Optum Serve®

Advancing federal government functions

Robotic process automation (RPA) is the automation of business processes that are primarily repetitive, systematic and rules-based. The automation takes place when software robots carry out processes or tasks normally completed by humans.

Optum Serve® Robotic Process Automation for Government (RPAG) framework can be used to increase quality by lowering human error, reducing workload and creating efficiencies. Optum Serve offers an end-to-end framework that provides government entities the ability to execute RPA to a broad set of applications. Aligned with the Federal RPA Community of Practice, our framework includes governance, a strategic implementation approach, and security across the continuum.

Many government programs require an extensive number of manual processes to keep them fully functioning. This may be due to a variety of situations, such as legacy or disparate systems with no automated processes, having to perform manual data entry into multiple interfaces, or performing tasks that require high levels of compliance and auditability, to name a few. These manual processes can be resource-intensive, prone to human error and tediously slow – all of which lead to higher costs to maintain and execute them.

According to the RPA Program Playbook published by the Federal RPA Community of Practice, if agencies deployed RPA to save all civilian employees only 20 hours per year, that would equate to roughly $3 billion in capacity created.[1]

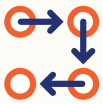
There are numerous ways in which RPA can be used within various business processes: to enhance internal operations, improve technology performance, provide more robust analytics and reporting, and strengthen compliance.

Some specific RPA use cases include:

- **Invoice processing and payment**
- **Enterprise resource planning transactions**
- **Conversion of data formats and graphics**
- **Physical and electronic document sorting**
- **Email generation, archiving and extracting**
- **List processing and file storage**
- **Performance reporting**
- **Repetitive tasks employees carry out 50+ times a day**

Optum Serve RPAG benefits

Implementation of RPAG offers federal agencies a multitude of benefits, including:



Productivity and efficiency

Implementing RPAG takes over labor-intensive administrative tasks, which frees employees for more meaningful activities, such as resolving customer issues, analyzing system behavior, improving productivity and efficiency, and reducing costs. By focusing on decision-making and tasks that cannot be automated, employees feel the work they perform is more impactful, and they are not bogged down with recurring administrative duties.

Scalability and flexibility

To improve scalability and flexibility of the systems with a large number of manual processes, one needs to hire and train new employees, which is a costly and time-consuming process. With manual processes, it‘s not easy to efficiently handle more requests or customers quickly. The ability to replicate robotic tools across geographies allows an agency to be agile and meet increased demands.

Compliance

Robotic processes allow an agency to implement extensive data collection processes and execute accurately with little to no human errors. This helps ease the ability to meet both industry and government auditing and compliance regulations. As auditing and compliance rules are updated or changed, RPAG allows for quick adjustments and helps mitigate potential errors.

Accuracy

Software robots, if implemented correctly, can repeatedly make processes work without failure using the business rules provided, which minimizes the consequences of mistakes. With routine processes completed flawlessly, every time, agencies don‘t need to allocate time for making corrections, which results in significant cost recovery.

Cost savings

With automation of work processes, administrative costs can be reduced immediately and little to no additional back-office resources are needed, for a quick return on investment. There are cost savings from minimizing impacts of employee turnover and training of new employees. Software robots can be easily retrained if business rules change, bringing even greater efficiency to agencies.

RPA architecture solution

Optum Serve partners with federal health agencies to help them drive better outcomes. We have experience in successfully implementing RPA for a variety of platforms using low/no code software packages such as UiPath and Pega Robotics, including:

- Business process management
- Case management
- Document management
- Data management
- Grants management
- eSignatures

We've also developed a large library of robotic components that can be leveraged for most government systems to reduce costs and time of implementation.

The Optum Serve RPAG execution framework can be implemented either in a private or public cloud infrastructure. We have proven effectiveness of our RPAG architecture to enhance the following applications:

- PDF validation
- Optical character recognition (OCR)
- Screen scraping
- Machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI)
- UI recording and replay
- Data parametrization
- Screen development
- Coordinating technologies within business processes

RPA execution logs are maintained for auditing, debugging and compliance requirements. Our RPAG analytics are used to assist in decision-making and in continuous performance and functional improvements. Storage of data created during RPA processes is never stored outside of existing systems unless it is by design and follows a rigorous backup and archival process like any other data storage would require.

RPA Center of Excellence (COE)

Our global RPA COE in Ireland hosts the capabilities shown below which we use to drive automation across our business in all geographies. We have been using RPA since 2018 have installed around 500 different types of robots across our business and is expected to double this year. We also have a projected savings rate of $4 billion this year. Because of our work, we were awarded a UiPath automation excellence awarded 2019 for "Best Competency Building." The award-winning submission from Optum® Global Solutions (OGS) defined a framework that ensures there is a high level of standardization, reusability, sustainability and maintainability in the bots being developed for UiPath automations. Being one of the largest users of UiPath, we have good business and technical relationship with UiPath where we closely collaborate in solving issues and providing inputs for new capabilities.

- Experienced team
- Ability to scale
- Management
- Training University
- Advocates

- Process alignment
- Collaboration
- Metrics and measurement
- Benefit tracking

- Process definition
- Architecture guidelines
- Templates and checklists
- Best practices

- Tools expertise
- Development environment
- Integration platform
- Reusable robots

RPAG governance model

For establishing automation governance, we first establish an Automation Design Authority (ADA) consisting of process experts, architects, process owners and delivery leads from each line of business. ADA provides guidance and a common framework to build an optimal solution for the right opportunity with proven enterprise strategies, best practices, and tools and technologies to deliver business value and customer satisfaction. As shown below, ADA provides a governance model with structure to select, prioritize, coordinate and help implement RPA opportunities.

How to govern	What to govern		
Strategies and policies	Business and IT strategy		
Roles and responsibilities	Enterprise portfolio management	Enterprise architecture	
Tools, processes and methods	Service delivery and management	Solution architecture	Tools and technology
	Organization		

A strategic implementation approach

The implementation approach is a critical step in achieving successful execution of RPA. Optum Serve RPAG framework includes a four-phased software development lifecycle-based approach of discovering, designing and delivering, deploying and managing. It is built on the foundation of our wide range of health care experiences across different platforms and different environments.

We review all the existing business processes in the discovery phase to identify processes, assess and prioritize, shortlist processes and define business cases. We have a quick-start guide, template, process mapping guidelines, cost benefit template, prioritization matrix, timeline checker and process accelerators to facilitate this process. We use the JIRA intake tool for maintaining and tracking user stories and the resulting requirements.

Discover	Design and deliver		Deploy	Manage
Ideate, prioritize and access	Detailed design	Build and test	Transition and deploy	Manage and maintain
• Identify and capture a comprehensive list of business processes together with related data for each business area • Assess and prioritize based on structured process walkthrough and set of defined prioritization criteria • Shortlist processes for RPA implementation • Define business case	• Complete detailed analysis of the “as-is” process creating all relevant documentation • Complete and sign off the solution design document • Commence RPA development • Complete end-to-end testing, including UAT • Ensure business readiness for deployment (change management/training) • Complete change control and defect planning		• Move robot(s) into production • ”Hypercare“ period commences for a number of weeks until process is stable • Ramp up volumes, uptime • Move robots out of hypercare into BAU and transition to control room • Complete voice of customer survey for lessons learned	• Ongoing management of the robots via management console • Complete change request and defect management • Complete performance reviews to ensure full optimization • Provide business with detailed and regular metrics and reports

Governance (business/technology)/communications

- Robust governance and stakeholder communication framework is defined.
- COE manages reporting of the BAU business processes peformed by the virtual workforce.

In the “design and deliver” phase, we conduct detailed analysis of “as-is” processes, define “to-be” processes including any process re-engineering and create a solution design document (SDD). We use a standard delivery plan, process definition document template, solution design document template and process mapping guidelines with best practices and lessons learned for this phase. The second part of this phase is “build and test,” where a clear User Acceptance Testing (UAT) plan is developed in parallel to building of RPA solution. We have a UAT Test Plan, Training Plan, Change Plan Methodology and Change Control Plan to facilitate this process. We work with business SMEs, RPA business analysts, the solution architect, RPA development teams, business sponsors and governance committee to facilitate the process.

We transition and deploy our solution by first moving robots into “hypercare” for a period of a few weeks and then ramp up robot volumes during hypercare. We leverage the voice of customer survey feedback and lessons learned to improve upon the robots, if necessary. As the RPA robots start performing the business process, they are handed over to the control room for monitoring and execution. The ongoing management of the robots via a centralized orchestration and management console, and change requests and defect fixes are conducted through the governance process.

Keeping data and information secure

While RPA can help create more operational efficiencies, it‘s important to not lose sight of data protection and data integrity. Agencies handle personal, protected and confidential data. And although there is a need to continue building automated processes, especially in the digital era we live in, we also know how sophisticated hackers have become. Our software robots are designed to follow the same security protocols and access controls as humans doing the same work. Optum Serve has been awarded a FISMA Authority to Operate (ATO) for several large systems that we manage at multiple federal agencies, some of which require FISMA high security. Being part of a Fortune 5 company, we have implemented policies and procedures based on information security best practices.

Starting small

Agencies do not need to implement RPA on a massive scale to see the benefit and return on investment. Each agency will be at a different level of maturity and have different use cases where RPAG can help deliver on its mission. At Optum Serve, we meet our clients where they are. We can assist an agency that is just starting out on its RPA journey, and we can also help with large-scale, established RPA operations. Our goal is to help agencies, no matter where they are on the maturity curve, leverage RPA to better serve their constituents and drive better outcomes.

About Optum Serve

Optum Serve is the federal health services business of Optum and UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH). We are proud to partner with the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Veterans Affairs and other organizations to help modernize the U.S. health system and improve the health and well-being of those we collectively serve.

Federal RPA Community of Practice – RPA Program Maturity Model[2]			
Start-up RPA program	Emerging RPA program	Impactful RPA program	High-performing RPA program
Level 1 • Pilot bots underway or <5 bots in production • Less than 5k hours of annualized capacity created • Establishing formal processes related to RPA	**Level 2** • 5–20 bots in production • 5–50k hours of annualized capacity created • Initial security, privacy and ATO policies formally defined • Developing program management, reporting and process improvement capabilities	**Level 3** • 20+ bots in production • 50–100k hours of annualized capacity created • Formal ATO, IT security and privacy policies • Strong program and operations management • Strong process improvement capabilities • RPA solutions implemented across multiple functional areas • Robust pipeline of future opportunities	**Level 4** • 5–10 bots deployed monthly • 100k+ hours of annualized capacity created • COE Model – bots generated from multiple business units • Intelligent automation capabilities • Dedicated (FTE) program management, process re-engineering and development capabilities • Workforce redeployment, capacity planning and reskilling required • Enterprise platform for unattended bots

Connect with us to learn more about how Optum Serve can support your agency's RPA initiatives at optumserve.com/contact.

1. RPA Program Playbook, version 1.0. digital.gov/pdf/rpa-playbook.pdf. January 15, 2020. AccessedAugust 12, 2022.
2. Ibid.

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