(1) Imagine Austin | Driving value across the enterprise with finance-led transformation -

Transcript:

(00:07) all right welcome everyone I'm I'm Ken merzel I'm the global industry leader for financial services automation anywhere uh I've spent my whole career in finance I'm excited about today's topic about uh Finance transformation uh most recently I worked at Bank of America for 15 years half of that a CFO of their insurance group and then manage Financial operations for the bank um so I spent a lot of time talking to our customers about how to apply the technology and finance but fortunately today I brought

(00:36) our customers to talk about how they're applying uh technology so you want to hear a lot from me uh just a couple of uh introductory remarks uh first of all brought to you by our lawyers here so just a reminder that uh you know we will talking about some future capabilities today so you know make any purchase decisions based on what's currently available on the market uh with that um so I'm really excited about um the topic because um really most organizations actually start their automation journey

(01:04) in finance and I think part of the reason is the fact that we have a you know integrated Suite of capabilities which most of you are very familiar with and that's really critical when you're doing a lot of uh automation use cases with INF Finance so you often need you know process Discovery to identify uh where you're going to automate using document automation where you have a lot of PDFs involved uh process Automation and what's really exciting and you've heard a lot about already today is the

(01:31) ability to now easily within the platform Infuse of gen and so I think that's really opening up a whole new series of of use cases that weren't possible before and so we'll talk a little bit about that um today as as well um so in terms of our uh plan for today uh basically hear from our our customer speakers who I'll introduce in a second we'll spend about 20 uh 30 minutes and then we'll have a a brief Fireside Chanel just kick things off with some questions question but U the main hopefully the main thing is you're

(02:03) all thinking about your own questions uh and uh so we do want to reserve you know a fair amount of time at the end for you to ask your own questions about uh uh to our our customers about how to apply this technology and finance so with that let me um introduce our speakers today uh we have Alfredo Chalo who is the uh CFO of Americas at GAA and also Ron Kumar who uh is the head of digital transformation and so with that I will hand it off to Alfredo I I think I you hope you can all hear me out there great um excellent if

(02:40) we can go to the oh actually I need the um yeah thank you there we go okay so let me tell you a little a little bit about GAA so GAA we are a German company um that operates across 100 countries 18,000 employees all over the world close to6 billion uh dollars in revenues double digit return on sales a relatively large company for for German standards right um what do we do so we operate in many Industries predominantly food Dairy and beverage just to put it in context um when it comes to food a third of the chicken nuggets in the

(03:22) world are made with our equipment half of the beer produced in the world is made with our equipment and a quarter of the milk if you consume milk hopefully it's produced with our equipment um we have some fairly ambitious goals ahead of us um and we've said those overall our mission statement has been to deliver Sustainable Solutions for the U nutritional and pharmaceutical Industries and to in order to com uh achieve those uh uh those those goals we have um anchored ourselves in six uh levers six to seven

(04:06) levers three really around operational service and sales Excellence uh three on strategic initiatives or strategic Focus areas one of them is I'm sure we've all been exposed to it on what we call new food which is mostly alternative proteins uh GAA has is uniquely positioned to help our customers uh uh deliver uh alternative Protein Solutions uh for the food industry um the third the the other initiative that we have is sustainability which is something that uh we take dear and close to our heart and the third one which I'm going to

(04:46) speak to today as it relates to finance is digitization now um our journey on digitization in um in in the Americas really started from from a from an with an ultimate goal of transforming the finance department to really become a strategic partner to the CEO to the general manager to the business and in order to do that uh we've had to uh leverage data that we have across all layers on the organization that's where digital really comes into play whether it's small data or big data to really drive the

(05:28) performance um of the business and improve the performance of the of the business with the ultimate goal of changing the finance organization from being reactive rear view mirror Focus to really forward looking and more predictive now when we started this journey we had a fair share of challenges which I'm sure that many folks here in the room can relate to uh we had a um and we still deal with a cluster of siloed systems um that didn't necess Sol speak to each other uh we had processes that uh were fairly

(06:06) inconsistent not really ironed out um and had to be streamlined uh we had data that lack some lack governance uh Al together and with the help of digitization and automation we've been able we've been in a journey to really transform that um we started our journey uh on especially on the automation side with the ultimate goal of improving our Effectiveness in the in the finance team to really uh improve and reduce uh the quality and the error rates that we had in different elements um in the organization now F we started three

(06:47) years ago um and uh since then I think very very many of you here in the room have had to deal with the issue of talent acquisition and how hard it is to uh attract and retain talent and what started as an Effectiveness program for us really switched into a capacity augmentation we have been able to leverage um Automation in the company as a way to really multiply have and become a multiplier to the existing team that we have in place so uh RAM Kumar is going to share with you now uh some of the business cases and use cases that we

(07:28) had uh as we embarked in this J Journey thank you Alfredo so our journey was um we started with some challenges however but the excitement developed over a period of time now the entire organization is looking forward towards RPA and AI now talking about our journey on finance now Finance is the first uh playground for you to bring in any automation use cases because you have this classic use case of invoice processing and and vendor management now these are some of the areas we cast a widenet when we're

(08:04) looking at automation so which process to automate what to automate now since we were Finance is closer to us we cast a wide net across different processes and then try to get the organization realize the benefits of automation see because V seeing the benefits of automation is much better to convince the stakeholders than giving having them to visualize what automation can do for them now this has built uh the excitement and one example I want to talk about is the order to Cache invoice automation I think the last session the

(08:37) CIO talked about order to cach challenges that we had and we did have problems there where we had billing accuracy issues and capacity issues now the first bought that uh automation Journey that we picked up was invoice Automation and we've delivered close to 6,000 Plus hours capacity augmentation there so that talks a lot about uh what RPA could do for it now we had to sell the first use case but successively it was much more easier where the stakeholders Department manages are reaching out to us as like when can we

(09:09) embark on RPA Journey now first evangelizing RPA was tough for us because normally you would see it talk about the tools and systems Finance talking about automation was difficult even for it to understand how they could relate to the business process so and other than that we were able to touch upon other areas on procure to pay reporting project reporting and reconcilation the classic examples of automation now continuing our journey me coming from a quality background being a black belt our Focus was more towards is that

(09:42) the best way to do is that the optimal way to run the process because we were coming right after integration of businesses across North America which means we had to find Opportunities to integrate all the processes and standardize them so we always magnify the process processes and looked at how best we can Implement how best we can integrate and can RPA replicate those actions so we had to tweak the processes and standardize them and so we've used value stream mapping process mapping process re-engineering that helped us

(10:16) drive it to the next level now we have to Red we had to redefine and redesign process when we had people who were doing the process for the last 15 20 years 30 years in a traditional way and we had to demystify that now we have also had to make some decisions to Outsource some of the processes so it was diff I mean starting with Finance we were able to access it but we need to get this thought process across entire organization which was difficult however the success that we had with initial Bots helped us improve our data improve

(10:50) our processes and kpis so and uh we developed a uh in-house approach towards development uh towards uh automation Journey we've followed a very uh careful process and then we never treated RPA as an ins silos organization trying to sell Services we integrated it with our functional departments wherein we went and talked to them explained about RPA demonstrated few BS to them and helped them understand that RPA is one of the solution maybe they are leaning towards RPA but we never were biased towards an RPS solution so we were we were honest

(11:27) in terms of assessment and giving them the direction maybe ETL package would solve the problem or maybe a middleware software would be more much more efficient and cheaper when compared to implementing an RP solution so that's how we looked at it so that helped us gain trust about RPA as such and the solution so we have again this is more on the development life cycle that we followed but finance and the CFOs were part of this journey irrespective of what functional area it was because that helped us to stay on top of the payback

(11:58) stay on top of of budget and quality then uh how do how did we decide which initiatives to fund so RPA it got us all excited we definitely wanted to hop on this journey and which one do we start uh so Alfred and I you know we had a half a day workshop to understand okay what is more important for us and then we defined what would be the criteria because the first session that we did with different functional leaders we had almost close to 100 ideas of which one would we jump on at the same time we have to keep the excitement levels

(12:32) maintained so that adaption becomes easy so we looked at strategic alignment in uh so we had some challenges on our customer side so customer complaints on invoicing so those were the first ideas that we wanted to automate next payback analysis we looked at the process SE where the payback was less than one year nothing more than that if it is more than one year it's out of scope for now later on WE conquered them but that's how we looked at it and then it was easy to justify with the business when we had

(13:02) to go for a capix budget so it makes it much easier then we looked at scalability now this is our guard rail for any development that we're doing can we mimic the success can we scale this up across regions across business lines across product lines so that's how we evaluated the ideas that came up during our Discovery workshops and then other than that we looked at standardization versus optimization there were processes which were being done in different way in different business units we always looked at okay

(13:31) can a BPM team get involved first before RPA can come into play so that way we didn't sign up for things which are not in our scope at the beginning so other than that you know we leveraged uh offshore development and onshore development so we had onshore team which was maintaining relationship with the business staying closer to the process and we had offshore team which is more on uh focused on development to keep our cost low and that's how we know we were getting the payback quick yeah then so some of the automation

(14:01) opportunities Beyond Finance me we started with Finance we but we've explored towards Master data management journal entry booking on the record to report order to cach of we we have uh worked on invoicing Pro invoice processing and also it improved our collection process wherein we are able to integrate the entire process of invoicing to collections the flow of information was also consistent so the collections team didn't have to go back and check did the order get invoiced or not so we ensured that there's one

(14:31) source of Truth and there were a lot of synergies in terms of digitization of the process and the metadata that we got out of these processes helped us drive the kpis in the organization so that is the Hidden Gem of RPA which Business Leaders wouldn't understand when you're talking to them to go and talk to a procurement guy they wouldn't know but when you come back and say hey average time it's taking for you to issue a PO is X and we're trying to move towards y then they understand it and that's

(14:56) possible because of the capability RPA has provided ided us from a metadata standpoint so these are I'm not going to go through all of these but these are some of the ideas you know that we've explored and the Beyond Finance now one approach that we followed right from beginning was modularized development approach this helped us scale our Solutions so we were I can proudly say that our successive BS for invoicing we were able to deploy it in less than onethird of the cost that we spent on the first part so that's where we've

(15:28) learned our lessons we leveraged our our experiences and then we deployed it so it was much easy for us to repeat the success now it's more than you know it's it has moved from push to a pull where the functional leaders are asking for us when do we get our chance to do a bot so that's the excitement so it moved away from Finance to supply chain to order management customer service project management these are some areas that we were able to expand our uh services so overall we've added about and this is

(15:57) one example we call it that's our first bot we we have about 80 Bots right now we just named first three Bots it's Billy so we call it Billy bot so just to keep the excitement there so about 6,000 hours we have added capacity to the business which helped us improve our customer service function and make the customer happy you know so overall uh opportunities and how we stand our journey was standardization of the processes we looked at automation then intelligent automation as trying to bring in some rule based cognitive based

(16:31) approaches towards development and initially we we had to Target the low hanging fruits which are which are more task oriented me but that helped us convince the business showcased the business what RPA can do because it has so much capabilities at times we would not also not imagine until we have taken those first 10 steps right then chatbots this is the most recent the the GG chatbot that you talked about so we have also embarked on the journey Journey we call it finia chatbot where in through teams so we have five different sap

(17:04) instances and three different A6 instances imagine an HR person going into the systems to find the status of an invoice it would be a nightmare for them they would know okay what how to look at it right but with finia chatbot they could just using NLP talk to the six systems and get a uh get details about an invoice about a voucher about a transaction so next is uh and this is all possible because of the uh work that we've done with RPA digitization of the data and establishing the routines and processes to get the data from the Erp

(17:36) systems to a data Lake and then other than that we're also looking at process mining process uh Integra uh API integration and AI integration so this is how we're trying to take this journey towards RPA and AI so from uh if you would see here like we started with transactional processes and we are more moving towards more you know supervised learning machine learning capabilities now today we are talking about real-time closing instant closing I can tell that with data and automation we were able to bring down our closing

(18:11) time time period from 7 days to 3 days which means again eventually these days I know we're talking about instant closing real-time closing with new Erp systems coming into play but RPA will definitely be an enabler for that and then uh real-time reporting and consolidation that's another area that uh we are looking at where we could have a a real-time reporting of our kpis financial so that the CFOs can drive the business while during the month rather than at the end of the month trying to chase the

(18:39) targets then uh another area let shift from operational Finance to strategic Finance so translation from strategic to operational data was tough because the CF would give us some numbers and how do I relate to the lowest level when you're talking to the sales team or sales order or service team RPA helped us establish that link to convert the Strategic actions into operational actions and then other than that now we are more exploring about NLP uh cognitive Ai and blockchain mean we've not reached the

(19:10) blockchain part right now but we are trying to establish the structure for it in terms of uh whether could we leverage it for contracts or it for Bank settlements those are some things that we're looking at so this is about you know how our journey was starting with finance and today we are at 80 plus Bots uh generating lot of uh Roi for the business compared to the spend that we're having for by that software and the human effort that's there thank you great so thanks so much for the insights guys um what we're going to do now is

(19:46) we're going to have a brief fireside chat I'm G to ask a few questions but this is going to give you all some time to be thinking about what questions you want ask uh because again I get asked all the time hey what are other F Arts organizations doing want to hear from others is a great time in real time to get some uh feedback from all them so I'll bring them up on stage first great so um one of the things you talked about was um how you started moving beyond Finance into other areas and I I think the reason I get excited

(20:23) about Finance is you know sure there are lots of opportunities to automate within Finance but I've often found that Finance act as the stewards for the rest of the business and so I'm interested maybe Alfredo in your perspective in terms of you know what do you believe the role is of Finance in driving Automation and digital transformation across the entire company I think uh we are uniquely positioned in finance um to be the uh the Champions and sponsors for um for the for this initiative uh data um is what is our everyday bread right

(20:59) in uh in finance um and we see the potential uh to how that data you can trans transform that into information and drive business performance um so we're really in the engine room and uh we could be stewards of uh of the data we could be good stewards of the business of the uh of the overall uh organization and I think we have the responsibility to also lead by example and I think if we're asking everybody to to to transform themselves I think uh business starts uh at home right so yeah no that's exactly when I was at the bank

(21:38) was the exact same thing we we led by example um we had relationships across the entire business so we thought hey we should prove it out first and I think as I talked to customers you know there are absolutely huge opportunities within Finance but at some point you know when you've you've automated everything you've leveraged nii and machine learning um you they become diminishing returns and so the big benefit is really getting into the you know core operations and The Core Business itself um so second question maybe Rah I'll ask

(22:07) you um what have you seen are the approaches that have been most successful to really scale automation across the organization well uh our experience has taught us that we start small and aim for those low hanging fruits first to translate those benefits for the business and they become their use cases to expand further and then also have having a strong team is more important especially who are ready to embrace this technology because they will speak about RPA and what benefits they will bring so that way you don't

(22:41) have to reach out and explain them and another approach is are like casting a wide net so that the benefits reach to multiple functions then you're trying to connect the dots later it's much easier for you yeah that's how it no I think those are great insights and yeah I would agree with you as well I think when people start out I I think uh you know in my experience i' seen where people start and they're like let's take on the absolute most complex process in the entire organization right and

(23:08) probably not the best way to start so usually picking something simple I what we did when we started was um picked a very simple process created a video because the big challenge is people don't understand what automation can do particularly in finance right we're not technologists and so being able to create like a super brief demo that just shows people this is what it is they get get excited then just generating a big pipeline of ideas uh and then obviously you know prioritizing those and then really looking for the ones for for

(23:36) scale and then as I said ultimately you know moving moving beond Finance yeah just adding to that you know people will get personal because they've been used to doing that process in a certain way and when you go and tell them I'll automate they'll get too personal and they're not opening up but once you have the simple use cases then you have convinced them yes this is where it's applicable and they'll come forward and say can I do this two steps through a bot that's how yeah we were worried too with INF

(24:00) finance that um you know folks who feel threatened I was just going to replace my job and I think people quickly realize look I've never seen a finance organization says we have like unlimited staff and we have plenty of time I mean it's always you know what can we do with fewer and fewer resources so um you know frankly no one in finance wants to be you know creating reports and sourcing data right so I I found it as a great tool to I me people got excited about it and um you know it was a great tool also

(24:26) to attract new people in because they want to be using the latest technology so you know I've seen it be more of a plus than something that people are and of course everyone wants to do something gen related well speaking of which so let me ask you about that um obviously we've heard a lot about gen today um everyone's you know I think everyone's experimenting with right now but you know from your perspective I know it's in the early days but you know Alfredo how do you see gen um sort of changing

(24:52) the nature of use cases you know in finance but even Beyond Finance into the broader broader company I think automation geni are game changers for um for companies um and um I think we are in a similar stage or point in time as perhaps in the early 80s when erps were introduced right it's a big game Cher um uh I do think that uh specifically within within the finance function um machine learning is probably the most immediate um application that we see in fpna accounting jobs um it is difficult in finance in general because

(25:35) you you have to play Within certain guard rails right which are called the accounting standards right or your external disclosures right so um and I think that's where machine learning can really uh come into play quite nicely uh but at the same time if I think of uh unsupervised uh AI really gen AI I I think the application could very well be in areas where it's too hard for us humans to connect the dots so perhaps the audit function right really like mining through reams of data uh to find that unusual fraudulent activity right

(26:13) or risk management really thinking uh with that part of the brain that you never use I think it's uh that's where gen could even today uh have a uh an immediate application yeah I mean that raises two thoughts I mean one is um I think you know as we heard earlier today I mean there's a whole range of Technologies right that you can apply to any solution it's not any one technology but I agree with you I think the real power is going to be gen combined with machine learning other Technologies

(26:43) because uh obviously you can use automation to automate basic processes but what happens you get to an exception processing right and so that's where say okay well that's the 10 20% that we kick out and have someone perform but if you looked at all the data and said hey I'm processing exception you're probably processing one of five ways right and if you look at what's driving those five ways it's really a set of rules so you could basically run the data through a machine learning model process 80% of

(27:10) those exceptions and then really focused on the real you know challenging 20% so I agree with you I think we're going to hear a lot more about the combination of machine learning and gen because I think people hear at gen and they think that's all AI right but it it's a combination but that being said I mean gen um right now I me there there's so many possibilities that people haven't even thought of I mean some of the interesting ones I've you know heard about recently are like take uh

(27:35) financial planning analysis right so you know I I tell people yeah you could automate uh manual reports you create but you know if it takes you two hours a me to create a report I mean you could automate that but you're not going to get a huge return investment but all of a sudden that equation flips if you add gen right because now think about like forecast variance analysis or management discussion analysis where you feed in then again in a secure manner but all all the company's data about your forecast about your results and are able

(28:05) to spit out an mdna now are you going to publish that no I mean you're going to have someone still review it but uh the ability to summarize that or to say hey what are the biggest drivers of forecast experience or what might be the biggest drivers of Revenue growth in the future I mean that that's where I get really excited or you know I don't know if you have any additional thoughts on that yeah I think it's um on the fbna side it's it's 90% back to your 8020 uh I think 80% of what we do on on fpna is

(28:34) standard it's predictable right uh that's ripe for for automation Automation and AI That's uh then that 20% yeah it's it's a new new algorithms but that's also where the human element still still plays in right um we we saw it today this morning uh um human to the power of uh of AI right um so I think that's a I think it's a multiplier it has been a multiplier for us um and we see that way as well yeah and I think a lot of the use case historically also focused on areas where there's you know

(29:07) High transaction processing so like accounts payable invoice processing but you know the recent examples I've heard like leveraging J gen are around think about around billing in collections right which you know not only has an efficiency aspect but obviously has a big implication on you know DSO and cash flow and so the ability to feeding all the data about let's say a customer whether it's a commercial or individual customer their payment history their transaction history and be able to come up the strategy around collections let's

(29:37) say if they you know go past du um a lot of you know again just a lot of really exciting applications absolutely absolutely well um what I'd like to do is open it up to questions from the audience uh one request which is um that you just raise your hand and then um since it's being recorded I want to make sure I get a microphone over to you so everyone who's remote can also I hear about your questions so who wants the brave first person as oh good we got a lot of takers right so um our company is not

(30:09) experimenting with generative Ai and I think there's a sense of fear around it because of uh anecdotes and stories about data leakage and uh big foundation models being trained off of user input and even though some services are uh completely not like that because they will they will create a unique instance just for your company there's still this mysticism around that and resistance around that so I I think you mentioned that you've experimented with uh gen AI so how did you overcome that barrier

(30:42) that that that sort of security risk or the fear of security risk we we are probably in the same stage right now as well I think there's um that we have the same concerns as well right on on data security the the greatest concern that we have which I'm sure you can relate to is not being able to explain what the algorithms are doing right so I think it's upon all of us to to to really get uh get ingrained and really familiarized I think almost everybody here in this room knows how to deal with Microsoft

(31:18) Excel right um I think we all need to be become coders I think that was a term that was used uh years ago right and I think we need to understand understand that especially if we're going to be introducing that in the finance function it is our duty to make sure that we're not inadvertently we're introducing code that would put our company at risk so I share the same concern yeah it's a great question in fact you know when Gen became popular everyone started hearing about it I heard more companies come out

(31:47) with restrictions on the use of gen than talking about how they're going to use gen and it's for exactly the reasons you describe right concerned about is my data secure you know you don't want to put your company data out and you you know Chad GPT um is is it accurate like you know sort of like Wikipedia it be fairly accurate but you know you're not sure exactly level of accuracy and so I think that's why um I think that's frankly within the platform I created the ability to infuse gen within the

(32:14) platform because obviously to extent you're using the platform today you already have comfort around the data security right because the data is within the platform um the ability to control and provide guard rails how people use it so they can only use it within how you've you know built the automation so I think that's giving you know some customers early you know earlier Comfort around okay I know it's least within those guard rails but they still have the issue you mentioned around the data right at the end of the

(32:40) day it's only as good as the data so I think as they talked earlier today the ability to work with other organizations to create either your own data model using your own data or you know a secure data model based on you know industry or whatever relevant data is is really helping accelerate things do Qui question thank you it seems now there is hundreds of suppliers offering automation you know how did you select automation anywhere you know comparing with other suppliers go ahead go ahead go ahead go ahead I let

(33:19) you it it was clear that they were the best right so go ahead yeah I mean we've assessed tools now that we did assess the tools and from a security governance standpoint this qualified very well for us because we want to make sure it should be an on premise one because we deal with pharmaceutical customers and other customers so we don't want any of our Enterprise that are going out other than that you know a definitely is a lead of because from starting from in the last three years we've done 80 bots

(33:48) so much of productivity gain it worked out very well for us so yeah I'll speak from an industry perspective and not within sales but but um I think a lot of the custom customers because obviously I talked to customers who are like trying to decide what what to use and I think a lot of the reason they end up working with us a just integrated sued of capabilities because you need more than one capability um second obviously it has you'd assume all the right security and governance that's sort of a given um

(34:13) and then um really is a lot of it was ease of use um because even if you aren't going to go to Citizen development right and and you're not going to have everyone develop their own Bots just to be a to like if I'm a manager particularly in finance I feel like I'm just as responsible understanding what my bots are doing as I do what my employees are doing right and so the ability even if you are on a coder you could see the process you understand exactly what your Bots are doing you have an audit Trail I I think

(34:38) that's that you know I've seen that's been really critical as well let me go back here one sec thank you so much going back to the uh earlier point about the um risk profile with these Foundation models and the the risks and concerns are you aware of any government mandates or regulations coming down the pipe that would influence the the managing um and the carrying of these Foundation models in finance that's a very good question um I am not sure I do know that the federal government does have when we do business

(35:15) with the federal government the federal government has um certain requirements when it comes to uh cyber security um and and and that's something that we would consider um consider uh in in any implementation right to to make sure that we comply uh we um I our our headquarters is not too far from DC so I think the regulatory environment and the leg legislative environment is very Dynamic so but I haven't I haven't heard uh the the latest yeah I mean I can speak to that as well because I actually

(35:49) you know I support obviously the banking industry which is highly regulated and so it's interesting because you know even when like RPA came out or any other technology I mean The Regulators are learning at the same time right because they realize that all their you know the companies they regulate are looking at the Technologies and um so it's interesting like if you take the case of banks I mean actually like the OCC and other Regulators have said hey they're they're aware and supportive now that

(36:14) being said you have obviously have to have an controlled environment and you know and try to ensure that you're not introducing bias but they realize that there are a lot of benefits if used in the right way so so I'd say you know Regulators are coming up to speed just as all of us are um but but you know we've seen in some Industries you know more support of that because they realize the benefit as long again as it's in a control manner but it's evolving Ken if I if I may add my two cents I just uh was gathering my

(36:40) thoughts um I we we are a German company and the EU a few years ago uh introduced some regulations on data privacy especially related to Consumer and individual data privacy um as a means uh to comp apply with that not to just uh play not to put the company at any risk whatsoever uh we have stayed away for from Individual data so we we build kind of f data firewalls or Mill layers in our data structures so um the day uh if if there's any uh private information that is not uh let's say shared with the uh with the

(37:23) Bots or with the with the AI and ultimately I think the ultimate guard role frankly is human in the loop right that's why we talk about co-pilot because at the end of the day I mean sure there are some use cases where you could automate all the way through but at the end of the day generally you're going to come out with some output that's going to be gen related but you're going to have someone looking at that certainly early on just to make sure that it makes sense and you're comfortable with

(37:51) it so we just we talked about earlier about the Strategic direction of using gen AI and the risk of using that one but I'm just curious how on the other hand how how do we use a gen AI like what process what kind of infrastructure uh because using bot I can understand you can easily connect to uh your Erp do some closing reconciliation or feeding some data but GNA like at least to me is largely it's a conversational uh interface um do do we know if there's anything that we could uh connect it somehow for example

(38:30) reading a contract getting a data from the contract and then booking an entry or or sending out invoice some something like that can actually connect these two do together here me so the we're still experimenting as I said we started with our conversational chatbot which uses data for it and it learns from the kind of questions that you ask for so we we follow the same approach starting small small and starting with data that where we not going to have privacy issues first thing we've looked at our Master

(39:04) data aligned our Master data across systems Define those data definitions very clearly because in sap you have different fields and your have Microsoft systems they are in different completely different tangent so you got to align that so that's the first step that we did second can we relate the data one to one looked at that then understood okay do we need to push entire data into it no then we identifi the micro fields that we need to push it in because you're talking about data from sap again you don't want this to be millions of

(39:37) rows getting into it because that kills the efficiency of it and it might show different patterns that's how we approach and then we solve the chatbot issue where avoiding getting into multiple systems so to answer your question yes we've defined a clear data structure identify the def Define the data uh data elements and the definitions very clear C merge the data sets again this all happens in the back end through RPA and that's where RPA plays a role and then goes through the engine for us I mean there we leveraging

(40:05) the Microsoft open AI platform for us yeah I definitely take advantage as well um you know we have two major sponsors here um AWS and Google so I would definitely talk to them they're up on the fifth floor because obviously that's what we try to do is Infuse some of the you know Best in Class and so that's why you know we're able to like port in you know adws Google what have you into to the platform uh because obviously they have a lot of that expertise as well in terms of not only the AI but the data

(40:33) models Etc so I definitely encourage everyone to talk to them if you haven't already I think there was another question y thanks yeah just a a scalability question you mentioned you went from zero to 80 Bots can you just comment on how you organized around that really Around The Upfront ideation and prioritization okay I'll take it de sure um we we did not select any uh process that would be would be unique right so we own we selected we had when we had our first meetings with users and really like trying to gather their input uh we had a

(41:16) funnel of 100 plus if not more and that was three years ago three right now the finalist 200 plus haven't already implemented close to 100 right um and we selected uh processes to automate that would go across multiple business units across multip multiple geographies so then the development cost is one and it's not you don't have to replicate it right and then it's a business-wide um business-wide benefit the benefit as well that it has is that then the time to deploy it's almost in instantaneous not really right because

(41:55) you need to make adjust ments here and there but it it really expedites the ability to to roll it out fast and then users Buy in into the concept and then they become your your greatest um advertisers right um just with real life examples yeah and the key as well is as organizations you know grow and do much larger and higher scale automations you also see the you know what they ever they call it Center of Excellence or what have you expand and evolve over time initially it might be one or two people eventually um it it becomes maybe

(42:30) slightly larger centralized and that goes to feder but my point being that um you really need evolve the governance and you know organization and program over it as as the program expands too because they're a key element of that all right we have time for one last question hopefully this is the easy one um on the earlier point you guys made around um Finance driving automation across the company um can you comment a little bit on kind of the role of the executive leadership team and what approaches worked um most effectively

(43:04) whether it was top down or Bottoms Up I think it's um you need a sponsor I that helps a lot in the SE Suite in that case that was me um but the real Buy in I think it comes from the subject matter experts in the organization that you're able to convert uh when we're selecting our processes to automate we're looking for change agents folks that we could convert there's always going to be folks that are on the fence right uh it's going to be much harder to convert I think it was very critical for us to find those change

(43:42) agents and invest time with them and then make it uh this initiative that area that Improvement be theirs not not really ours and that is that is not a concept unique to automation right I think it's a change management concept when you get the Buy in from the folks that are actually doing the job uh it the the it's the potential is Limitless well I want to thank everyone for all the great questions and let's also Round of Applause for thank you and

YouTube -- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P8Oy6bqx2HM