

A Case for Transformational Change – Secure Intelligent Automation for Mission Readiness, Accelerating Insight and Enabling Future Readiness for Warfighters.

The daily requirements imposed on military activities continue to grow far more rapidly than budget and resource allocations. Mission essential tasks for our Military continue to expand without removing any earlier demands. Our agencies must take advantage of exponential technologies to improve efficiency and meet cost reduction goals while maintaining the same standard of service.

One key to mitigating these ever-expanding mission requirements is a connected intelligent automation platform and enterprise approach to automation. The IBM and Blue Prism team is helping DoD leaders identify and minimize daily mundane duties so humans can focus on mission critical tasks.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

Federal programs should consider robotic process automation (RPA) “bots” a key component of their workforces. In simple terms, an *RPA bot is a software robot programmed to execute a task or a series of tasks by mimicking a human’s actions for which it’s programmed.* Using RPA, these robots are programmed to capture and understand information, process a transaction, manipulate data, generate responses and communicate with other applications. These software bots, work through systems’ graphical interfaces, including web browsers, and can also be integrated via application programming interfaces (APIs).

RPA foundational automations can automate the routine - providing relief from deterministic and repetitive tasks our people perform every day. The results are tangible, allowing our people and resources to focus on higher value mission critical tasking elsewhere in the organization.

Processes best suited for RPA



High volume



Repetitive tasks



High FTE number



Manual data entry



Multiple legacy systems



Logic & rule-based processes

Blue Prism’s Connected-RPA platform

Defense organizations are under growing pressure to automate the countless processes that underlie mission operations. Unfortunately, most automation solutions are limited in their ability to learn complex processes — and to meet DoD’s demanding security and performance standards. **Blue Prism Connected-RPA expands the art of the possible** — with enterprise-scale auditability and security features including FedRAMP Level 5 readiness — providing instant access to an ecosystem of AI skills that work in collaboration with human staff to accelerate mission performance. Its intelligent automation ecosystem is comprised of advanced technologies, and a community of experts, researchers and providers that enables your agency’s people to create and customize innovative automations for unique tasks.

Expanding RPA - IBM Intelligent Automation

Where the RPA platform and software bot provides the hands for a digital workforce, a well-placed cognitive tool provides the workforce its brain. In this manner, these *digital workers* are software-based labor that can independently execute meaningful parts of complex, end-to-end processes using multiple skills that go beyond what RPA tools and bots alone can offer.

IBM's Intelligent Automation incorporates recent advances in cognitive technology to transform the foundational RPA bots from a simple, process-driven team of task executors to an orchestrated body capable of decision making, self-healing and continuously improving. Automation infused with AI can change how work gets done to achieve the goals of the mission at the speed of the mission.

Natural language processing

Ability to understand and interact using human speech as spoken or typed

BPM integration

Integration into existing business process management tools to enable seamless process

Advanced Analytics

Ability to gather understanding from data to diagnose issues and make recommendations

Machine learning systems

Ability to train bots as they encounter new situations to continuously improve

Internet of Things (IoT)

Integration of IoT sensors and connected environments to provide bots with insights and instructions

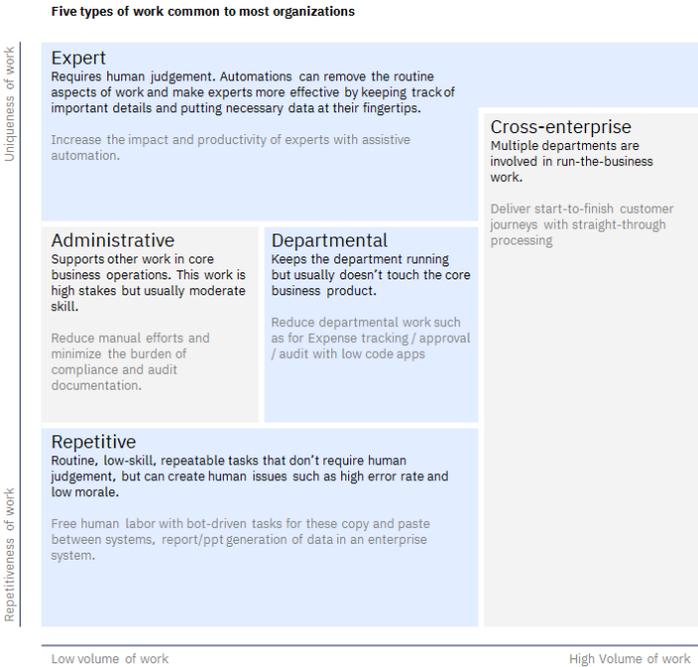
Continuous Monitoring

Live, autonomous monitoring and assessment to adjust bots' activities and load balance in real-time

Results that matter: RPA and Intelligent Automation in the DoD

By learning how agency employees (humans) complete their tasks, this scalable digital workforce can replicate the way agency workers interface with mission critical enterprise systems, while still meeting the highest standards for security, compliance and auditability. This enables collaboration between human and digital worker, no matter where their agency human employee counterparts are required to work to deliver mission critical results against increasingly demanding expectations during the normal course of business as well as during unprecedented times of crisis.

Every organization – including the DoD – contains of a spectrum of work ranging from simple repetitive tasks to the more complex. Automations can be applied to all types of work – the key is aligning the right automation with the workflow.



For each style of work, automations can be applied to drive the desired outcomes. Automating work is about creating a digital workforce that seamlessly integrates with the human workforce and frees those humans up to work on things that cannot be automated.

Work type	Repetitive work	Administrative work	Departmental work	Expert work	Cross-enterprise work
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Copy-paste input – Manual data entry – Logistics system updates – Obligation/Authority (OA) rate reviews <p>Automation should help to improve the <u>accuracy</u> and <u>speed</u> of routine work by supplementing people with bots.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Compliance – Documentation for various regulatory requirements – Training record completion – Flight log updates <p>Automation should help to <u>reduce the burden of paperwork</u> and regulatory compliance by digitizing and managing various types of automation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Travel claim expense tracking / approval / audit – Leave processing <p>Automation should help to reduce departmental work with low code apps that handle processes that otherwise would involve <u>hard-to-manage documents and spreadsheets</u> sent over email.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Managing AWCF – Personalized consultation <p>Automation should help to <u>increase the productivity of experts</u> by assisting them with deeper insights and recommendations for action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Processing insurance claims – Approving loans <p>Automation should help to <u>deliver start-to-finish customer experiences</u> with straight through processing. It should enable the integration of individual business operations from across the enterprise into one process that feels simple and bespoke to the customer</p>

Source: Adapted from "The quick and practical guide to digital business automation" by Brian Safron, IBM automation expert, in collaboration with Cheryl Wilson (<https://www.ibm.com/automation>)

Success Story: Working with VA to Support our Veterans

To help you capitalize on the potential of intelligent automation, the IBM and Blue Prism team stands ready with the expertise and experience necessary to build a customized blueprint for your organization’s automation journey. IBM has a comprehensive, phased and iterative approach to enterprise-wide intelligent automation that can help your organization quickly and effectively realize its various benefits. IBM brings a full lifecycle of automation services, a user-centered and design driven approach, leading edge cognitive technologies, one of the world’s first and largest cognitive consulting practices, and a strong strategic partnership with Blue Prism.

At the Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) VICCS, the IBM team provides the largest and most complex Intelligent Automation project in the US Federal Government with a range of services, to include Centralized Source Material Tracking Services; Intake and Conversion Services; Inbound Mail Management Support Services; Rules-Based Processing Services; and Centralized Outbound Services, in support of the VBA Office of Business and Process Integration (OBPI). VBA developed the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS), a paperless claims processing system that enables efficiencies, thereby reducing the time required to process claims for benefits. The system reinvents a manual and paper-based process comprised of inherent bottlenecks and inefficiencies.

Historically, VBA leveraged 700+ employees to process and minimize the turnaround time of claim benefits to millions of Veterans annually. Even with a large number of human workers processing claims, the VBA frequently experienced a 5-6 day lag between receiving mail to the time teams were able to review and begin the routing process. The IBM Intelligent Automation as a Service Platform provides VBA with the much-needed operational agility to scale up and down based on VBA’s program related demands, providing the Veterans with an overall better customer experience and ultimately working to get our Veterans their benefits faster.

Taking it to the next level – applying an enterprise approach to automation

Successfully applying automation at scale to your organization’s workflows and processes is not an easy undertaking. Basic RPA bots serve as an entry point to automation, supporting the automation of the highly repetitive tasks, and can assist with freeing up resources to work on higher value add tasking. Agencies can remain at this stage of their automation journey – deploying small startups and tactical implementations – but you will inevitably fail to realize the full potential of automation and run the risk of hitting barriers and frustrations that may result in failure.

At IBM, we have seen successful deployments and also learned from our share of mistakes throughout our years collaborating with our clients. Our approaches have grown and matured, learning from those mistakes, and can help our clients avoid common pitfalls we already experienced.

Organizations need to begin adopting an enterprise vision of automation going beyond foundational RPA that shifts the human tasks to a bot. An overall understanding of the business process is required in order to establish a

vision on where you want to be in the future. You need to re-imagine how you will do business, not simply shift the workload to another desk (be that bot or human).

Begin with an overall understanding of the business process and assess where automation can be a tool to implement the re-engineered processes. Select the right process for automation and establish key measurable indicators to monitor success and implement the automation in conjunction with a broader enterprise strategy. This enterprise strategy must include collaboration with enterprise IT systems. Continue to improve by measuring those key outcomes of the process and making improvements to meet them.

Failure to shift focus to this enterprise-wide, process driven approach in collaboration with the enterprise systems will result in hundreds of unit-created bots accessing enterprise systems needing to be adjusted whenever these enterprise system makes a change. Ultimately these bots will be too cumbersome to maintain, and organizations will stop doing it.

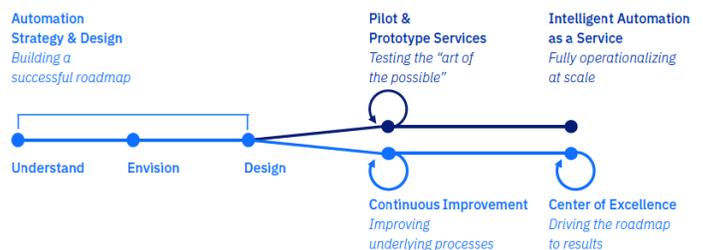
Beginning your Intelligent Automation Journey

No matter how much automation you deploy in your processes, human expertise, creativity and interpersonal skills will be needed. To capitalize on the potential of intelligent automation, every organization needs a blueprint for their automation journey – a phased approach to enterprise-wide intelligent automation that helps the organization realize the benefits of automation. Government’s ability to capitalize on the potential of Intelligent Automation ultimately depends on the approach it takes.

As discussed above, we recommend a holistic, enterprise-wide approach that puts the user at the center of strategy and design, puts in place the right governance and change management mechanisms, continually improves with traditional business process improvement tools, proves value with collaborative, rapid prototyping, and leverages a managed service model.

The journey starts with a strategy and design as a piece of a larger process assessment that evolves into a center of excellence and continuous process improvement effort. In parallel, automation opportunities move into an iterative pilot and prototype phase and ultimately to production and an “As a Service” model.

IBM Intelligent Automation Offerings



IBM Intelligent Automation as a Service (IBM IAaaS)

IBM’s Intelligent Automation as a Service offering delivers automation at scale using this model, while still allowing organizations to pick and choose RPA software, cognitive solutions and hosting options at their discretion. This model allows you to access a full suite of IA technology and services at a lower cost, via a subscription-based pricing model, because service providers can capitalize on economies of scale, best practices and lessons learned, and the latest technological innovation. Buying as a service, rather than procuring and managing automation tools on a case by case basis within the IT department, lets you **FOCUS ON MISSION CRITICAL OUTCOMES** and lets the private sector provide innovative, continuously improving automation solutions as a service.



Ready to get started?

IBM Services are available on a range of contract vehicles to include OTAs, Army ITES-3H CHESS, Army RS3. Additional vehicles are available at <https://www.ibm.com/industries/federal/contracts>.

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