertise in process automation, solution scalability, compatibility with existing systems, and the support services provided.

**IT infrastructure readiness**

Assess the readiness of your IT infrastructure to support RPA implementation.

Ensure the necessary hardware, software, and network requirements are in place to accommodate the RPA solution. Evaluate compatibility with existing systems and assess the need for upgrades or modifications.

**Data security and compliance**

Consider data security and compliance requirements throughout the RPA implementation.

Implement security measures such as role-based access controls, encryption, and data masking to protect sensitive information. Ensure compliance with data protection regulations and industry-specific requirements.

## Change management

Implementing RPA involves organizational changes.

Plan for change management activities, including training programs, workshops, and communication plans. This will educate employees about the benefits of RPA, address their concerns, and facilitate a smooth transition.

## Pilot testing and proof of concept

Conduct a pilot test or proof of concept to validate the feasibility and effectiveness of the RPA solution.

Test it in a controlled environment with real-world data to identify any potential issues, refine the automation processes, and gather feedback from end users.

## Monitoring and maintenance

Establish a process for monitoring the performance of RPA bots, identifying any exceptions or errors, and resolving them promptly.

Implement regular maintenance and updates to ensure the RPA solution remains effective and aligned with changing business requirements.

## Continuous improvement

RPA implementation is an ongoing process.

Encourage a culture of continuous improvement by regularly evaluating the effectiveness of RPA, identifying opportunities for optimization, and leveraging data insights to refine and expand automation efforts.

## Process discovery and mining

Process discovery and mining involve utilizing data analytics and machine learning techniques to identify, map, and analyze existing business processes. This helps organizations understand their operations better and identify areas for automation.

Organizations can discover process inefficiencies, bottlenecks, and automation opportunities by analyzing event logs and system data to facilitate targeted RPA implementations.

## EMERGING TRENDS &amp; FUTURE OF RPA IN THE T&amp;H INDUSTRY

## Emerging RPA trends in the T&amp;H Industry



## Hyper automation

Hyper automation integrates RPA with artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, such as machine learning, natural language processing, and computer vision.

This further empowers the RPA bots to handle more complex tasks, make intelligent decisions, and interact with unstructured data seamlessly.

In the Travel & Hospitality industry, hyper-automation can enhance customer interactions, enable intelligent chatbots, and facilitate advanced data analysis for personalized recommendations.



## Intelligent Process Automation (IPA)

IPA combines the capabilities of RPA with cognitive technologies to automate end-to-end processes.

By incorporating AI capabilities, IPA enables RPA bots to understand, learn, and adapt to dynamic scenarios.

In the Travel & Hospitality industry, IPA can optimize processes such as fraud detection, itinerary planning, customer sentiment analysis, and dynamic pricing, leading to more efficient operations and enhanced customer experiences.



## Guest experience optimization

RPA is increasingly being utilized to improve customer experiences in the Travel & Hospitality industry. Bots can now automate tasks such as personalized recommendations, itinerary customization, and post-booking interactions, providing travelers with a seamless and tailored experience.

RPA can enable organizations to leverage customer data for targeted marketing, loyalty program management, and customer support to enhance customer satisfaction and increase customer loyalty.



## Intelligent document processing

RPA is being leveraged to automate document processing tasks such as invoices, receipts, contracts, and regulatory compliance forms.

Advanced OCR and AI capabilities enable RPA bots to automatically extract relevant data, validate information, and update systems. This results in significantly improved efficiency, reduced errors, and accelerated processes like invoice and expense management and regulatory compliance.

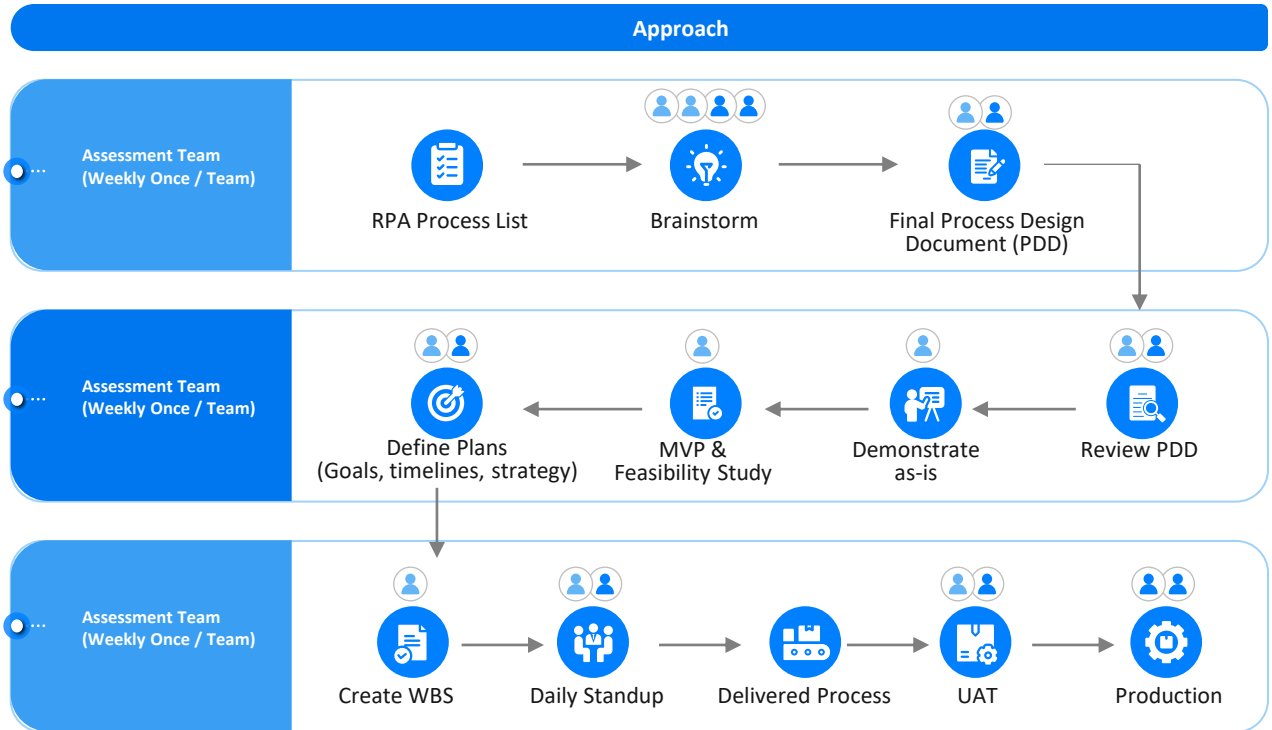


## Robotics-as-a-Service (RaaS)

RaaS is an emerging model where organizations can access RPA capabilities through cloud-based platforms or service providers. This reduces upfront costs, eliminates the need for infrastructure setup, and enables scalability and flexibility.

RaaS allows businesses in the Travel & Hospitality industry to quickly adopt and leverage RPA without significant initial investments, making it more accessible to organizations of varying sizes.

## OUR RPA APPROACH



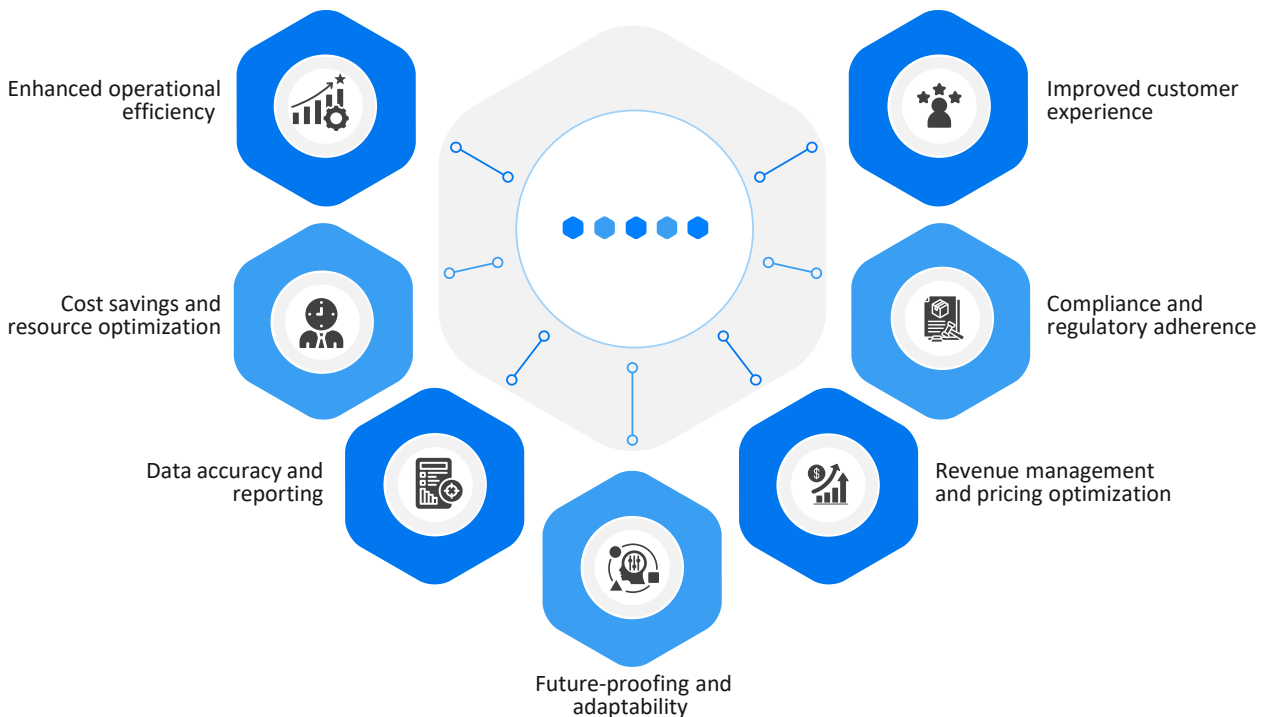
**Governance**

- KPI measurement & tracking
- Automation governance
- Reporting
- Monitor bots environment
- Bot enhancements & optimization
- Close collaboration with client stakeholders

## CONCLUSION

## 7.1 Encouraging to Adapt RPA

Implementation of RPA can be revolutionizing for the T&H industry by bringing in a whole lot of benefits such as:



The organizations associated with the T&H industry looking forward to optimizing operations, boosting revenue growth, and offering an exceptional experience to the customers must consider the variety of use cases where they can reap the benefits of RPA, analyze the cost and ROI parameters, and work toward RPA implementation.

## 7.2 Summary

The transformative power of Robotic Process Automation (RPA) in the Travel & Hospitality industry is immense. RPA enables organizations to unlock their true untapped potentials and transform the T&H sector by automating repetitive tasks, streamlining processes, and optimizing resource allocation, to deliver operational efficiency and cost savings.

As the industry embraces RPA, it is essential to consider change management, stakeholder engagement, and employee upskilling. By proactively addressing adoption challenges, organizations can successfully implement RPA and empower their workforce to focus on more strategic, value-added, and productive tasks.

Embracing RPA is not only a competitive advantage but also a catalyst for innovation and success in an increasingly dynamic and customer-centric industry.

## APPENDIX

## 8.1 OUR RPA EXPERTISE

## RPA T&amp;H Solutions

Accounts  
Receivable &  
Payable

- Invoice Processing
- Payment Processing
- Vendor Management

Data  
Management  
& Analytics

- Managing Large Amounts of Customer Behavior Related Data
- Bookings
- Financial Transactions
- Providing Insights to Optimize Pricing
- Marketing, & Sales Strategies

Booking &  
Reservation  
Management

- Property Onboarding
- Payment Processing
- Email Confirmations

Cross  
Functional

- Scraping
- Data Extraction & Aggregation
- Integration with Websites, Portals, Documents & Systems
- Data Entry
- Process Monitoring & Optimization
- Applications Integrations

Inventory  
Management

- Tracking Inventory Levels
- Generating Alerts for Low Stock
- Placing Orders with Suppliers

Compliance &  
Regulation

- Automating Data Collection & Verification
- Report Generation
- Monitoring Compliance Issues

Finance &  
Accounting

- Purchase Requisition & Automation
- Automated Invoice Processing
- Credit Note Processing
- Accounts Payable: Three-way Match
- Client Onboarding
- Accounts Reconciliation
- Financial Planning & Forecasting
- Automatic Report Generation
- Tax Reporting & reconciliation process

Customer  
Service/BPO

- Order entry/updates
- Billing
- Customer Queries & Complaints
- Managing Social Media Interactions
- Providing Personalized Recommendations to Customers
- Refunds
- Retrieving KYC Information

## 8.2. SUCCESS STORIES

### 8.2.1 Customer Profile Creation in Booking Tool & Mid Office Tool

#### About the Client

Is Australia's largest independently-owned travel management firm. It facilitates corporate travel for mid-market businesses to true meaningful connections.

#### Business Needs

To create customer-specific profiles in the online Booking Tool (Serko) and corresponding profiles in the Mid Office Tool (Tramada) and to eliminate the tedious, repetitive manual efforts that made the creating customer profile process inefficient, time-consuming, and laborious

#### Solutions

Develop and test RPA to :

- Accept minimal information on the UI
- Trigger the process to build the customer profile in the Booking Tool and Mid Office Tool based on the information provided in the Excel sheets

#### Technology Stack

RPA Tools

#### Business Impact

- Increased Efficiency
- Reduced Manual Efforts
- Reduced Errors
- Streamlined Process

### 8.2.2 RPA Implementation for Invoice Processing

#### About the Client

A US based Travel & Hospitality giant serving customers globally

## Business Needs

To assist the US team during the pandemic in multiple operations:

- Extract and print vendor Invoices
- Help employees with access to Billing Inboxes to reduce issues with 'marking as read' or moving/deleting important emails
- Optimize the manual 'tagging' process required for invoices
- Reduce hard costs by minimizing the usage of a third-party service that scans and/or types documents sent via postage/email
- Automate uploading of reports and information to the central billing system
- Automate collecting and combining budget rollups
- Scale and maintain existing bots

## Solutions

Implemented RPA using UiPath and multiple automated processes, including:

- Created bots to perform tasks such as accessing inbound billing emails from different vendors, filtering, de-duplicating, extracting data, compiling and logging, and updating daily email log
- Tagged bots to insert data into the client system swiftly and accurately while logging and highlighting any non-tagable scenarios
- Created a bot to access billing applications, filter, download, parse invoices, compile manifests, stamp PDFs, organize PDFs, manifest in ZIP, and put on SharePoint
- Automated creation of a Budget Tracker document by collecting and combining rollups and flowcharts data from various buying systems based on a set workflow
- Prepared team responsible for the day-to-day operational effectiveness (support, maintenance) of existing bots by creating an 'Automation Operations Center'

## Technology Stack

- UiPath
- Orchestrator
- Power BI
- Power Apps
- Power Automate
- Office 365
- Workato
- Enate Azure
- FileZilla
- SSMS

## Business Impact

- Processed ~1000 emails daily in 10 hours by the invoice processing bot, reducing 80-person hours processing time to 10 hours
- Reduced 80% processing time per task and external dependency by 90% for third-party services by using RegEx and OCR-based solutions
- Minimized payable AI/ML-based extraction of data from invoices
- Optimized Budget roll-up processing time from 1 month to 6 hours
- Reduced processing time required for manifest creation and PDF stamping from 10-person hours to 30 minutes,
- Eliminated human errors

## About Automation Operations Center

The automation operations center is built to support bots in production by:

- Supporting & scaling automation
- Monitoring, logging, & reporting
- Performing break-fixes & small upgrade requests
- Implementing best practices
- Providing proactive & reactive support via the ticketing system
- Following the latest RPA tech trends for optimized solutions

## 8.2.3 RPA for Automated Ticket Processing

### About the Client

Is a leader in outcome-based marketing and provides services including marketing data, insights-strategy, marketing technology, creative services, and media reach to create connections between people and brands

### Business Needs

- To utilize the client's 20 associates working on 24/7 shifts engaged in various laborious marketing-based for better technical projects
- To streamline marketing department processes by setting up an RPA CoE to perform tasks like:
  - To create standard user – UI (Interactive) and API
  - To capture service task details in ServiceNow
  - User activation /deactivation/ termination
  - To add/ revoke role and access to the business unit
  - To modify the user's email address

### Solutions

- Consulted for end-to-end setup from CoE to a live bot deployment
- Set up UiPath RPA infra, team, and orchestration along with the implementation team
- Established and demonstrated RPA practice by implementing processes on the AWS platform
- Defined initial charter to implementation framework for each stage: process identification, evaluation, planning, design, implementation, validation, deployment, and monitoring

### Business Impact

- Processed around 100 tickets each day & **reduced operation time** drastically **by 80%** right at the beginning
- Eliminated manual errors and achieved faster calculations
- **Repurposed 18 FTEs** for other priority work

### Technology Stack

- **Tools used:**
  - UiPath
  - VB.Net
- **Systems & platform integrated:**
  - AWS, ServiceNow, Marketing Operations s/w, Office365