



Let's Solve

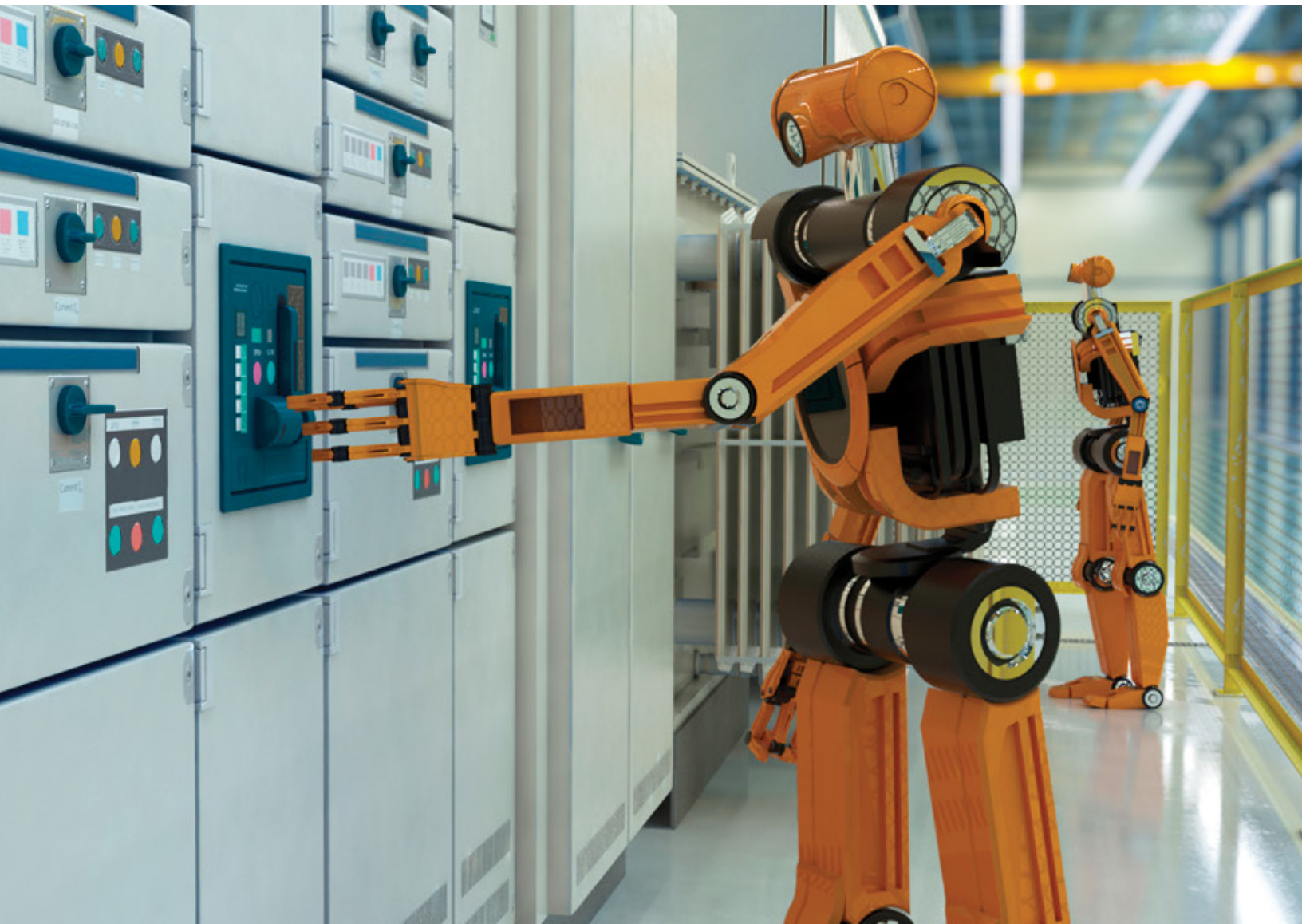


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Bot Governance and The Role of Culture in Bringing About Change

Author Akash Dalpatraj Jain



Bots continue to make headlines in the world of automation. According to Gartner, the software revenue for the global Robotic Process Automation (RPA) market in 2021 is projected to reach 1.89 billion USD. The RPA market is also expected to continue to grow at a double-digit rate till 2024 despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

For example, Automation Anywhere, the global leader in RPA, is on track to deploy almost three trillion bots worldwide and this is expected to multiply in the years to come.

CXOs worldwide have quickly jumped onto this bandwagon in a bid to optimize operational costs as well as to bring about increased stability and scalability in operations. The pandemic has also renewed interest in RPA as organizations explore ways to maintain business continuity by reducing the dependence on a human workforce for routine tasks.

The Growing Importance Of RPA

Gartner predicts that 90% of large organizations globally will have adopted RPA in some form by 2022 as they look to digitally transform critical business processes while recalibrating manual labor and effort. Almost every occupation has the potential for partial automation, as per McKinsey, and half of the activities handled by the world's workforce are potential candidates for automation, amounting to almost 15 trillion USD in wages.

According to KeyBanc Capital Markets, the estimated global RPA market is more than 100 billion USD. This estimate is likely to increase exponentially in the future as organizations introduce automation in every aspect of their business, increasing the number of bots involved in operations. There may come a time in the future where we will be interacting more with bots than with humans. The addition of an intelligence quotient through Artificial Intelligence (AI) will only make sure that interest in RPA continues for a long time.

However, this surge in the adoption of RPA comes with a set of challenges connected with the efficient management of multiple bots and calls for organizations to take proactive steps in preparation for adopting RPA.

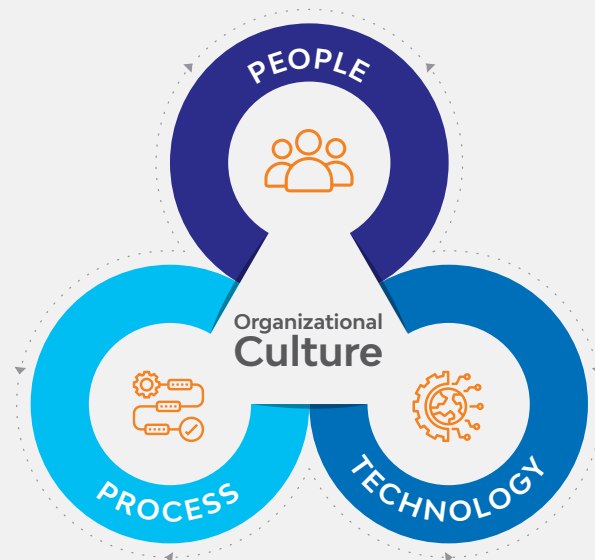
Key Questions to Ask Before Getting Started with Bots

A key mandate for organizations is to have clarity on the capabilities needed to manage multiple bots at the same time before incorporating bots into critical operations. This includes identifying teams responsible for handling bots, defining measures to track a bot's performance, deciding on the location where bots will be operational, as well as factors such as optimization and decommission. Strong governance also helps ensure that organizations benefit from a reduction in maintenance costs and overheads when trillions of bots are deployed.

Setting the Right Strategy for the Adoption of Technology

How an organization handles the dimensions of people and technology determines the success or failure of adoption. Historically, technology in any industry has evolved as more and more people adopted and adapted to them. However, it is equally important to create a strong culture and process centered on the technology adopted. Rather than looking at each dimension in siloes, the right balance of technology, people, process, and culture can help drive a strong and successful adoption.

Market trends show that organizations are rapidly developing and deploying bots across various functions to ensure better services, stability, and cost reduction. The RPA technology is also evolving at an exponential rate causing CXOs to lay down strategies to choose the right technology for operations as well as build capabilities for these technologies. The first step for organizations is to define strong guidelines and processes around bot governance which helps sustain and improve RPA adoption in the long run.



Creating a Governance Mechanism for Bots

Governance mechanisms in any organization help minimize human errors and help benchmark as well as monitor productivity, capability, and performance parameters. Another key focus area is achieving Six Sigma within processes to handle variations and ensuring adherence to Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) levels to continuously improve performance.

As bots become a part of the operations workforce, traditional processes designed

for a purely human workforce will have to be completely transformed. For example, processes such as compliance checks, audits, project monitoring, process checklists, and performance benchmarking should cater to a workforce that includes both humans and bots. By making necessary changes to processes, organizations can ensure that they still meet the mandate of methodologies such as CMMI and Six Sigma.

Why Bot Governance?



Change Management

As industries are more agile these days, the processes also constantly need to change to keep pace. Bot maintenance needs to be governed well to ensure that these changing processes run successfully. Besides, a bot's usage should be governed efficiently to ensure that an organization's operational costs do not increase.



Real-Time Monitoring

The live tracking and monitoring of bots help organizations control operations efficiently. Using various dashboards and trends, organizations can identify idle times and efficiency rates, which can help improve planning and increase the productivity of teams.



Risk Management

Proper guidelines and processes are necessary for bots that are deployed to handle critical tasks and have a high impact on operations.



Auditing

Bot governance can help ensure that bots are functioning in compliance with processes and performance parameters, which can, in turn, be used to analyze trends, and perform audits, and compliance checks.



Business Continuity

A strong governance can help ensure the availability of bots with minimal disruption to business continuity.



Performance Optimization

Governance can provide a framework to monitor the performance of bots and provide a foundation for optimization since achieving high performance is key to the success of any project.



Meet Objectives

A strong governance helps set and achieve project objectives.

The Role of Culture in Bot Governance

As bots are added to workforces in increasing numbers, and the positive impact on the organization becomes apparent, it could lead to a sense of insecurity among employees. So, to successfully integrate bots, it is important to create an organizational culture on bot governance, helping employees understand the benefits of incorporating bots in their day-to-day operations.

The benefits include:



Better Project Management: Bot governance plays a pivotal role in managing projects that involve bots, which are different from the traditional way of handling projects



Tighter Collaboration Between Humans and Bots: A significant portion of an employee's insecurities reduce when they have more time to focus on productive tasks as a result of leveraging bots for routine and repetitive tasks



Automation-First: By making governance a culture, employees can be encouraged to identify processes for automation that helps increase their efficiency



Reskilling: By reskilling employees on RPA and other latest technologies, organizations can experience increased efficiency from both employees as well as the technology adopted



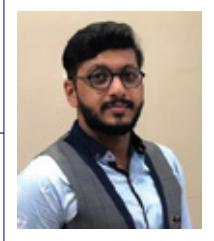
Rewards and Recognition: A proven method to encourage workforce participation in this journey is to celebrate successful implementation as well as increasing the reusability or adoption of bots across the organization

The Way Forward

Any decision to adopt a technology or application is crucial for organizations as the decision tends to impact processes and functions. Factors such as cost, time, and resources, among others, are usually taken into consideration before deciding to deploy technology. After deciding on a technology, the process involved in successfully integrating the technology is equally crucial.

The four dimensions of technology adoption, most importantly culture, can help organizations create a bot governance mechanism, leading to a collaborative work environment between humans and bots. With the right culture and governance, organizations can integrate RPA technology while creating an efficient and effective workforce.

About the Author



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Akash comes with 15+ years of IT experience in consulting, implementation and transformation. He has rich experience in delivery, IT process automation & Automation Point Solutions. He is certified on TOGAF 9.0, APEX 2.0 an LASSIB's society initiative for Program Management excellence, Leadership Journeyman an initiative of L&T academy and have also completed ISG Change Transition Manager training. He has also been a technical evangelist with a very good domain experience in Oil & Gas industry.. He is keen on transforming automation services through AI/ML.

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