BAE Systems shared services team soars to new performance heights with Automation

BAE SYSTEMS

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ORGANIZATION PROFILE

BAE Systems is a global defense, aerospace and security company, employing 85,000 people in more than 40 countries. With an annual revenue of £18,400M its products and services cover air, land and naval sectors as well as advanced electronics, security, information technology and support.

CHALLENGE

The Shared Services Team at BAE Systems centralizes the HR and Finance functions company wide. Its more than 350 people employees manage the back-office activity for the recruitment and life-cycle management of 34,000 UK employees and the financial activity that crosses all business units including Expenses and Accounts Payable. Looking for new ways to become more efficient by reducing the human effort needed to perform repetitive tasks, BAE Systems recognized Robotic Process Automation (RPA) was the integrated, scalable solution that could be applied across its organization.

SOLUTION

After investing time researching and consulting other businesses about how they ran their RPA programs, the team created a unique profile of the types of processes they wanted to start automating. The tasks were high volume, rule-based, and with structured information. BAE Systems launched its automation program focusing on HR and Finance processes managed by the Shared Services team. The approach was to start small while planning to scale for the future.

BENEFITS

50
Processes automated

7X
Faster payroll data upload

120
Automations planned by 2021

Processes Automated
- Payroll processing
- Position management
- Financial accounting reporting
- Invoice receipts

Industry
Aerospace and Defense

"Beyond the actual processes delivered, RPA has given BAE Systems higher quality, first time right, consistent processing and scalability."

— **Ian Jones,**
Head of Transformational Services, HR

STORY DETAILS

Payroll was one of the first processes to be automated within the Shared Services team, which had inherited many different payroll cycles as various parts of the business merged to become what BAE Systems is today. Due to the restrictive nature of the processing, only one of 10 payroll clerks could access part of the system to make data changes at any time, leading to frustration for the team. Now, a bot completes the payroll tasks, processing all the data files to a schedule defined and managed by the Payroll team. Every morning the bot reports what it has completed, and the team can now focus on more valuable work like data quality checks to ensure accuracy instead of the mechanics of uploading data. Using a bot also allows this work to be completed outside of business hours. Automation has increased payroll data uploads by 7x.

RPA has empowered back-office teams to enable change by giving them the tools to improve processes and workflows. This results in higher quality, right-first-time, consistent processing and scalability. Without RPA, adapting transactional processes is a large IT project, which could take years to complete.

To date, BAE Systems has automated 50 processes, saving more than 2,600 hours annually, and benefiting from 7X faster Payroll data upload.

THE FUTURE

The Shared Services team hopes to have 120 automations in production by 2021. Using RPA will continue to help improve quality, giving BAE Systems a competitive edge in its high-precision industry.

"As soon as we deploy a bot, we're effectively making a positive change to the DNA of our organization."

— **Lee Boyle,**
RPA Program Manager

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