**Automation v/s RPA**

Automation existed even before RPA came into the picture. Though multiple overlaps exist between these two, unlike RPA, Automation is the invention of a new technology to solve real-life problems with the need for human intervention.

Refer to the table below to look into the differences between Automation and RPA.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Parameter** | **Automation** | **RPA** |
| **What does it Reduce?** | Reduces execution time | Reduces the number of people working on something. |
| **What does it automate?** | Automates repetitive test cases i.e a product | Automates the repetitive business process i.e product as well as business |
| **Programming Knowledge** | Programming knowledge required to create test scripts | Programming knowledge is mostly not needed as it is wizard-driven |
| **Software Environment** | Limited software environment | A wide range of software environments |
| **Application** | Used for QA, Production, Performance, UAT environments | Usually used in production environments |

## ****Lifecycle of RPA****

A typical life cycle of RPA has 4 phases. Analysis, Bot Development, Testing, and Support & Maintenance.

* **Analysis** – Business teams & RPA Architects work together to analyze a business process for RPA development.
* **Bot Development** – Developer teams start working on developing the automated workflows for the requirements in a distinct development environment.
* **Testing** – Run testing cycles such as SDLC  to analyze the quality and correct defects.
* **Support & Maintenance** -After the development & testing phases, a bot enters the maintenance phases in which it provides continuous support and helps in the immediate defect resolution.

## ****RPA Tools****

There are numerous tools available in the market, each providing various functionalities according to your need. But, the top 3 tools in today’s market are the trio( **UiPath**, **Blue Prism**, and **Automation Anywhere**).

Refer to the table below for the comparison between these 3 tools.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Features** | **UiPath** | **Blue Prism** | **Automation Anywhere** |
| **Is trial version available?** | Community edition/ Free edition  is available | No trial version available | Trial version is available for 30 days |
| **Is it user-friendly?** | Provides user-friendly visual designer | Provides a user-friendly visual designer, easier than Automation Anywhere | Developers friendly but requires high programming skills. |
| **Popularity** | Most Popular tool | More popular than Automation Anywhere | Least popular tool in the trio |

## ****Advantages of RPA****

The listed below are a few benefits of RPA.

* Multiple processes can be automated at once.
* Cost cutting technology and enhances resource optimization.
* Doesn’t require prior programming knowledge.
* Supports and allows regular compliance process, with error-free auditing.
* Easy to model, scale, and deploy the automation process.
* Makes it easy to track defects.
* Continous builds & release management.
* No training period is required as it works without human intervention

It’s a known fact that during the last few years, RPA has emerged as one of the most disruptive technology. Although there is a lot of buzz surrounding RPA, there are many misconceptions still abound with RPA.

## ****Industries using RPA****

RPA is used in various kinds of industries to help humans automate their work, and simultaneously speed up the work in this scaling industry. Refer to the image below for examples of the few applications of RPA.

