**What makes a process a good candidate for automation**

There are a number of factors you can take into account when considering if a process is fit for automation. Normally the analysis and prioritization are performed by an RPA Business Analyst, but it's useful for developers to evaluate the prioritization, while on smaller implementations, you may not have a Business Analyst in the team.

There are two sets of criteria you can use to determine the automation potential: process fitness and automation complexity.

**Process Fitness**

Here are the criteria you can evaluate how fit a process is for automation:

**Rule-based**

The decisions made (including data interpretation) in the process can be captured in a pre-defined logic. The exception rate is either low or can be included as well in the business logic.

**Automatable and/or repetitive process**

We can differentiate 4 types of processes:

* Manual & non-repetitive: the process steps are performed by humans and can be different every time the process is executed
* Manual & repetitive: the steps in the process are performed by the user, and at least some of them are the same every time
* Semi-automated & repetitive: some of the repetitive steps have already been automated (using macros, Outlook rules, and so on)
* Automated: there are processes that have been already automated using other technologies than RPA

Processes that need to stay manual or are non-repetitive, due to the high exception rate or factors that cannot be integrated in a business logic, aren't good candidates for automation.

**Standard input**

The input in the process should either be electronic and easily readable or readable using a technology that can be associated with RPA (such as OCR). A good example is an invoice having the fields pre-defined.

**Stable**

Processes that have been the same for a certain period of time and no changes are expected within the next months are good candidates for automation, provided they meet the other criteria as well.

**Automation Complexity**

This set of criteria determines how hard it is to automate a process:

**Number of Screens**

RPA works by programming the robot to perform tasks at screen level (when the screen changes, the logic has to be taught). The higher the number of screens, the more elements have to be captured and configured prior to the process automation.

**Types of Applications**

Some applications are more easily automated (such as the Office suite or browsers), others heavily increase the automation effort (Mainframe, for example). And the more different the applications are, the number of screens will increase, as well (see previous point).

**Business Logic Scenarios**

An automation's complexity increases with the number of decision points in the business logic. Basically, each one could multiply by two the number of scenarios.

**Types and Number of Inputs**

As previously stated, standard input is desirable. Yet there are cases in which one standard input (such as an invoice) has to be configured for each supplier that will be affected by the automation. Moreover, non-standard input can be of different complexity grades, with free text being the most complex.

**Assessing automation potential**

By using these factors in our automation potential assessment, we can sort processes into 4 categories:

**NO RPA**

Processes where change is frequent, the system environment is volatile, and multiple manual (even non-digital) actions are required

**SEMI-AUTOMATION**

Processes that can be broken down into steps that can be clearly automated, and steps that need to stay manual (such as validations or usage of physical security tokens)

**HIGH-COST RPA**

Processes that are rather digital and can be automated, but use some technologies that are complex (such as OCR) or require advanced programming skills

**ZERO-TOUCH AUTOMATION**

Processes that are digital and involve a highly static system and process environment, so that they can be easily broken into instructions and simple triggers can be defined