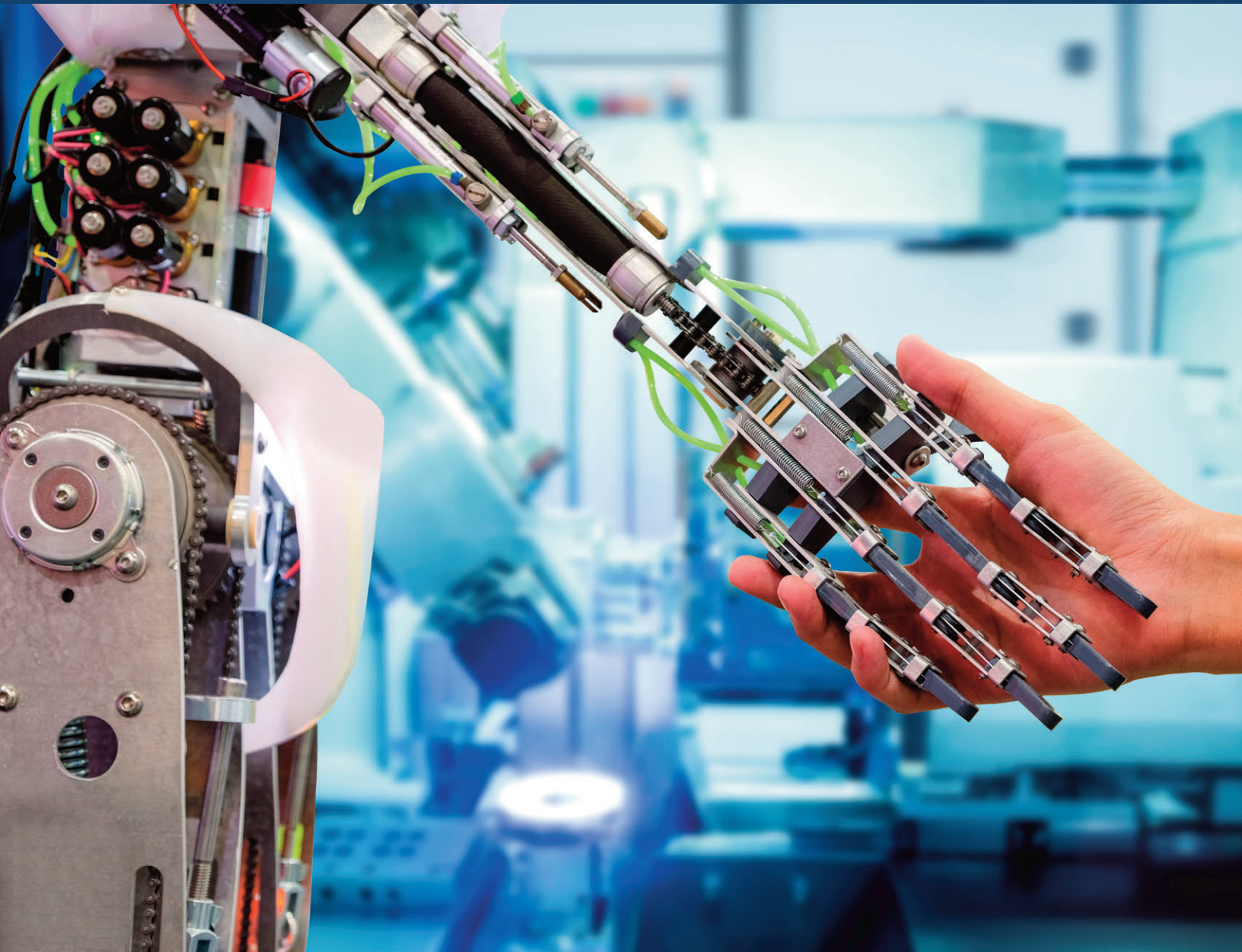


A Virtual Think Tank Executive Summary

Center of Excellence for Robotic Process Automation





Moderator:

Nancy Jamison

*Principal Analyst,
Digital Transformation
Frost & Sullivan*

**Includes Insights from
Participants Affiliated
with the Following
Organizations:**

Vineet Sharma
*Global Director, CoE Automation
AB-InBev*

Aaron Hubbart
*Senior Project Manager,
Process Automation
Navistar*

Manish Rai
*Vice President of Product Marketing
Automation Anywhere*

Mikael Hamon
*Head of Purchasing
Center of Excellence
Ameram*

Weston Jones
*Partner, Global Robotics and
Intelligent Automation Leader
Ernst & Young*

Introduction

Frost & Sullivan, a leader in growth, innovation and leadership (GIL) for over 50 years, recently hosted a select group of executives from diverse organizations to participate in a Virtual Think Tank. The topic of this event, “Center of Excellence for RPA,” produced a highly interactive discussion on how using Centers of Excellence (CoE) is increasingly becoming the model for rolling out Automation projects across organizations.

The discussion centered around when it makes sense to launch a CoE and the tools and benchmarking strategies required to ensure ‘excellence’ in a Center of Excellence. Several key questions emerged in the discussion:

- How far along in your RPA deployment does it make sense to launch a CoE?
- What are the benchmarks I should set in managing my CoE?
- What tools should I use in tracking and deploying my CoE?
- How do I get organizational buy in for my CoE?
- What are the lessons learned in running a CoE?

RPA CoE: Frost & Sullivan’s Take

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) has been in use across organizations for more than two decades, automating hundreds of processes, primarily in the back office. Today, RPA is bringing benefits across the enterprise from the back office to the contact center.

For this Think Tank, the executives assembled came from a variety of industries, from business-to-consumer service delivery to consultants and solution providers. Those present represented all levels of CoE management, from just starting out to the management of thousands of bots and process automations.

Nancy Jamison, Principal Analyst, with Frost & Sullivan, opened the discussion by noting the rapid acceleration in bot adoption, citing one area in particular, customer contact, with an example from Dimension Data’s 2019 Global Customer Experience Benchmarking report. The use of robotics and AI in particular are two of top key trends. Figure 1 Robotics and AI, shows close to 90% of 1100 customer care managers said that they felt AI and robotics volumes would increase in the next two years.

Robotics and AI

Automation – core to the future of CX operations



- ▶ Fully automated robotics and AI set to surge. **88.3%** anticipate robotic automation and AI volumes to increase during the next two years.
- ▶ **71.6%** believe that up to one quarter of CX activity currently supported by agents could be fully automated.
- ▶ Top benefit of robotics and AI expected to be **improved CX**.
- ▶ Costs and cybersecurity vulnerability top risks/fears associated to AI and robotics. **45.0%** have lingering concerns it could create negative customer feedback.
- ▶ As a result, some **80.3%** of organizations are expecting technology budgets to increase; conversely **55.1%** expect headcount employed to fall.

Key Takeaway: From automating back office processes to desktop process automation that can assist customer support agents, more than now ever businesses are embracing the benefits RPA can offer. However, as RPA agents do what humans can do, there needs to be best practices in design and tools to manage this rapidly expanding digital workforce. CoEs are an essential component in this workforce expansion.

Sharing CoE Development Progress and Process

The discussion then turned to a couple of key questions:

1. How far along in your RPA deployment did it make sense to launch your CoE?
2. What benchmarks did you set in managing your CoE?

The Impetus Behind Automation

Each participant detailed the reasoning behind the launch of a CoE, what processes they chose to automate first and why. Their challenges, however, centered on where to start, and how to choose which metrics to measure success against.

Aaron Hubbart of Navistar initiated the discussion by saying, “We probably have 200 ideas in the pipeline we’ve identified as opportunities for RPA within the organization. The next step for us is to get the first three pilots in production, and then start the next wave. We identified 12 processes that we would like to automate using RPA that we feel have a very significant impact to the business to the tune of about 40,000 hours freed up as a result of these automations.”



“Our CEO wants to put in 10,000 bots by 2022, which will be somewhere in the range of 35 to 50,000 (FTs) of labor.”
– Weston Jones,
Ernst & Young

A Virtual Think Tank Executive Summary



“ We identified 12 processes that we would like to automate using RPA that we feel have a very significant impact to the business to the tune of about 40,000 hours freed up as a result of these automations. ”

– Aaron Hubbart,
Navistar

Vineet Sharma, of AB-InBev, then shared that their goal is to have about 10% of their workers as digital. He added, “At the four to six months mark is when people started using CoE. As every company is different as soon as you’ve gone through the first cycle of deploying the bots, that’s when the CoEs come into existence for many of our customers.”

Weston Jones of Ernst & Young chimed in by pointing out that “Governance is really, really important, otherwise you start getting splintered and shadow IT starts showing up.” As for the need for metrics, he added, “It’s very important to set a baseline of what you are setting out to achieve and how you measure it. We have found that the top four reasons why CEOs wanted to do this was, first, they want consistency and process execution, second is field decision-making, third is shifting people from transactional to value added work, and the fourth is cost.”

Along these lines, Aaron added, “The challenge has really been how do we come up with the standard set of metrics or KPIs? We feel that it likely is going to be a different set of metrics for each process that we automate with overarching metrics around number of hours redeployed as a result of these bots. So, now we don’t view RPA as a straight cost reduction or headcount reduction tool, but as opportunities to free up our resources that are doing non-value add activities and allow them to focus on the value-add activity.”

Key Takeaway: While every company is different, it’s important to determine what value-add processes can be automated, but set the metrics for best fit for the type of process being automated.

What Tools Should be used in the Tracking and Deploying of a CoE?

BI and Dashboards

There are many benefits to RPA that are driving adoption. Commonly cited benefits include compliance, cost reduction, improved service levels, revenue, and error reduction. To realize increasing benefits, however, a CoE needs the proper tools to manage and measure operations.

On the subject of using tools, some thought leaders expressed that at first they would employ the out-of-the-box features of the RPA platform, and then as they gained experience move onto using tools that provide more insights into effectiveness and results.

Manish Rai, from Automation Anywhere, reinforced this idea by discussing changes made to tools to elicit more in-depth insights. He said, “We’ve embedded the CoE dashboard so an administrator can simply, per bot type, specify some key metrics, such as how much time the work would take without the bots. So, you can calculate the savings and then the hourly cost associated by a worker and some basic metrics and then it creates key data like ROI, cost savings, and man-hour savings automatically. And we recently added a mobile app, so all that data is available on the go to all the RPA users.” Figure 2 shows as example of a CoE dashboard screen.

Center of Excellence Dashboard Snapshot

RPA CENTER OF EXCELLENCE DASHBOARD

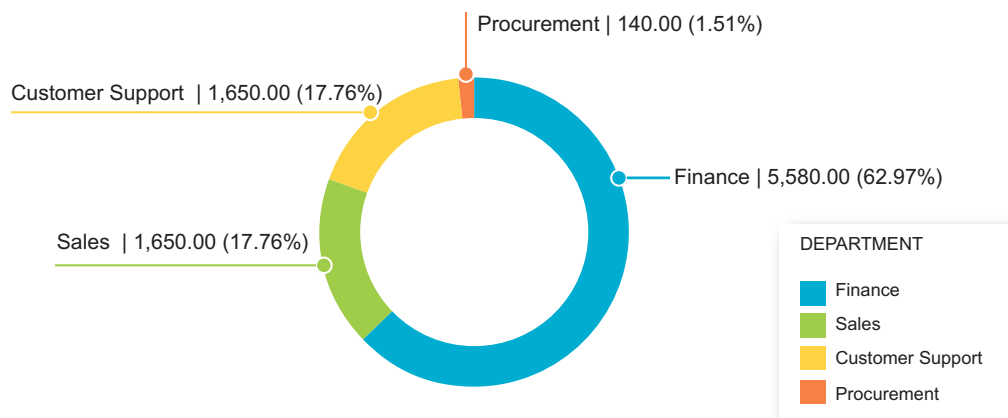
What's the total Bot Run Time?

769.00

Bot Run Time (sum)

Metric: Bot Run Time (Sum) Comparison Metric: None

How does Money saved vary by Department?



All this is not possible without Organizational Buy-in

What does it Take for a Successful CoE?

As with any technology project, achieving the best and ongoing results is not possible without cross-organizational executive buy-in. As we learned in this discussion, it is very easy to get interest in RPA projects once the word is out on the results achieved through one or more pilots. But establishing a CoE and ongoing development requires a different level of attention.

In fact, Aaron Hubbart said, "I think a lot of people see the potential benefit," and while "RPA really was a top down initiative, it's really developing that ROI that helps...and it's not the traditional ROI because there are a lot of the benefits that come from RPA that aren't easy to quantify or aren't easy to track." Weston agreed, added, "I agree that doing a quick proof of value to show a quick win is great. To which Manish stating, "I think the best way to succeed with RPA is first to demonstrate a couple of quick wins, and second, keep it simple in the beginning."

Ultimately, companies are finding that to get the most out of RPA projects, and expand its use, resources need to be aligned across the organization.



“A typical reaction of a CFO is ‘Oh my gosh, we had a ROI in the first three months itself. How fast can I roll it out across the organization?’ and that’s the reaction you want to generate.”

– Manish Rai,
Automation Anywhere



About Automation Anywhere®

Automation Anywhere makes the world's most widely deployed RPA Platform. Their mission is to enable companies to operate with unprecedented productivity and efficiency by automating any part of the enterprise that can be automated with the most intelligent and intuitive robotic process automation platform we call "The Intelligent Digital Workforce." Their vision statement: To take the robot out of the human. To liberate employees from mundane, repetitive tasks, allowing them more time to use their intellect and creativity to solve higher order business challenges. We see a world where every employee will work side by side with digital workers, making them exponentially more productive and far more fulfilled. Learn more at www.automationanywhere.com

About Frost & Sullivan

Frost & Sullivan, the Growth Partnership Company, enables clients to accelerate growth and achieve best-in class positions in growth, innovation and leadership. The company's Growth Partnership Service provides the CEO and the CEO's Growth Team with disciplined research and best practice models to drive the generation, evaluation, and implementation of powerful growth strategies. Frost & Sullivan leverages 50 years of experience in partnering with Global 1000 companies, emerging businesses and the investment community from more than 40 offices on six continents. Learn more at www.frost.com