

Redefining government: Seattle improves quality of city services by Scaling RPA



Seattle



ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Seattle, Washington is home to nearly 750,000 people. It's well-known for its innovative sector, home to Amazon and Microsoft, music and arts scene, famed tourist attractions and much more. The City of Seattle provides a wide range of public services, including utilities, transportation, parks, permitting, human services, and police, fire, and emergency management.

CHALLENGE

When he joined the City of Seattle in 2019 as Automation Program Lead, Luke Keenan sought to build a sound foundation to optimize how the City provides services using his considerable experience in RPA deployment. Under Luke's leadership, Seattle IT tested different RPA solutions for cutting-edge technology and ease of implementation. After an Automation Anywhere demonstration, the team decided that Enterprise A2019 met all their desired functionality.

SOLUTION

The automation team was able to deploy their first bot within the first week of deploying the A2019 platform. Since then, more than 60 bots have been pushed into production, with each automating a different process at varying levels of complexity. The team maximized the platform's capabilities by leveraging the AI power of IQ Bot to accelerate the processing of incoming applications and Bot Insights for real-time tracking of bot and business performance.

BENEFITS

6,200

case backlog of utility applications eliminated

600

hours reduction of manual data entry

1,500+

FTE hours saved

35%

decrease in password lockout notifications

Processes Automated

- Public utility assistance application intake and processing
- Password lockout notifications
- Timesheet reminders for payroll

Industry

Public Sector

"We are changing the culture that all bots are nefarious bots. We're showing employees that bots can help them automate their day-to-day work."

—Luke Keenan,
Automation Lead,
City of Seattle

STORY DETAILS

While the City of Seattle has had many successes since their RPA deployment, the team is especially proud of 3 specific challenges automation helped them overcome.

The Utility Discount Program (UDP) program—which helps low-income residents with utility bills—was impacted during COVID-19. The application process shifted from call center support to a self-service online form that consolidated the data into disconnected Excel files, resulting in an instant backlog of 6,200 applicants. Unattended bots worked through the front end of the process to eliminate the backlog and manual data entry, plus research and reduce wait times for application review and approval. The bots eliminated the backlog, and utility credits were extended to nearly 2,900.

When employees were forced to work from home due to the virus, they could not connect to the city's network and missed critical password-change notifications. This caused lockouts and increased help desk calls. A bot was developed to automate password data tracking and reset schedules so that employees received timely, personalized expiration on their mobile devices without requiring network access. To this day, the bot sends out approximately 700 emails daily.

Each of the city's 48 departments was responsible for its own payroll and used to send manual emails to every employee or manager who forgot to submit or approve a timesheet on time. The team built a bot that downloaded reports for each department and sent unique emails to each employee with a missing or un-approved timesheet within minutes, saving 30+ hours per month.

THE FUTURE

The city hopes to have 80 bots in production by the end of Q2 2021 and is looking into developing an internal bot store. One of the bots currently under development will support end-to-end invoice processing automation.

The city's automation team also wants to encourage other employees to participate in developing future bots and own their process automations. A few have already taken Automation Anywhere's robust citizen developer training and certification programs, and they have begun developing their own smaller bots. With the increased excitement around RPA, the automation team expects this number to increase significantly soon.

"As local governments continue to face resource constraints due to the global Covid-19 pandemic, the City of Seattle is finding innovative ways to improve its government services through automation. Seattle IT has seen immediate results from its bot automation service—from everyday work to more efficient government services for the City of Seattle residents."

—**Dan Lewis**,
Digital Transformation
Strategist, Seattle IT

About Automation Anywhere

Automation Anywhere is a global leader in Robotic Process Automation (RPA), automating business processes with software bots performing repetitive, manual tasks, resulting in productivity gains and improved customer experience. Visit [automationanywhere.com](https://www.automationanywhere.com).

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