Blue Prism Labs

Lab 3: Processes

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Introduction

As mentioned in earlier Labs, Objects are the reusable interactions with systems of record. They form the building blocks of automations.

A Blue Prism Process is created as a diagram that looks much like a common business flow diagram. Processes are created in an area of Blue Prism named Process Studio. The processes utilize the objects, stringing them together with business rules to accomplish complex tasks.

Real-world processes contain large amounts of flow structures, stages, and data items and often a significant amount of space is required to arrange them. When you come to develop "real-life" Processes, you will find diagrams can become large and unwieldy, and separating the logic out on to more pages will help to keep your diagrams tidy and readable. Like other business flow diagrams, a Blue Prism Process can be spread over a series of pages arranged in a hierarchy such as shown below.
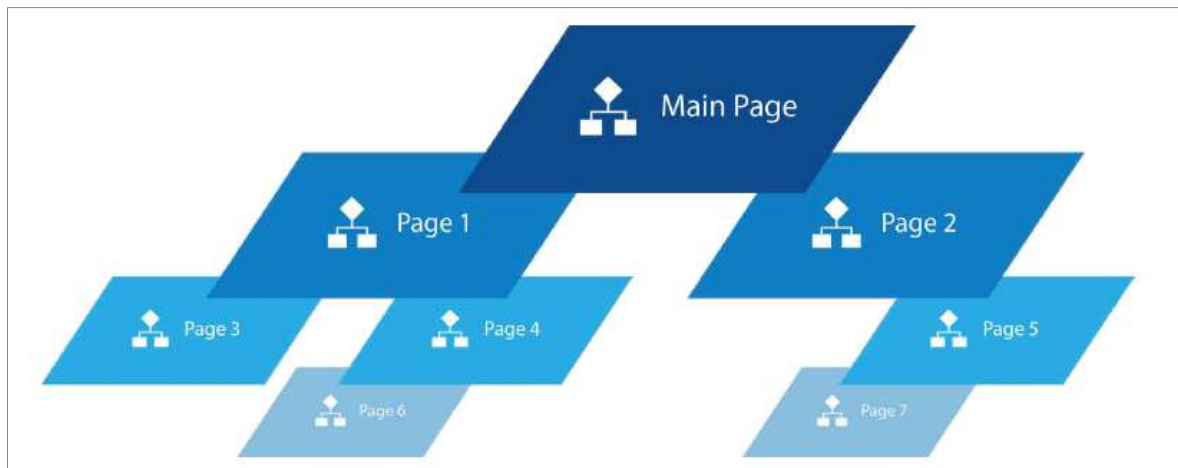
In this lab, we will build our first Process focusing only on the Main Page. All of this will be done with very similar drag and drop actions that we have already covered.

Lab 3: Processes

1) Before we can build a process to use the Blueprism.com Object we just made in Lab 2, there is one final thing we must add to the "Search" action. We need to set an input parameter to pass the value of the term we want to search for to make the object flexible to search for any term. Open the Object called "Lab 3 Object Start - BP". Go to the page called "search" and double click the "Start" stage. Towards the bottom right, click the "Add" button to add an input to the action. Under where it says "Name" under the "Inputs" tab, type "Search for". Under where it says, "Description" type "What to search for". Finally, on the right-hand side, expand "Text" to reveal "Search For". Click on "Search For" and drag it to the blank spot under where it says, "Store In".

2) Save and close the object. Add a suitable description of the changes you've made when asked. These descriptions are very helpful to look through previous versions, all of which are available from the Interactive Client. They can even be viewed side-by-side with any changes highlighted!

3)   Click the Studio tab in the Interactive Client.

The Studio tab is where you create and edit both Processes, which contain business logic, and Objects, which interact with applications.

4)   Right click on "Processes" and click "Create Process"

Enter the name "Lab 3 Process Start - BP" and hit the "Next" button at the bottom right.

Enter the description "Searches Blueprism.com" and hit the "Finish" button in the bottom right.
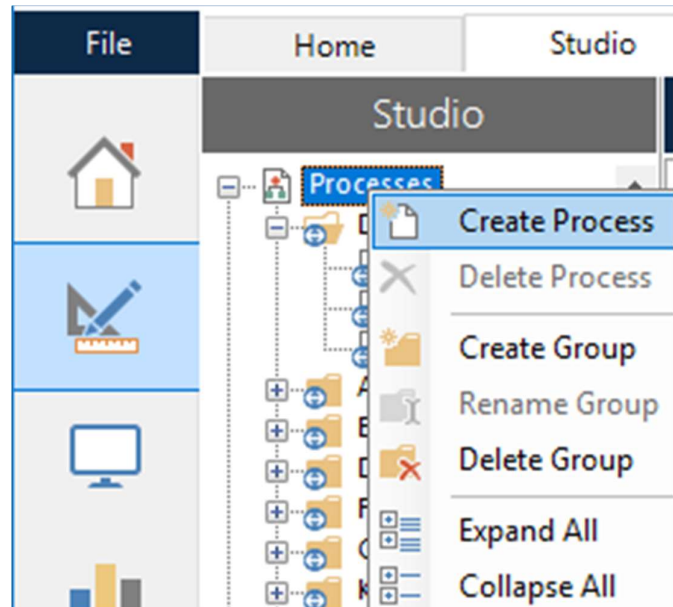
5)   The Process you just created should be highlighted. Double click on it to open it in Process Studio. This is where you can create and edit the Process.

6)   Add two actions between "Start" and "End" and link them all together.

7)   Double click on the first action to open its properties. Change the name to "Launch". Where it says "Business Object", locate the object "Lab 3 Object End - BP" and select it. Where it says action, you will see the published pages from the object. Select "Launch" and press "OK". Separating the application logic (modeled in Objects) from the business logic (modeled in Processes) provides significant resilience. While creating an Object for the first time may take a bit of time, many Processes can be made that use the same Object, saving significant time in the long run. Additionally, if the application were to change in some way, adjusting the single Object would resolve the issue for every automated Process that utilizes that Object.
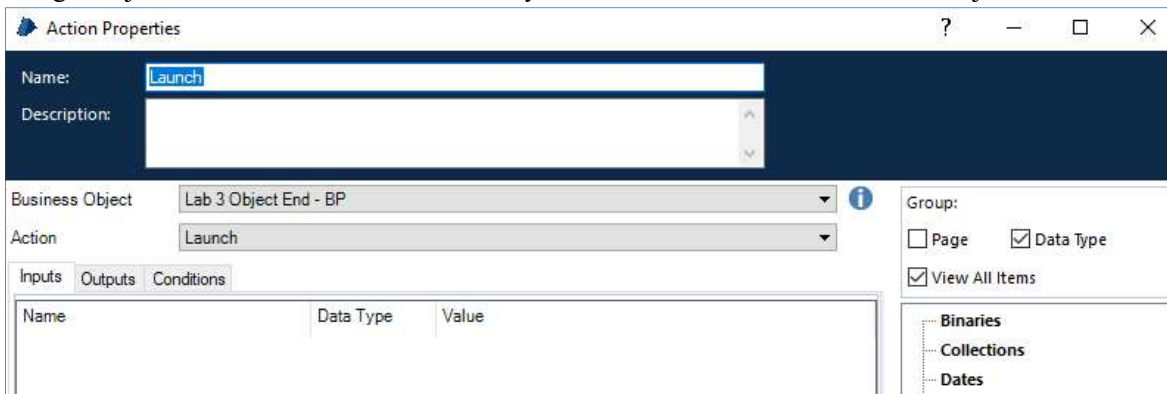
8) Add a "Data Item". Open its properties and change the name to "Search For". Select "Text" as the Data type and enter an initial value of "Coca Cola".

9)   Double click on the second action to open its properties. Change the name to "Search For". Where it says "Business Object", locate the object called "Lab 3 Object End - BP" and select it again. Where it says action, select "Search". Notice that the input you added earlier in this lab shows up here. On the right-hand side, expand "Text" to reveal "Search for". Click on the "Search For" Data Item and drag it to the blank spot under where it says "Value". The Data Item you just created will be passed to the Search action you created earlier!

10) Your process should now look like this:
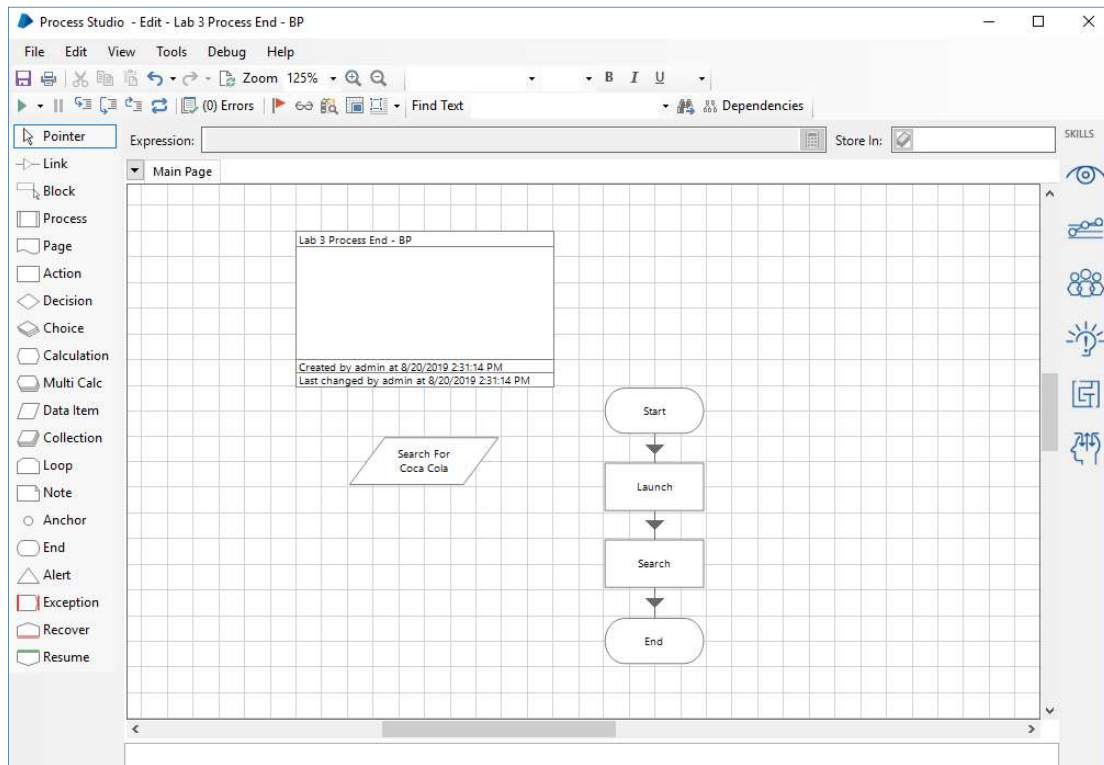
Note: If you double click the big box titled "Lab 3 Process Start - BP", you can check a box to "Publish" the process to the control room. This then allows you to run the process directly from the control room, outside of debug mode. Once published, a process can be started by scheduling it, by a web service call, or by simply dragging it to an available digital worker and clicking "Start". Later labs will cover this in more detail.

11) Click the "Reset" button in the upper left:

12) Click the "Go" button in the upper left:

13) Watch your process run! When finished, feel free to close the browser and the process.

Note: You'll notice that your Process is made up of building blocks from the Object. This allows a Process to contain only business logic, allowing for greater flexibility and easy reuse of Object actions. Processes can also be stepped though so that you can observe each step. Or it can even be modified while it is running. This makes it easy to create, fix, and modify your processes to do more!