

Not Just Another eBook on Intelligent Automation

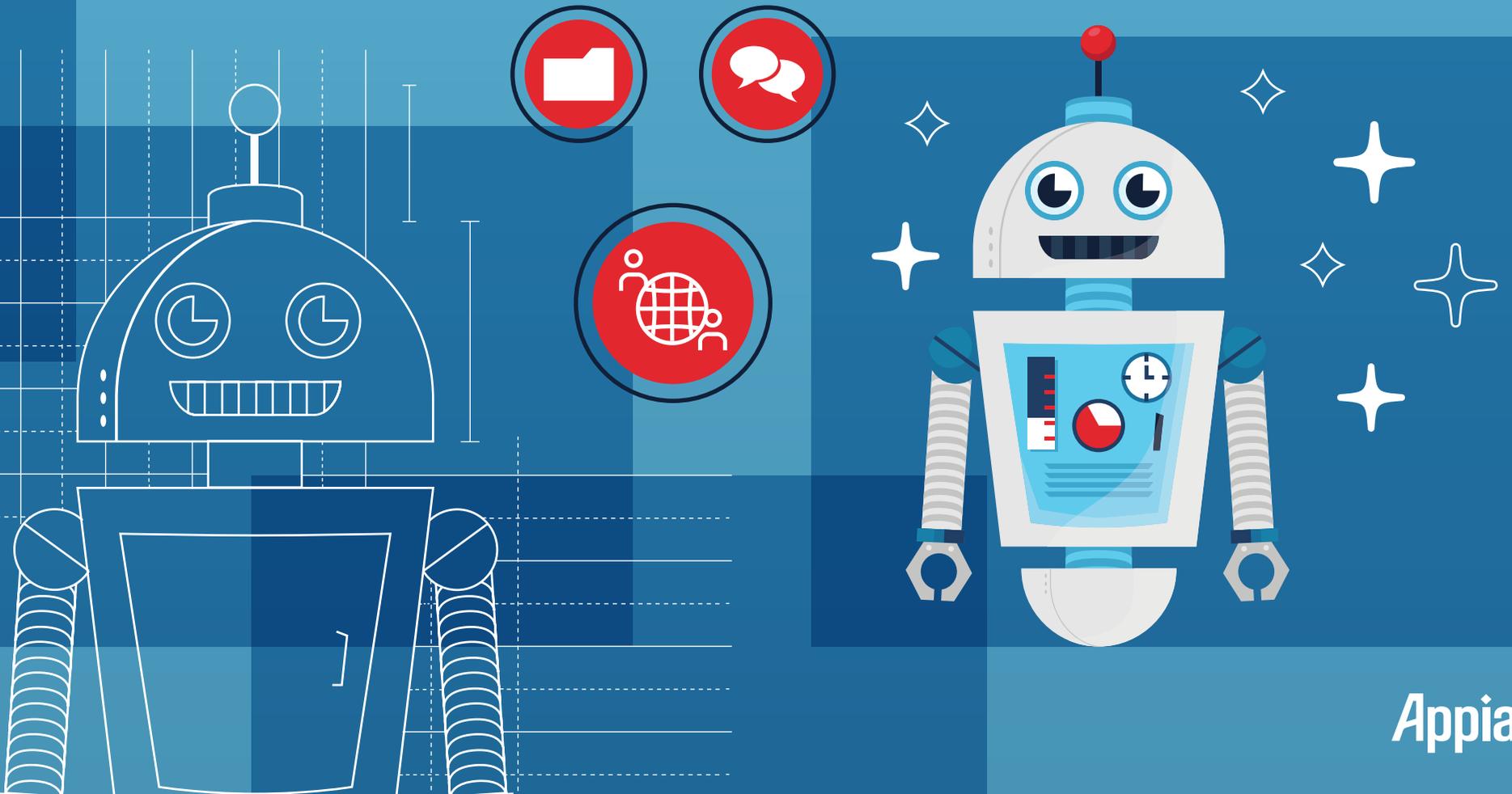


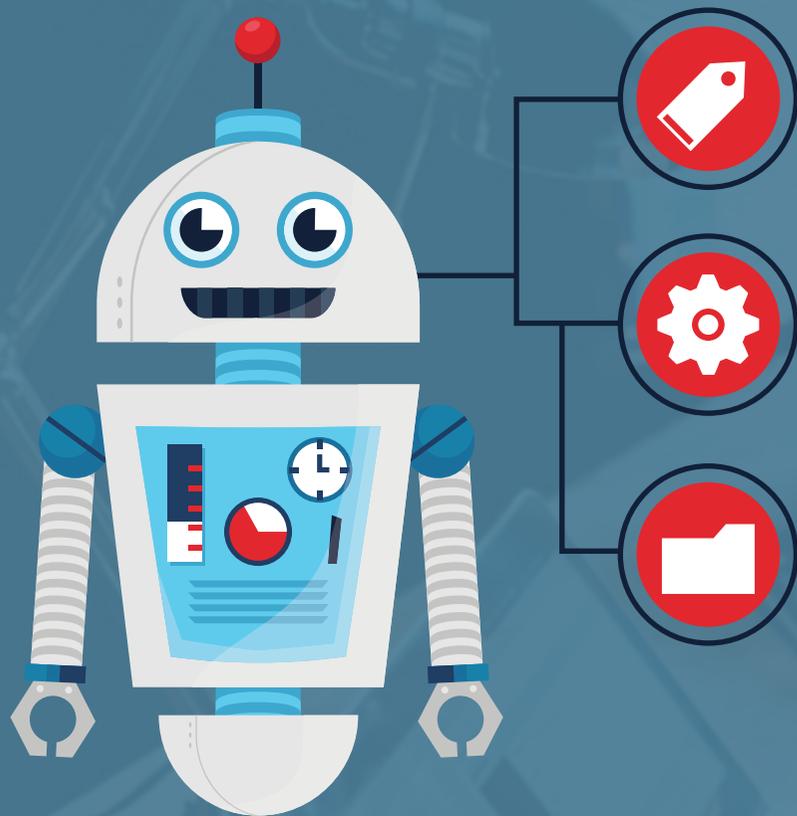
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1 Two Trillion Reasons to Automate

When you get down to the nitty-gritty, intelligent automation (IA) is about the convergence of a spectrum of technologies—artificial intelligence (AI), business process management (BPM), robotic process automation (RPA), and more—to automate more kinds of work than ever before.

Back in the day, IA was mostly limited to very complex back office processes, such as financial processing in banks and provisioning of service on enormous telecom networks.



But, with the rise of cloud-based technology, the economics have changed. The math is more compelling. IA is now much cheaper and easier to do.

So, companies are using it to do all kinds of administrative work across the entire organization. Many, for example, are leveraging IA to change their business model to provide better, faster customer service.

Others are adopting IA to gain more visibility into their sales channels, operating models, and day-to-day business operations.

And the opportunity cost of not embracing IA? An eye-popping two trillion dollars for US businesses alone¹.

In other words, if you're waiting for the hype cycle to plateau, or slow-walking plans to scale up that IA pilot in one of your business units, it's time to make dust or eat dust. All of which brings us to what may be the most important business challenge of our time:

How do you leverage intelligent automation to create business value?

2 An Extinction-Level Challenge

Ignore it or get it wrong and your career and your entire organization could be toast.

The truth is, most people don't believe that bots are coming for their jobs, at least during their lifetimes. And few say that automation has cost them a job or loss of income.

But don't be fooled. Businesses that don't embrace automation will eat the dust of those that do. Intelligent automation is taking labor arbitrage to a whole 'nother level.

Think about it. Why should you settle for the 10% cost save of traditional offshoring, when you could save 20 to 40% through automation—freeing up your employees to spend more time on optimizing the customer experience?

Savvy senior execs are embracing the challenge of leveraging IA to drive business transformation in 2019 and beyond.

So say the findings of Appian's Future of Work Survey² conducted by IDG, which reveals how senior-level IT executives at companies with over 1,000 employees in the US and UK are embracing IA.

- 54% say machine learning is the most commonly deployed form of IA
- 75% have either deployed or plan to deploy IA in the next year



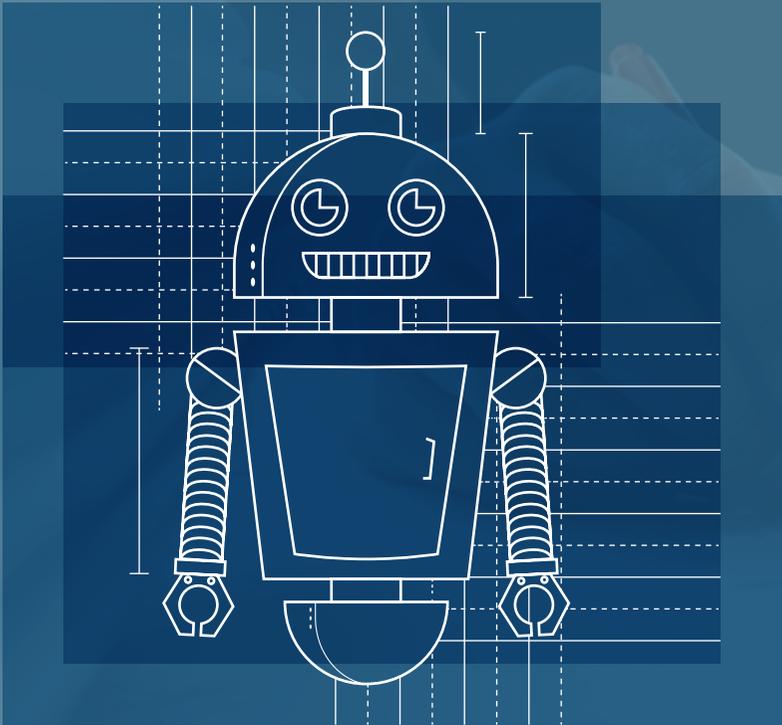
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Imagine Tech That Pays Back 10X its Cost

Something else to consider.

Digital labor (IA) can generate business value worth up to 10X the cost of the tech involved.³

In other words, you'll get far more productivity out of that IA pilot in your business unit, if you expand it to the rest of your organization.



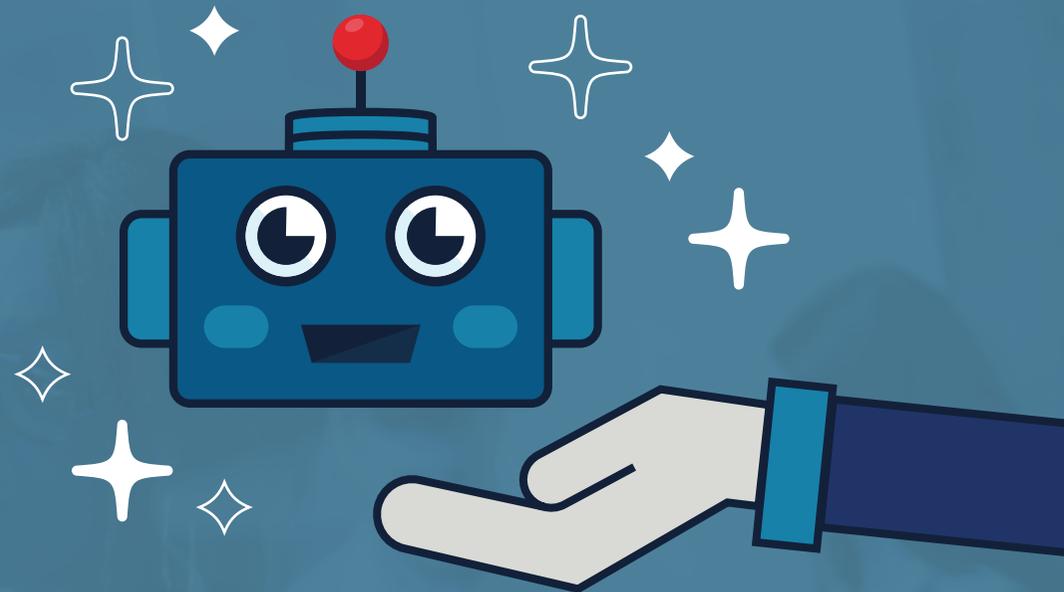
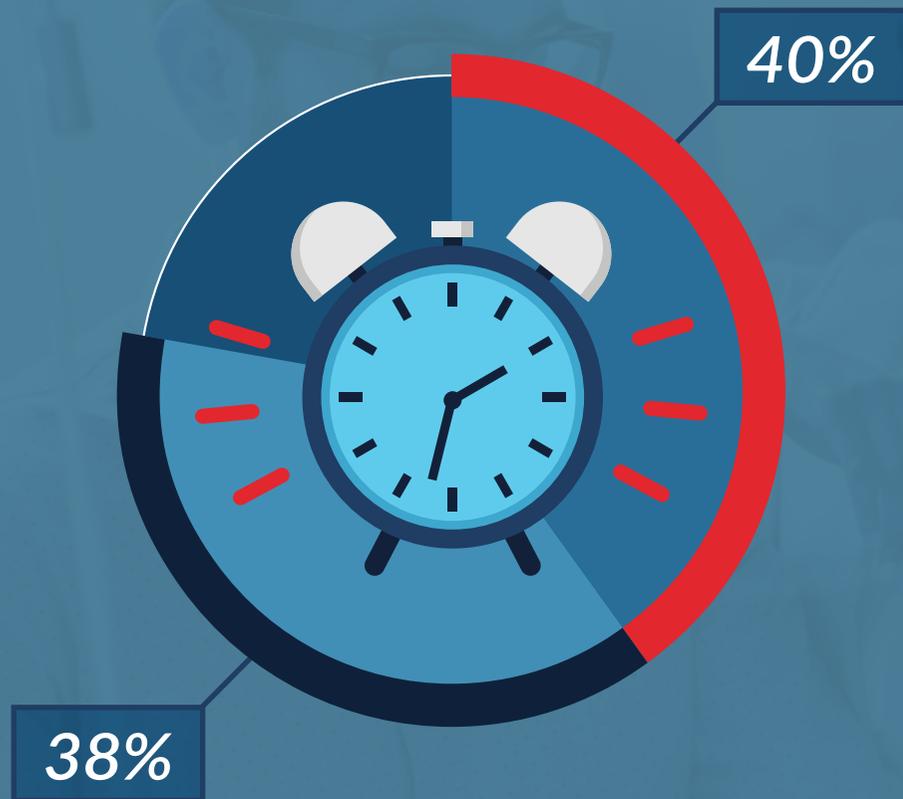
“...The most important challenge with adopting automation is figuring out where to start first,” says Jing Bing Zhang, IDC Research Director and automation expert.

“If you’re not sure where or how big to start with automation, do a prototype to validate a concept,” says Zhang. “Then, learn from that and move forward. Think big and start small—you just can’t afford to do nothing.”

4 Not Just Another Shiny Object

Of course, the skeptics in your organization may throw shade on IA as the latest “shiny object” or flavor-of-the-month trend.

But here’s the problem with that kind of techno pessimistic thinking.



The rapid evolution of robotics, artificial intelligence, and machine learning has put us on the cusp of exponential growth in intelligent automation—from automotive, oil & gas and utilities, to banking, financial services, retail, food, and more.

So, if you’re among the 40%⁴ of large organizations that are exploring IA in one or more of your business units, or the 38%⁵ waiting to automate your operations in the first place, this is probably a good time to double down on your process automation efforts.

⁴<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/four-fundamentals-of-workplace-automation>

⁵<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/four-fundamentals-of-workplace-automation>

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Automate Like Your Future is on the Line

How many meetings does it take to get that IA pilot approved for development? How many false starts are there? When the pilot is done in a business unit or two, how long does it sit there before it gets scaled up?

“Skeptics tend to be risk averse,” says Frank Casale, Founder and CEO of The Institute for Robotic Process Automation and Artificial Intelligence⁶. “I get that and I respect it. They also tend to be cynical—and in some cases for good reason. They’ve been sold voodoo for many years.”

“But your biggest risk is the one you’re not thinking of,” says Casale. “The one where you choose to sit back while your competitors are doing robotic process automation (RPA).”

“Or your board or shareholders are wondering why you haven’t made any significant changes,” says Casale, “or moved the needle while your competitors have.”



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Set-it-and-Forget-It Won't Cut it Anymore

In the past, cost was a sticking point in business process automation. Today, with the the explosion of cloud technology, not so much. Companies are able to explore the capabilities of IA more than ever before—and at significantly lower costs.

But just dabbling in IA isn't enough.



“You absolutely have to revisit your automation strategy and your old assumptions about automating work,” says industry analyst Neil Ward-Dutton, Co-Founder and Research Director at MWD Advisors⁷.

“As you're doing that, it's important to also get a handle on the different kinds of work (performed) in your organization,” says Ward-Dutton.



So, revisiting your automation strategy should be an ongoing process.

It's not like you can just set your automation strategy in 2019, and then forget about it for five years. The technology is changing too fast for that.

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5-Step Plan to Crush Your Intelligent Automation Goals

(Note: This practical check list is based on Ward-Dutton's must-read white paper, "An IT Strategy Brief for the New Era of Intelligent Automation.")⁸



Develop an IA strategy that sets out how and where you will look to apply automation capabilities to specific kinds of work



Categorize work according to how much expertise is required to perform it



Go to school on the specific types of automation needed for the work in your organization—exploratory, transactional, and programmatic



Put plans in place to turn your analysis into business outcomes



Create an automation technology ecosystem and review your assumptions regularly

What's Old is New Again

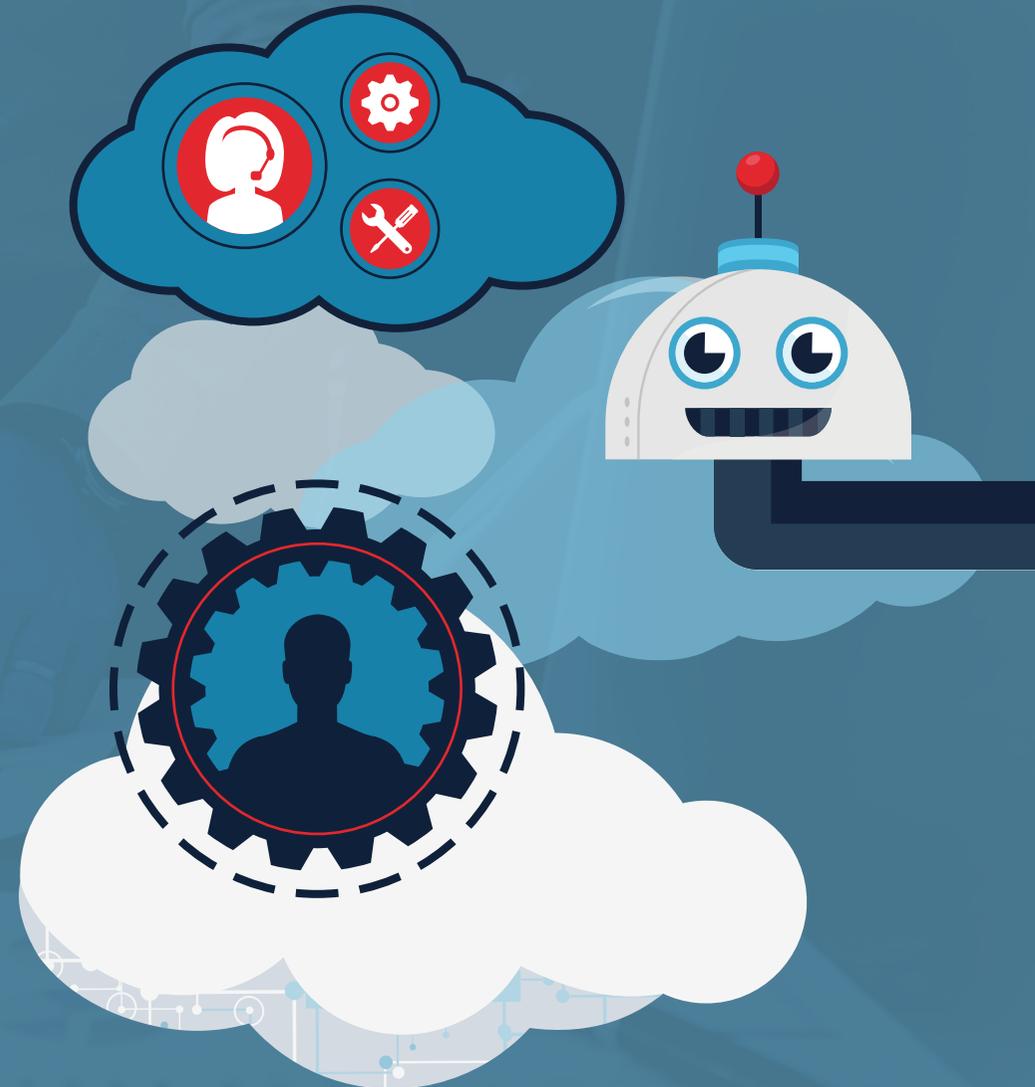
If you believe everything you read, business process management (BPM) is dead—or dying.

But the rumors of BPM's demise are premature. As they have been every time BPM's death has been pronounced over the past 10 to 15 years.

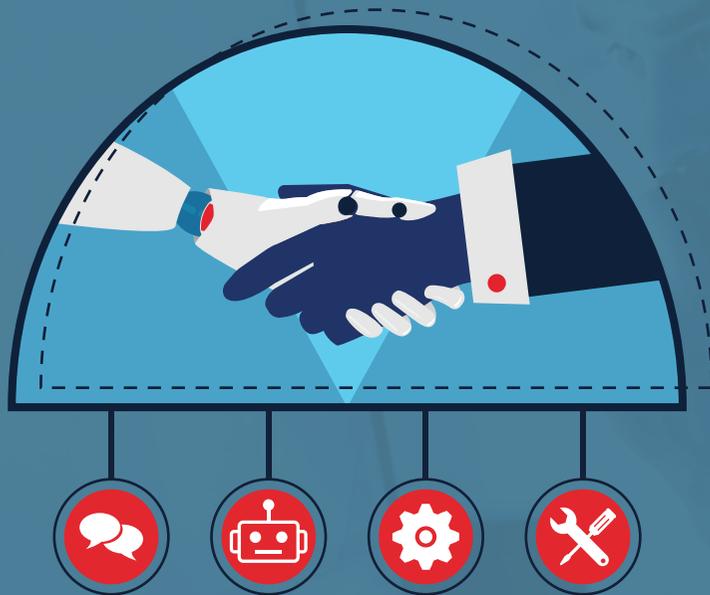
The fact is, modern BPM has evolved into an automation backbone that allows you to plug in a broad variety of smart tech capabilities and change them over time. In fact, you'll get far more productivity out of automation if you leverage BPM to orchestrate the technologies involved to solve business problems across your organization.

Today, we're seeing the convergence of powerful cloud-based technologies—like RPA, AI, machine learning, and more—with BPM to automate more of the workforce stack.

For a deeper dive into the importance of intelligent automation, check out the must-read white paper, “An IT Strategy Brief for the New Era of Intelligent Automation⁹.”



What it all comes down to is this: the most successful organizations do a better job of integrating smart technology with human labor to create long-term business value.



So says Malcolm Ross, Vice President of Product Marketing at Appian.

“Automation is an enabler of your business,” says Ross. “It’s not a one-stop action. It’s about always looking at your processes, and process models, optimizing and re-evaluating them, and adapting them to the changing needs of your business.”

“From a practical standpoint, intelligent automation is about the orchestration of technologies,” says Ross. “It’s about helping organizations to create business value by combining the power of BPM, machine learning, and RPA with the speedy integrations of low-code development.”

ABOUT APPIAN

Appian provides a software development platform that combines intelligent automation and enterprise low-code development to rapidly deliver powerful business applications. Many of the world's largest organizations use Appian applications to improve customer experience, achieve operational excellence, and simplify global risk and compliance.

*For more information, visit
appian.com/intelligent-automation*

