Robotic Process Automation with Desktop Flows

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Overview

Introduction to Robotic Process Automation

Introduction to Desktop flows

Desktop flows in action!

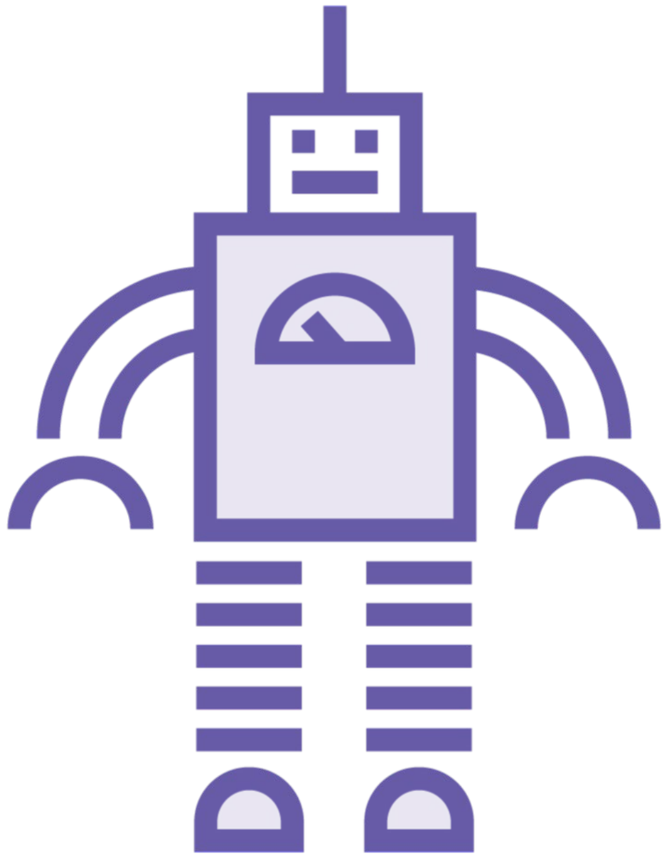
Introduction to Robotic Process Automation

Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

Robotic Process Automation is the technology that allows anyone today to configure computer software, or a “robot” to emulate and integrate the actions of a human interacting within digital systems to execute a business process

https://www.uipath.com/rpa/robotic-process-automation

Robotic Process Automation



Traditional workflow automation tools interact with APIs

- **Connectors in Power Automate terms**

What about legacy applications with no APIs?

RPA systems “watch” a user’s mouse clicks / keyboard in a user interface

- **And replicate it over and over**

Introduction to Desktop Flows

Desktop Flows in Power Automate

Robotic Process Automation is a newer offering inside the Power Platform

- General availability in April 2020
- Initially released as “UI flows”

Enables Power Automate to automate all your business processes

- Whether they are modern or legacy

Premium licensing required

Connectors (Cloud Flows) or Desktop Flows?

Connectors (Cloud flows)

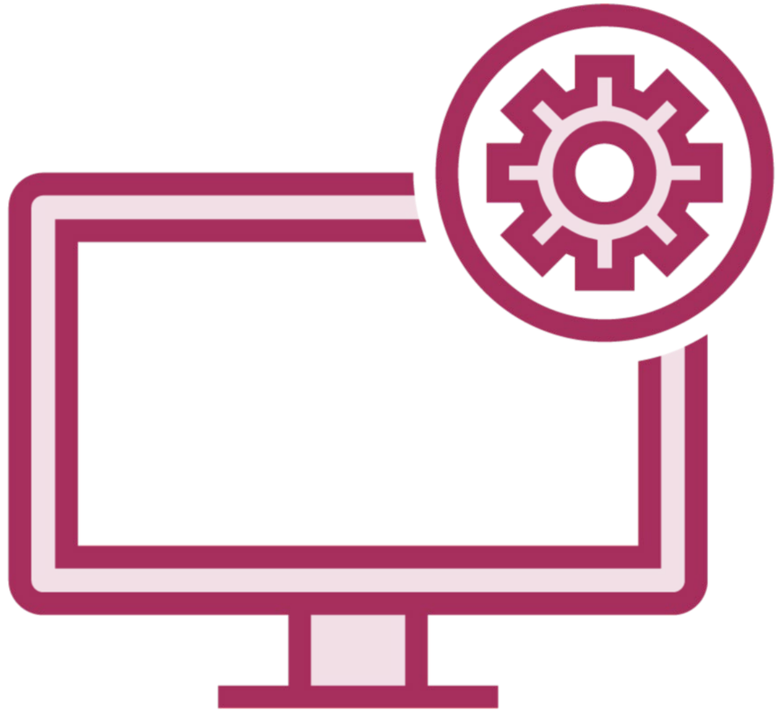
Modern apps with APIs

Desktop flows

Legacy apps (no APIs)

Two Options for Running Desktop Flows

- **Attended**
  - **Active Windows user session**
- **Unattended**
  - **High volume tasks**
  - **Fully automated without any user needed**
  - **The Desktop flow will log on a remote computer**
    - **Do its job**
    - **Log off**
  - **Screen is locked – no one can see the flow while it runs**



Desktop Flows Licensing (As of August 2022)

Attended Desktop Flows

Per user plan with attended RPA

40$ per user/ Month

Unattended RPA add-on

Per bot plan

$150 per bot/month

https://powerautomate.microsoft.com/en-us/pricing/

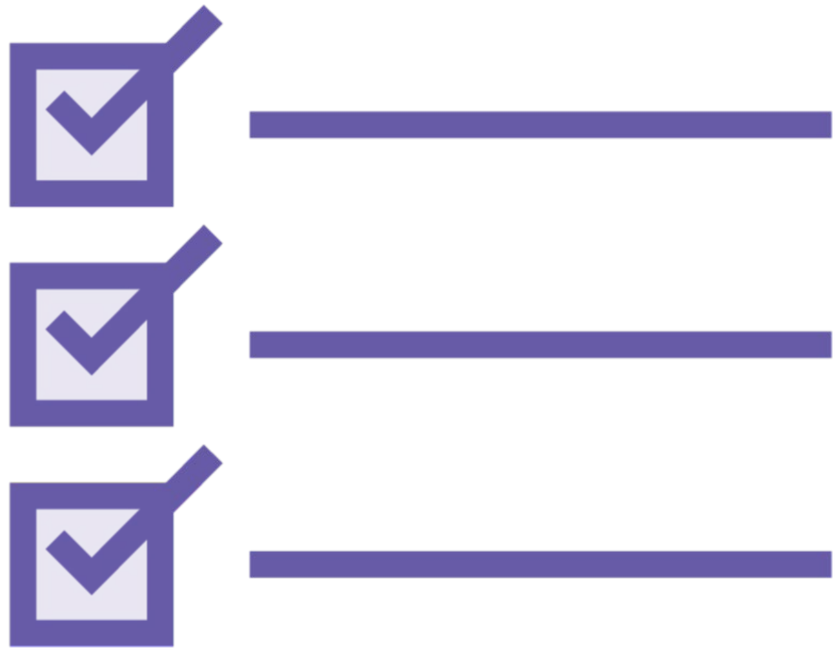
Desktop Flows in Action!

Getting Ready to Create Desktop Flows

Make sure you have the licensing required for Desktop flows

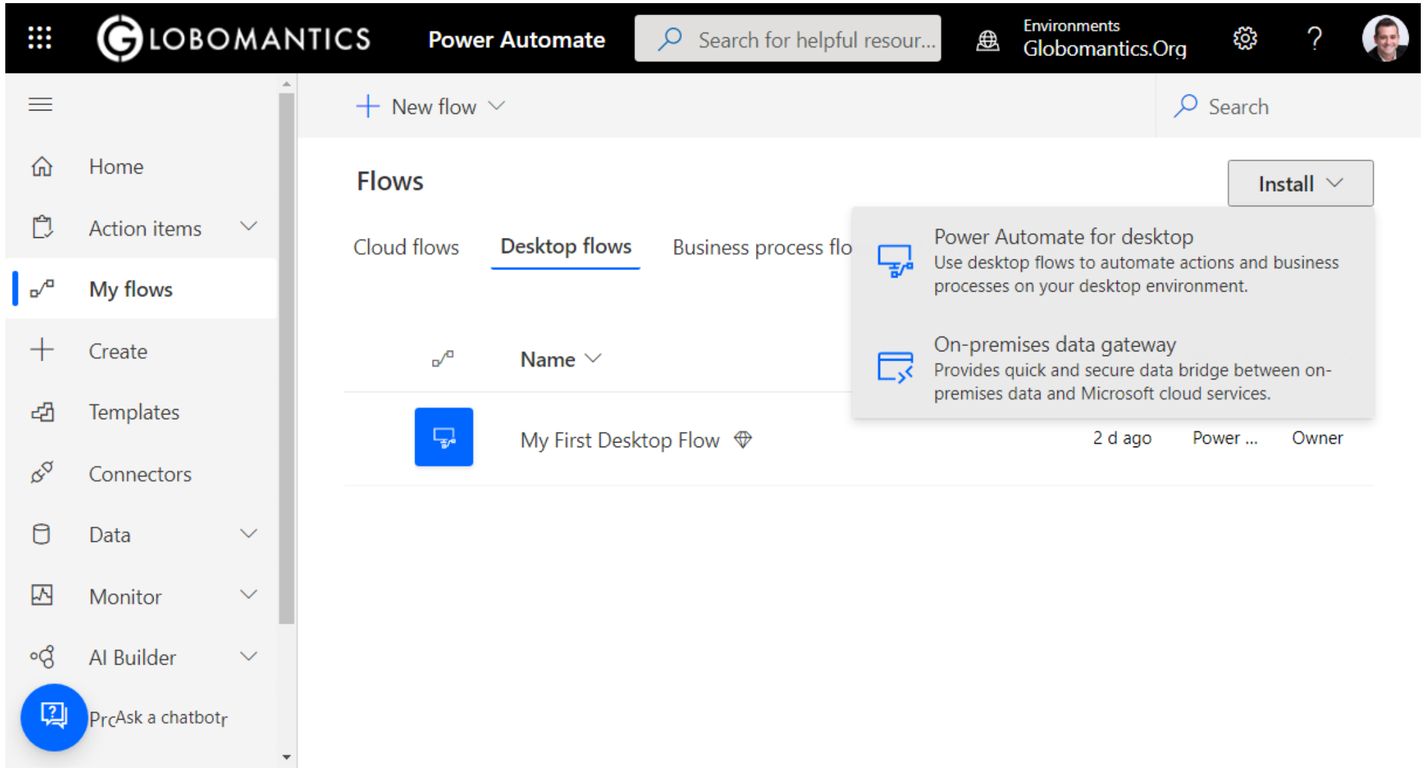
You will need to install Power Automate for Desktop

- **Tool used to create Desktop flows**

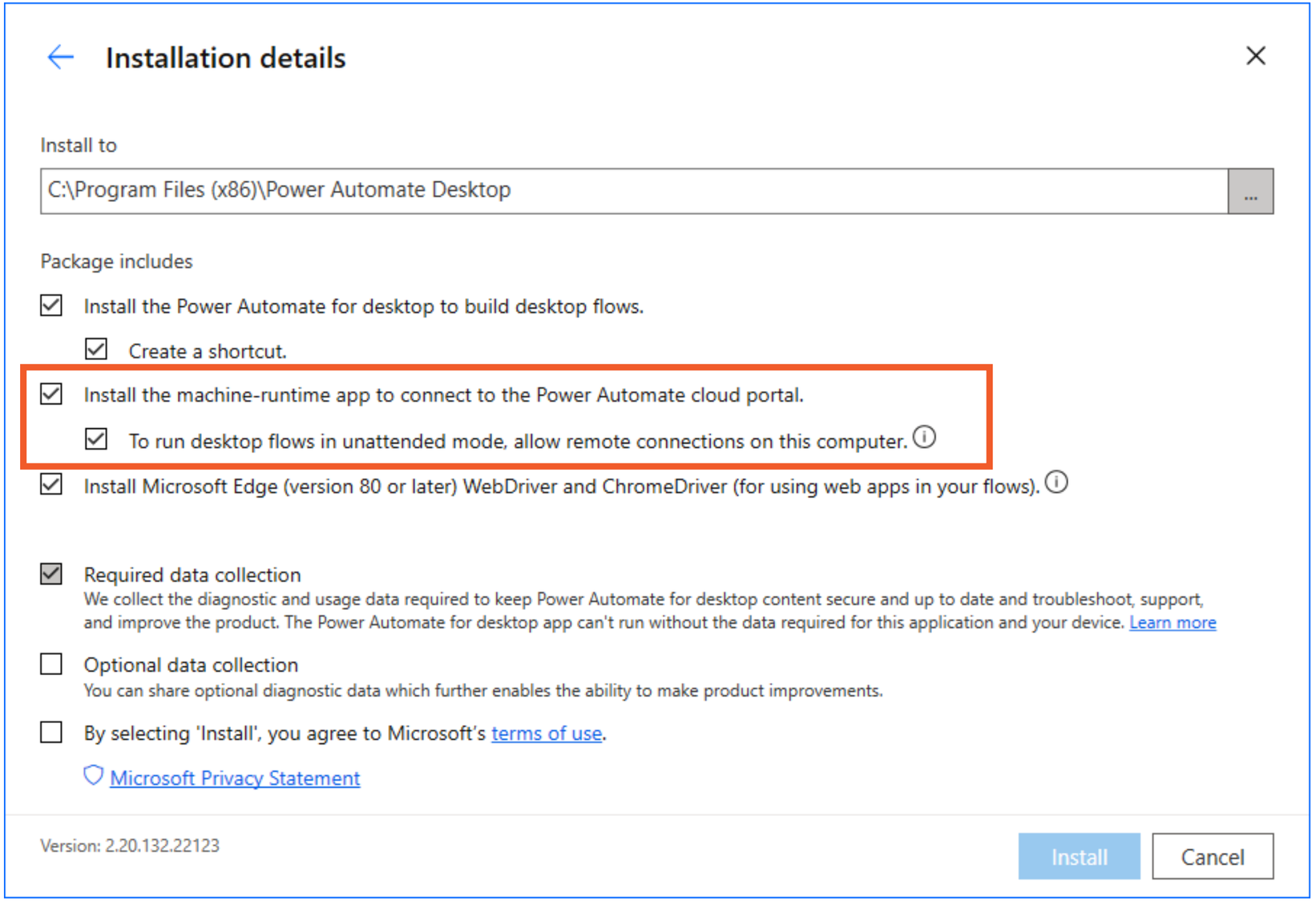


Download it from the Desktop flows tab

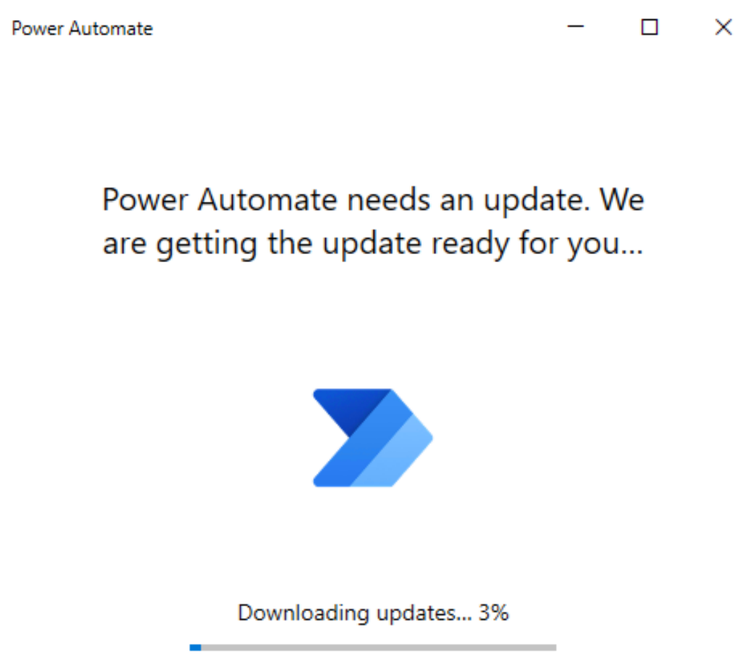
Install button at the top right



Machine Runtime App



Windows 11 Users



Power Automate Desktop is pre-installed on Windows 11 devices

- **It might need an update first time you open it!**

The machine-runtime app is not pre-installed

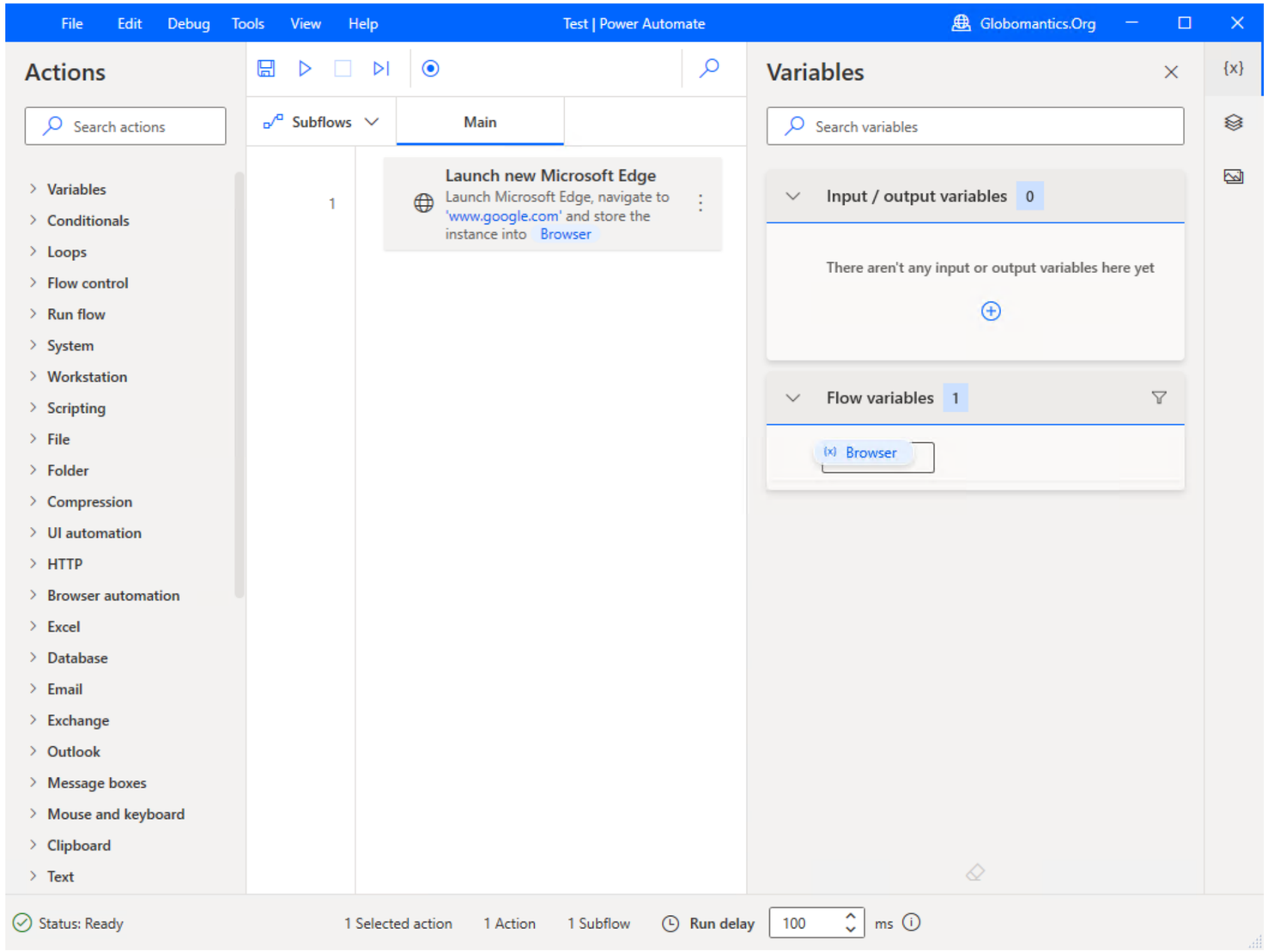
- **Install it from settings**

Two ways to create your flow

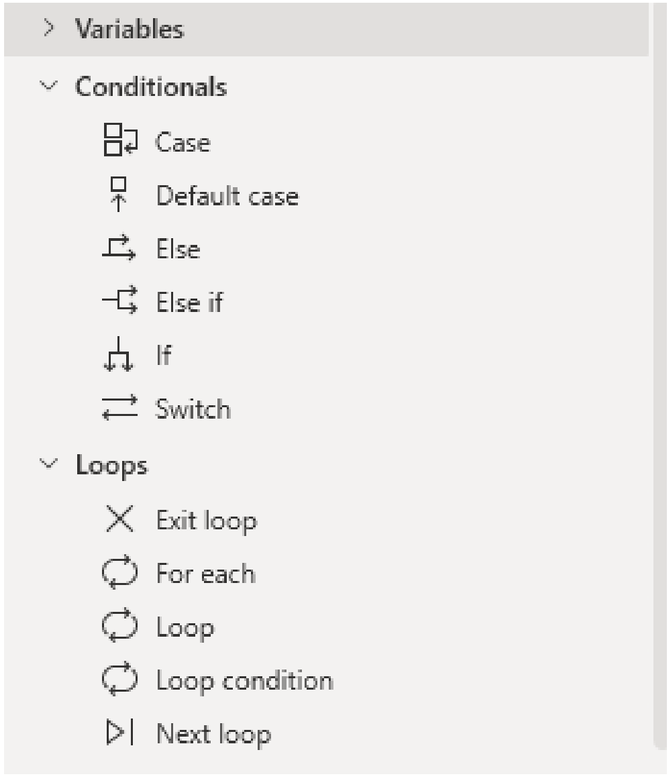
- Add from the hundreds of possible actions
- Record yourself doing the process

Most of the time it's a mix of both!

- Record the process
- Clean up / optimize



Logic Controls



Power Automate desktop has multiple logic controls

- **Variables**
- **Conditions**
- **Loops**

Allows you to create advanced flows that follow your business logic

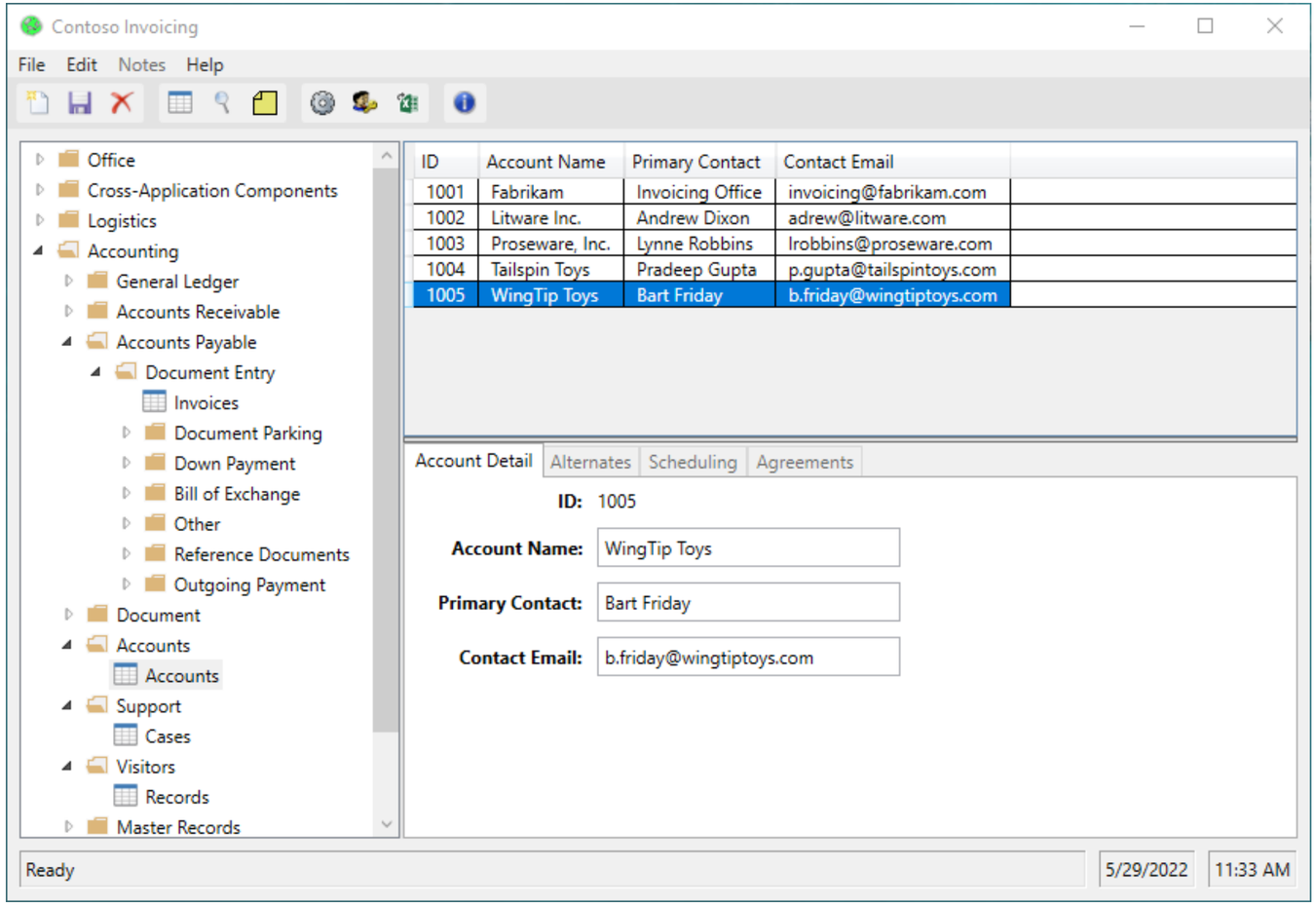
Our Scenario

Globomantics has a need to automate a business process around creating invoices – however, the process uses a legacy application with no APIs. You need to automate invoice creation in the legacy invoicing application using robotic process automation.

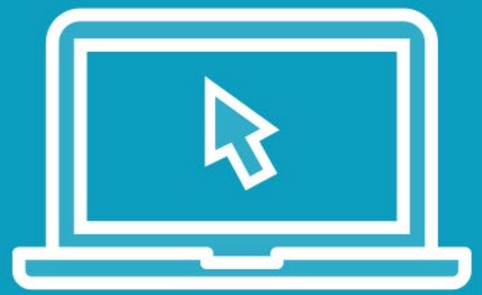
Contoso Invoicing app

Simple legacy app provided by Microsoft to learn Desktop flows

https://github.com/MicrosoftDocs/mslearn-developer-tools-power-platform/tree/master/power-automate-desktop/contoso-invoice-app



Demo



Desktop Flows in Action

Conclusion

Introduction to Robotic Process Automation

- Copy actions of a human
- Useful for legacy applications with no APIs

Desktop flows in Microsoft Power Automate

- Allows enterprises to automate all their processes with Power Automate
- Attended and unattended

Up Next:
Course Conclusion