Making the Most of Robotic Process Automation

RPA Platform Comparison

RPA is: *suitable for both fully automated and human-assisted processes.* An RPA process (once deployed, each process can be referred to as a bot) can be designed to act in both attended and unattended settings. An unattended bot performs one or more tasks without user interaction. Attended bots assist one or more people to complete a task more effectively or with fewer errors and delays. A simple example of an attended bot is one that helps automatically populate complex forms or contracts by quickly pulling information from multiple databases.

RPA is not: *strictly an exercise in technology.* Deliberate change management is important to make the most out of any RPA implementation. This ensures that the new processes are adopted smoothly, and that stakeholders understand how to adjust the automation routines as the needs of the business unit change.

RPA is: s*uitable for both large-scale and small-scale tasks.* RPA solutions are available at a wide variety of price points and levels of complexity. So, although RPA bots are capable of taking on an enterprise-wide challenge, they can also deliver cost-effective results on more focused pain points.

RPA is not: *a niche technology.* With top names in enterprise solutions, billions of dollars in investment, and verifiable results at a wide variety of commercial and public-sector organizations, RPA has shown significant growth. This ascent is expected to continue

RPA PLATFORM COMPARISON

What Robotic Process Automation Tool Is Right for Your Organization?

Breaking down the strengths and features of the four leaders in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for RPA platforms.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) is a fast-growing discipline that's tailor-made for the unique operational challenges that organizations face right now. RPA solutions can streamline processes at any level (front office, back office, or in-between) and unlock operational efficiencies by automating manual business processes and reducing the need for employees to spend their time on rote, repetitive, or predictable tasks. This can improve accuracy and efficiency while boosting both employee and customer satisfaction.

Dozens of vendors in this emerging field have already brought full-fledged solutions to market, and more are on the way. Each of these dozens of RPA platforms has a distinct approach, which can complicate the selection process. Below is a comparison of the four leaders in the Gartner Magic Quadrant, some of the best RPA tools on the market, to help guide decisions around which vendor solution is the best match for your organization.

	blueprism	AUTOMATION ANYWHERE	UiPath	(Microsoft Power Automate)
Cost	High	Medium	High	Low
Hosting	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
Process Recording	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Learning Resources	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
Learning Curve	High	Medium	Low	Medium
AI Capabilities	High	Medium	High	High
System Architecture	Client-server architecture	Client-server architecture	Client-server architecture and cloud-based orchestrator	Cloud-based
Development Environment	Object-oriented Integrated Development Environment	Script-based	Visual drag-and-drop designer with object-oriented options	Visual drag-and-drop designer
Scalability	High	Medium	High	High

Overview

UiPath™

Even among leaders, UiPath distinguishes itself by flattening the RPA learning curve. Those new to RPA will appreciate the UiPath Academy training video service, the strongest RPA-specific learning platform among these four vendors. The company offers free interactive learning resources that gamify the learning process, and certification paths for new or advanced developers. UiPath's drag-and-drop features make process creation and adjustment relatively straightforward compared to other RPA platforms.

Although UiPath uses a client-server architecture, UiPath Orchestrator, lives in the cloud. Orchestrator manages bots, integrates application and data sources, and is available in multiple enterprise cloud deployment options, including Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure, or Google Cloud Platform.

UiPath has historically set competitive annual fees for each platform developer. The vendor offers a variety of payment models for bots, including a flat fee for unlimited bots, an à-la-carte model, and bundles.

Cost	High
Hosting	Medium
Process Recording	Yes
Learning Resources	Medium
Learning Curve	Low
AI Capabilities	High
System Architecture	Client-server architecture and cloud-based orchestrator
Development Environment	Visual drag-and-drop designer with object-oriented options
Scalability	High

UiPath's artificial intelligence capabilities (branded as AI Skills) are competitive and include both task mining and process mining. Computer vision and optical character recognition (OCR) capabilities make it easier to ingest and analyze documents and mixed media, and UiPath's AI Center reduces the complexity of deployment, bridging the gap between RPA and AI. UiPath continues to build deeper partnerships with leading AI developers, including Microsoft Azure, AWS, and Google Cloud.

UiPath Case Study

A UiPath client accelerated a time-consuming security incident processing task by streamlining the case record creation process. The UiPath bot, integrated with both e-QIP and ServiceNow, creates records and assigns an initial action type for further processing, saving the organization's front-line security assistants 11,000 hours of rote labor annually.

Overview

blueprism

Blue Prism's hosting platform has no infrastructure requirements for launch and gives organizations access to next-generation AI-enhanced automation capabilities coupled with cloud-based flexibility. Blue Prism's per-developer costs are the highest among the four leaders, with bots priced on a case-by-case basis.

Blue Prism's University is frequently updated with training, certifications, and academic resources for developers. Unlike the other leaders, Blue Prism offers a training track specifically geared for universities and academia. Developing RPA in Blue Prism will feel familiar to experienced object-oriented developers, but newcomers to software development may find it a steeper climb than scripting-based RPA solutions.

Blue Prism packages AI capabilities, including chatbots and sentiment analysis bots that gain insights from unstructured data, through its Digital Exchange. Blue Prism relies heavily on outside developers for AI, and has technical collaborations with Microsoft Azure, AWS, and Google Cloud to bolster and streamline the AI development process.

Cost	High
Hosting	Medium
Process Recording	No
Learning Resources	Medium
Learning Curve	High
AI Capabilities	High
System Architecture	Client-server architecture
Development Environment	Object-oriented Integrated Development Environment
Scalability	High

Blue Prism Case Study

Guidehouse developed a bot to automatically send individual survey letter attachments to thousands of a government agency's grant recipients. In just a few minutes, the bot now completes what once took the agency's employees at least 1,000 hours to accomplish.

Overview

AUTOMATION™ ANYWHERE

Automation Anywhere is a strong choice for those who want control over where and how to deploy RPA technology. The platform can be deployed on-premise, in a hybrid cloud, or on leading cloud platforms, including AWS, Google Cloud, and Microsoft Azure, and can be adjusted as scale and needs change. Automation Anywhere charges a flat annual fee per developer, although pricing varies on a case-by-case basis.

The vendor has responded to competitive pressure by improving both interface and experience. The Automation Anywhere University service focuses on role-based courses and a mix of free and paid content.

Strong recent investment in AI has helped Automation Anywhere stay competitive. Automation Anywhere's IQ bot incorporates computer vision, natural language processing, and machine learning to help automatically classify, extract, and validate information. Recently, Automation Anywhere announced a multi-year strategic partnership with Google Cloud to migrate Automation 360 and become Google Cloud's preferred RPA partner.

Cost	Medium
Hosting	Medium
Process Recording	Yes
Learning Resources	Medium
Learning Curve	Medium
AI Capabilities	Medium
System Architecture	Client-server architecture
Development Environment	Script-based
Scalability	Medium

Automation Anywhere Case Study

An organization's HR team spent tens of thousands of hours on international background checks for candidates expected to join the organization. Combing through three separate databases was not only time-consuming, but also error prone. A bot now completes the verification process by automatically cross-checking the employee with the databases and generating a shareable PDF report on each individual. This frees up 33,000 hours of HR effort annually and substantially reduces errors in the background check process.

Overview

Power Automate

Microsoft continues a decades-old tradition of building its ecosystem through low barriers to entry for developers. All Windows 10 users can obtain a free Power Automate developer license. Unlike the other RPA market leaders, Microsoft offers two cost models for attended bots: either the typical per-bot-per-year model, or an annual fee based on the number of bot users. Unattended bots have a basic per-bot-per-year fee comparable to other vendors. Hosting is available in both on-premise and Microsoft Azure cloud deployment. Microsoft-heavy organizations will appreciate the ease of linking Power Automate with Dataverse, SharePoint, and Excel.

Power Automate gears itself toward technical users familiar with the basics of software development. Microsoft earns high marks for learning resources because the vendor's Learn platform offers curated certification paths for the Power Platform, which includes Power Automate along with a suite of other Microsoft services and applications. Additionally, the Microsoft Power Automate community forums are the largest of the four vendors. Developers without a coding background can hit the ground running with Power Automate's built-in recorder function, but it is more rudimentary than UiPath's recorder.

Microsoft is a leader in cloud AI solutions and the largest cloud player in the RPA space. Since Microsoft can develop and integrate its own proprietary AI, Power Automate's capabilities are expected to expand and potentially exceed those of other vendors, making this an important consideration for organizations looking to include AI in their automated workflows.

Cost	Low
Hosting	High
Process Recording	Yes
Learning Resources	High
Learning Curve	Medium
AI Capabilities	High
System Architecture	Cloud-based
Development Environment	Visual drag-and-drop designer
Scalability	High

Microsoft Power Automate Case Study

A government agency wanted a way to visualize agency-wide automation data, as well as help citizen users through the process of creating automations. Guidehouse created a Microsoft Power app, incorporating Power Platform, to gather information on the automations at the agency and to guide users through the automation lifecycle. The initiative saves agency workers an estimated 8,000 hours annually.

Guidehouse
Outwit *Complexity*

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Take The Next Step

This guide provides a framework for comparing the strengths of leading RPA vendors when considering the specific needs of your organization. Because the space changes and evolves quickly, Guidehouse recommends discussing your situation with vendor-agnostic RPA specialists who can prepare a complete assessment of the types of bots, AI capability, and scalability suited to your situation.

Guidehouse advises a broad range of clients on RPA planning, strategy, and implementation, and can provide deeper-dive assessments of specific RPA platforms, such as Power Automate. Contact us to discuss the next step of your automation journey.

About Guidehouse

Guidehouse is a leading global provider of consulting services to the public sector and commercial markets, with broad capabilities in management, technology, and risk consulting. By combining our public and private sector expertise, we help clients address their most complex challenges and navigate significant regulatory pressures focusing on transformational change, business resiliency, and technology-driven innovation. Across a range of advisory, consulting, outsourcing, and digital services, we create scalable, innovative solutions that help our clients outwit complexity and position them for future growth and success. The company has more than 12,000 professionals in over 50 locations globally. Guidehouse is a Veritas Capital portfolio company, led by seasoned professionals with proven and diverse expertise in traditional and emerging technologies, markets, and agenda-setting issues driving national and global economies. For more information, please visit www.guidehouse.com.

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