



# The Rise Of RPA Will Drive Higher Levels Of Business Efficiency

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FORRESTER OPPORTUNITY SNAPSHOT: A CUSTOM STUDY COMMISSIONED BY NICE | NOVEMBER 2019

## RPA Moves To Center Stage

Robotic process automation (RPA) is a technological evolution of business processes that enables employees to focus on more strategic tasks while it automates business processes in the background. Organizations are just beginning to touch on the capabilities of RPA; however, both business leaders and employees are already concerned that RPA or, more commonly, bots will take over human jobs. This is partly true, but it will also create new roles that depend on RPA/bots and will ultimately boost employee productivity. The more RPA is used, the more beneficial it will be to organizations and the more it will drive higher levels of business efficiency.

## Key Findings



### **Say goodbye to repetitive, mundane tasks.**

Employees and business leaders are excited about RPA and its value for their work and organization. They cited error reduction and accuracy as key benefits.



**Organizations must manage the change management process.** Firms need to better communicate with employees what they plan to do with RPA/bots to reduce employees' fear for job security.



### **Partner with the right specialists.**

Organizations pointed to the lack of skills and expertise when it comes to implementing RPA/bots, which is why firms should seek specialist solution providers.

## RPA: The Tool For Quality Output/Service

The need for rapid digitization has pushed RPA to a prominent position in automation strategies. RPA's ability to automate highly repetitive, rule-based tasks is set to make current roles more effective and efficient by reducing manual errors (41%), especially with 47% of employees stating they sometimes/often forget a step in the process. RPA also improves efficiency and effectiveness by lowering costs (36%) and taking over routine tasks to allow human workers to focus on more strategic work (34%).

According to Forrester's research, RPA's growth will continue, with global spending on RPA services in 2019 set to exceed \$5 billion — and \$12 billion by 2023.<sup>1</sup>



**Managers and employees highlight manual errors as a top issue, revealing that quality of work is a concern and a key driver for RPA adoption.**

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## “What effect do investments in RPA have on the employee's job?” Rank top three



**41%** Reduce manual errors



**36%** Lower costs by replacing low-value human activities



**34%** Take over routine tasks, enabling human workers to focus on more strategic work

Base: 51 respondents whose seniority level is manager or above  
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of NICE, November 2019

## Managers Expect RPA To Boost CX, Reduce Costs, And Improve Self-Service Capabilities

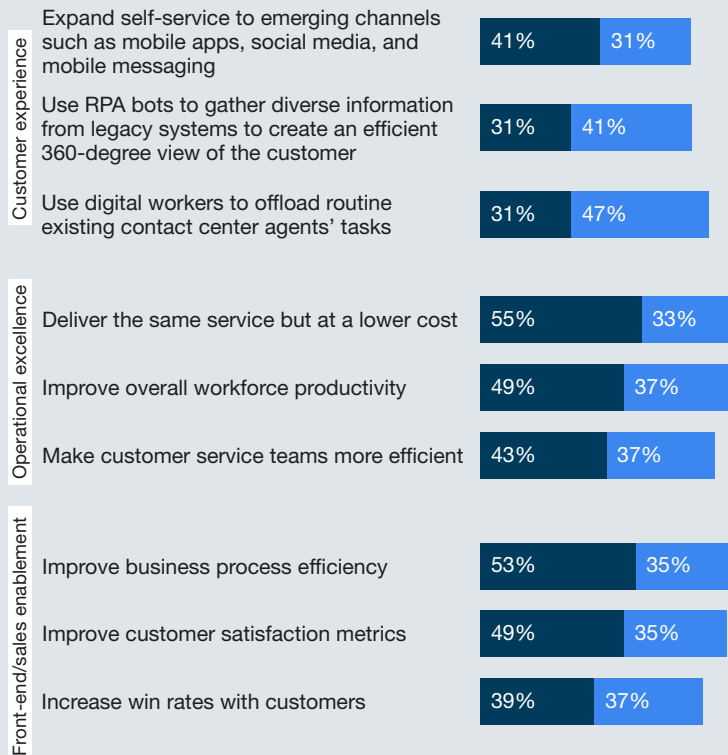
In the age of the customer, RPA is a crucial tool for human agents to reduce focus on systems and develop their customer-centric skills. As such, RPA is considered to be important in improving customer service team efficiency (80%), enabling a more holistic view of the customer.

RPA is not only a key component of a broader digital transformation but also a cost mitigation strategy (88%). Further, 72% of managers are looking at RPA as an enabler of customer self-service in emerging channels. This aligns with how customers increasingly use self-service as the first point of contact with customer service organizations.

### “How important is it that you gain the following from leveraging RPA-enabled digital workers to engage with employees?”

● Very important

● Important



Base: 51 respondents whose seniority level is manager or above

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of NICE, November 2019

## Employees Recognize RPA's Ability To Improve Customer Service And Delivery

Employees like call center agents need to collect information about a customer, but they must often open several apps to understand a customer's history. RPA bots interact with agents to help move the contact center from fax-and-paper tedium, errors, and repetitive tasks to better customer interaction, advice, and judgment, resulting in more engaged workers. When we asked employees about RPA's role, almost half (49%) said RPA has removed some or all mundane tasks and helped them to focus better on their work. For example, a customer's identity, query, and overall business context are often buried in multiple slow legacy systems. With RPA, a customer support representative (CSR) gets immediate access to relevant customer information, drawn from core systems, including business information, previous engagements, and recommendations on the next best actions to take.

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**“Does RPA remove significant mundane work/tasks, allowing for better engagement with your work and customers?”** Select one

Yes, it has removed some mundane tasks and enabled employees to focus better on their work/customers

45%

Yes, it has removed mundane tasks, but it hasn't enabled employees to focus better on their work/customers

28%

No, it hasn't removed mundane tasks from employees

19%

Yes, it has removed all mundane tasks and enabled employees to focus better on their work/customers

4%

Base: 53 respondents who work as an individual contributor  
Note: Not all responses shown.

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of NICE, November 2019

## Automation Drives Fear Into Employees' Jobs

The sentiment we often hear in the news is, “Robots will take over your job; whatever you can do, they can do better.” Headlines like these often drive fear about the automation market. However, it’s more complex than that: While some jobs will be replaced with bots, dependent work will also be created. For example, lower-skilled workers can gain technical and vocational certifications in RPA maintenance.

Nevertheless, 58% of employees are still worried that their job security is at risk due to the rise of RPA. In turn, this creates additional fears: 53% of employees feel that the more successful bots are, the more investment will be diverted toward the tools, rather than the people.

**“What are the top risks or challenges you perceive from your organization’s use of digital workers/bots?”** Select all that apply

Fear of job security

58%

The success of the bot will lead to more investment in bots and less investment in people

53%

I won’t have the skills to keep up with its evolution

36%

There will be a cultural resistance at operational levels

36%

It will negatively impact me on a psychological level

15%

## RPA Still Needs To Overcome Some Operating Barriers

As with any new technology, firms often underestimate or simply don't know how to best implement the technology. In other words, firms are bound to run into barriers when implementing new technologies. For instance, just under half of business leaders say the lack of internal skills to implement and operate the system is a top challenge (49%).

Reinforcing the employee sentiment of job security, 45% of business leaders say that RPA tools are making employees feel uncomfortable about their job security. Forty-one percent think that if their companies don't address the incoming change, they will face resistance within the company, which is why it's important to include different lines of business to ensure a successful change management process.

### “What are the top risks or challenges you perceive from the use of digital workers?”

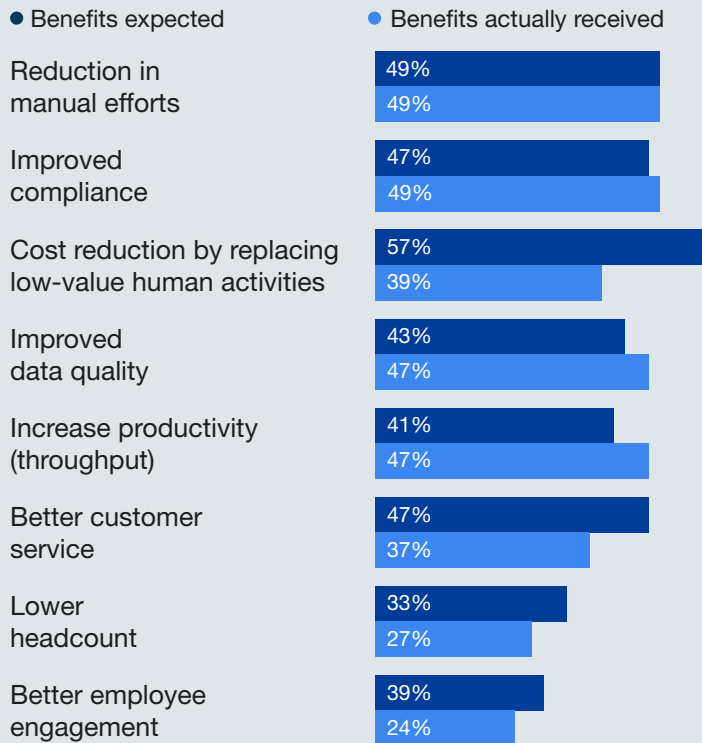
Select all that apply



## Organizations Should Automate Processes With The Highest ROI Potential

Organizations are mostly meeting or exceeding the benefits they expected from the implementation of RPA. However, there is organizational lag in the value from RPA in reducing costs. This means that either the expectations are too high or organizations are not managing the change in the right way. This could also derive from choosing automation for the more complex, time-consuming processes rather than the ones that drive the highest ROI. Automated tools today can prioritize and recommend the processes with the highest ROI potential.

### “When your organization implemented RPA, what benefits did you expect the technology to have on your business? What benefits did the technology actually have on your business?”





## Automation Leads To A Liberated Workforce

With the RPA services market exploding, RPA platform vendors are pushing for innovation. In turn, employees want bots to execute routine tasks on their behalf quickly and accurately (41%). This enables employees to focus on more strategic tasks and increases their energy and productivity levels (31%). However, the most intriguing employee desires for RPA are the need for real-time guidance and next-best-action recommendations (33%).

Most companies today invest in AI to reduce costs or, as a defensive measure, to keep up with or get ahead of peers. But automation is much more than that. It can lift employees to new levels of commitment, energy, and productivity; put a human face to a brand; and provide customers with new experiences.

### “What would you like see RPA do going forward?”

Rank your top three

● Rank 1 ● Rank 2 ● Rank 3

Execute routine tasks, on my behalf, quickly and accurately



Increase productivity levels



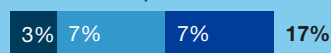
Provide me with real-time guidance and next-best-action recommendations



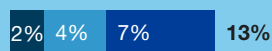
Enable me to provide better customer experience/services



Deliver rich, contextual data drawn from multiple systems



Offer real-time on-screen compliance guidance



## Conclusion

Forrester's study of business leaders and employees yielded several key findings:

**Current RPA's benefits are just the tip of the iceberg.**

Increased worker productivity, improvements in business efficiency, and better employee engagement are just beginning to be realized and tracked.

**Human-centric change management.** RPA's success within your organization depends on your change management capabilities; employees want to feel valued and safe, not fearing job security. They need to clearly see how RPA can assist them with tasks and improve quality of their work and their overall performance.

**Seeking partners is a must.** Solution providers that understand RPA and cognitive automation will be able to help all types of organizations to implement RPA, train their employees on how to use the new technology, and track benefits.

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Forrester's Infrastructure and Operations  
research group

## Methodology

This Opportunity Snapshot was commissioned by NICE. To create this profile, Forrester Consulting supplemented this research with custom survey questions asked of 51 business leaders and 53 information workers who are responsible for RPA (business leaders) or users of RPA technology (employees). The custom survey began in March 2019 and was completed in November 2019.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Source: "The RPA Services Market Will Grow To Reach \$12 Billion By 2023," Forrester Research, Inc., July 10, 2019.

### ABOUT FORRESTER CONSULTING

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## Demographics

### COUNTRY OF RESPONDENT

Canada: 50%

US: 50%

### SIZE OF ORGANIZATION

1,000 to 4,999 employees: 38%

5,000 to 19,999 employees: 24%

20,000 or more employees: 38%

### ROLE OF RESPONDENT

Individual contributor: 50%

Manager or above: 50%

### DEPARTMENT OF RESPONDENT

Contact center: 8%

Human resources: 15%

Finance/accounts: 31%

Operations: 46%



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