Robotic Process Automation – Product Categories

RPA (Robotic Process Automation) is a broad technology category that describes applications that use an application's user interface (UI) to automate a process rather than a traditional API.

RPA can be applicable to a wide number of use cases –

- *from short, tactical automations aimed at helping users to navigate systems on the desktop*
- *to providing a "virtual API" to assist IT projects where interfaces don't exist*
- *to enterprise strength, scalable, server-based capabilities that are designed to deliver strategic benefit to an organisation*

The table below illustrates some of the key features to consider when choosing the type of platform required, and highlights some of the differentiators of each approach based on requirements.

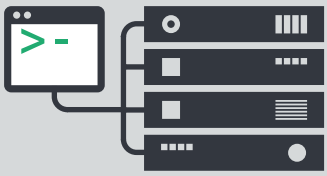
RPA approaches can be categorized into three distinct groupings:

Desktop Recorded Automation

Automated Tasks are coded or recorded individually and deployed to users' desktops. Tasks are straightforward and are triggered manually or by simple local events such as receipt of an email. Sometimes the users' tasks are deployed to a separate, optionally virtual, desktop to prevent the user being disrupted while their task is being executed. Some scripting tools provide a central folder of tasks and may allow them to be distributed to desktops when they change.

Software Development Kits (SDK)

An "automation enabler" that is coded by skilled IT developers as part of a project to deliver against pre-defined automation requirements. Because the technology is supplied as a toolkit, IT departments can use it to meet bespoke requirements, and need to consider not simply the automation, but the deployment methodology, change management, security and governance requirements as part of the project deliverable.



Virtual Workforce

An in-house capability that is hosted on virtual machines and governed by IT but devolved to the operation for configuration, control and monitoring. The platform includes aspects such as audit, configuration control, release management and security aspects, and allows an operationally led center of excellence to prioritize and deploy their own automation initiatives on secure, scalable infrastructure that is provided by technology resource.

RPA Categories – Requirements Summary

	RPA Category		
	Recorded Automation	**Software Development Kits**	**Virtual Workforce**
Design Architecture	Individually deployed desktop scripts	Automation Development Toolkit	Grid-based Virtualized Enterprise Robots
Operating Mode	User Initiated	User Initiated	Virtualized Automated Execution
Deployment Model	Desktop Installation	Desktop or Virtualized	Private/Public Cloud Based Deployment
Ease of Management	Manual "push" to Desktops	Binary File Distribution	Centralized Rollout and Control
Control	Distribution Server, Unconnected Resources	Application Server, Scheduled Resources	Centralized Repository for Configuration, Control and Audit
Process Architecture	Partial, agent assisted process	None – Development Required	End-to-End Straight Through Processing
Risk Management	User monitored	None – Development Required	Transactional Integrity
Statefulness	Stateless Processing	None – Development Required	Stateful Contextual Processing
Security Model	Shares user credentials	None – Development Required	Enterprise Security Compliance
Resilience	User monitored	None – Development Required	Architected for continuous unattended execution
Security Hardening	Desktop Visible	None – Development Required	Penetration Test Certified
Compliance	Shares user compliance model	None – Development Required	Enterprise Compliance (Encryption, Audit, Security)
Governance	None – Development Required	None – Development Required	Rules, roles and responsibilities enforced after setup
Redundancy Model	No redundancy model	None – Development Required	DR and Failover Architecture
Development Approach	Individually coded scripts	Coded Automations	Object Oriented Reusable Business Rules & Application Component Architecture
Design Methodology	Determined by developers	Determined by IT practices	Best practise operating model supplied as part of engagement
Testing Methodology	Live data sampling	Synchronized Test Environments	In-vivo Process Assurance Methodology (IPAM)
Runtime Architecture	User initiated	Message Broker	Robotic Object Broker Architecture (ROBA)
Platform	Single threaded user based execution	None – Development Required	Robotic Object Broker Architecture (ROBA)
Logical Access Management	Local roles and permissions	None	Centralized Access Management
Alerting and Event Management	None	None – Development Required	Enterprise SIEM Integration
Business Usability	Script Generation	Coded	Robotic Training

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