Four essential steps
for selecting use cases for
Cognitive Robotic Process Automation

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This knowledge bite is part of a series about Cognitive Robotic Process Automation (CRPA) best practices.

Step 1: Identify potential use cases

Cognitive RPA is considered the next frontier in Business Process Optimization, as it allows companies to automate processes related to semi- or unstructured data and has the capability to automate judgement based using machine learning capabilities. When exploring possible use cases businesses should look for processes that rank high on the following five points:

1. High-volumes
2. Repetition
3. Semi- or unstructured data points
4. Data quality and availability
5. Judgement and context-based processes

With CRPA businesses can cover data points previously out of reach from regular RPA, such as employer statements, valuation reports and financial reports. Therefore, it is a good starting point to extend currently robotized processes also to cover those elements that deal with unstructured data.

Step 2: Prioritize use cases according to net business value

When ranking the identified use cases companies should look at both direct and indirect benefits and costs. The direct benefits will include cost savings of labor, less (manual) errors, lower turn-around time and standardization. Indirect benefits could be greater flexibility, allowing 24/7 processing and opening up more innovative capacity for employees. Consider the indirect costs, where setting-up and monitoring this “intelligent workforce” requires a different approach and skillset of process management. This extended business case offers the fairest net business value upon which to base prioritization.

Step 3: Assess use-cases on required technology & ease of implementation

Based on the use case, firms should assess whether an off-the-shelf CRPA application would suffice or a tailored cognitive application is required. Most (C)RPA software vendors offer quite extensive cognitive abilities in their packages that might fit the use case, but it is advisable to do a detailed vendor assessment to benchmark functionality and delivery capabilities against the intended problem statement. In other cases, firms should consider customized CRPA applications or a self-built cognitive application that can be embedded in existing software packages or the current IT Infrastructure. In all cases the ease of implementation and the scalability to other use cases should be weighted carefully.

Step 4: Select top use cases for proof of concept development

Implementation of cognitive RPA applications might present more challenges than implementation of regular RPA, as there are higher requirements for data availability and data quality. Starting with small scale proof of concepts is advised, especially when there are uncertainties on these data issues. In short, during single or two week iterations you can assess whether the application and underlying models can deliver the value required for full-scale development and implementation. This iterative and agile approach to proof-of-concept development will provide a cost-effective way of innovation, especially for companies in the explorative phase of CRPA implementation.

For more information about how Cognitive RPA can add value for your organization feel free to contact Synechron.

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