This wiki article provides details on what Robot Framework is at a high level, covering some of the FAQs asked by people just getting started with test automation at IDBS. It does not cover the test orchestration side of the system which controls the execution of test suites in a controlled environment, this can be found within the [system overview](http://sharepoint/products/testing/Automation/Test%20Automation%20User%20Guide/System%20overview.aspx) article.

**What is Robot Framework?**

Robot Framework is a keyword driven framework used by IDBS to drive all of the automated tests. It provides IDBS with the ability to have a single, consistent approach to automation across all applications being tested, making the writing of automation easier for the end user.

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Keyword driven means that the test cases are scripted through the use of higher level functions or keywords. These keywords provide the building blocks for wiriting tests and provide 3 major benefits:

1. Human readable scripts - the keywords are named in such a way that the actions are clear to someone reading the script, instead of reading the underlying implementation in code.
2. Removes complexity from the test scripts - test sripts do not go down to the level of actually interfacing with the application being tested, this is abstracted away into the keyword implementation
3. Easier maintenance of test scripts - maintenance is a major overhead in automated testing. The use of keywords promotes a "change once, fix everywhere" approach, where changing a keyword implementation to fix a broken action (due to a change in the application under test) fixes all test cases that use that action via the keyword.

**What do you mean by a framework?**

Robot Framework is a framework in that it does not provide functionality to interact with the application under test directly. It provides a way of hooking other tools into itself to allow for this testing in a consistent manner. When using the framework the user therefore has to specify the tools to be used in the test scripts (done via the import of Libraries).

**How is IDBS using Robot Framework?**

Robot Framework has been integrated into a number of product lines, primarily to provide smoke test capabilities. XE and AMart have limited framework integration to handle smoke testing of these product lines. E-WorkBook has much heavier integration as follows:

* E-WorkBook 9.1.x
  + Basic integration to run thick client smoke tests only
* E-WorkBook 9.2.x
  + Thick client smoke tests and business scenarios on 32-bit and 64-bit
  + Web client tests covering all areas of web client functionality (9.1 - 9.2) to acceptance test level (Windows XP and Mac OSX)
  + Web service tests covering REST web services (Catalog, Security Administration, Workflow)
* E-WorkBook 9.3.x
  + Thick client smoke tests and business scenarios on 32-bit and 64-bit
  + Web client tests covering all areas of web client functionality (9.1 - 9.3) to acceptance test level (Windows XP/7 and Mac OSX)
  + Web service tests covering REST web services (Catalog, Security Administration, Workflow)
  + Asset Hub web service testing

**What tools can be used within the framework?**

Currently IDBS have integrated the following tools into the framework:

* QTP - used for testing Java and .Net based applications
* Selenium - used for testing web based applications
* HTTPLibrary - used for testing web services

Further tools are being evaluated for future inclusion into the framework.

**Where is all the test data stored?**

The test automation test assets (tests, libraries, keyword resource files etc) are all stored in subversion in the Testing-QA subversion repository. By default all testers have access to read this repository. If you want to commit changes to the Testing-QA repository, you will need to request access from IT.

**How does Robot Framework integrate with Quality Center?**

Currently the IDBS implementation of Robot Framework does not include automatic uploading of results or any other type of integration with Quality Center. The test suites are generally written as smoke tests which are run on the back of builds and the results stored in SharePoint. If results are required to be placed in Quality Center then stub tests can be created to do this.

**What do I need to do to get started?**

Install the basic components required by following the [installation guide](http://sharepoint/products/testing/Automation/Test%20Automation%20User%20Guide/Installing%20the%20basic%20components%20for%20test%20scripting.aspx). Then follow the getting started guides shown on the front page of the automation user guide.

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