

RPA 2.0: A transformation enabler for Life Sciences Industry

With digital transformation becoming indispensable in today's world, the Life Sciences industry is leaving no stone unturned to get transfigured by adopting automation in every digital way. Robotic Process Automation (RPA) has been amongst the most adopted digital technologies over the last couple of years, in the Life Sciences industry. RPA enables pharma companies to reduce human errors, operate at a much higher efficiency, and increase employee satisfaction by shifting their focus to more value-adding roles, further enhancing customer satisfaction and innovation.

Intelligent RPA – a force to reckon with in the coming years

RPA has evolved into much more than just a software robot that mimics human actions. The emergence of "Intelligent RPA" or "RPA ++" or "RPA 2.0" is showcasing RPA as the business transformation enabler, moving it beyond the usual perspective of a small task and process automation lever. This shift towards Intelligent RPA is also propelling the enterprise to spend across industries substantially and will make it an essential strategic initiative in the coming years.

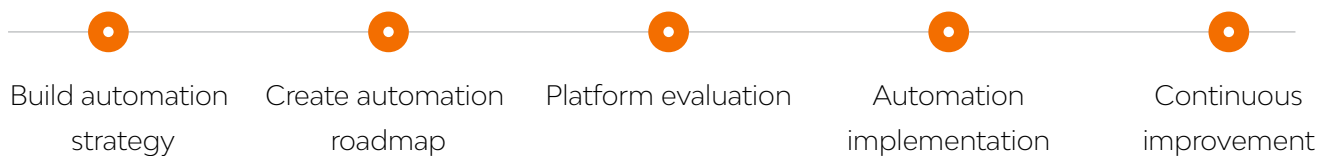
RPA in the Life Sciences Industry

The life sciences industry is currently in a transformative phase. It is a slow adopter of new technologies as compared to other industries like Banking & Finance, CPG & Retail, etc. The reasons for this sluggish pace include realignment to the new patient-centric working model, stringent compliance, lesser direct interactions with the customers, fewer digital assets, and lesser usage. In the past few years, however, the industry has improved its momentum, and along with other cognitive elements, Intelligent RPA is increasingly gaining popularity. Few of the challenges faced by the LS industry are listed below:

- **Digitization on low priority due to IT non-readiness:** This is often considered as overhead by the existing IT teams, and the implementation and support of RPA require a specific skill set that may not be readily available in the current IT workforce.
- **Complex interdependent processes:** Automation in this industry can get complicated due to multiple touchpoints, and the sheer amount of manual intervention involved in most of the operations.
- **Strict regulatory environment:** By strict regulatory guidelines, changes in software and hardware are subject to compliance guidelines, which may make it difficult and cumbersome to implement automation in the industry.

Accelerated Digital Transformation with Intelligent RPA

In many automation journeys, there exists an aspiration-realization chasm, and to overcome that, particularly in a complex ecosystem of Life Sciences, is an uphill task. Cognitive technologies such as AI, ML, NLP when blended with RPA, imbibe smart capabilities to the existing RPA initiative and help magnify the outcome vis-à-vis standalone RPA. The roadmap that organizations can follow for a successful automation journey includes the following steps:

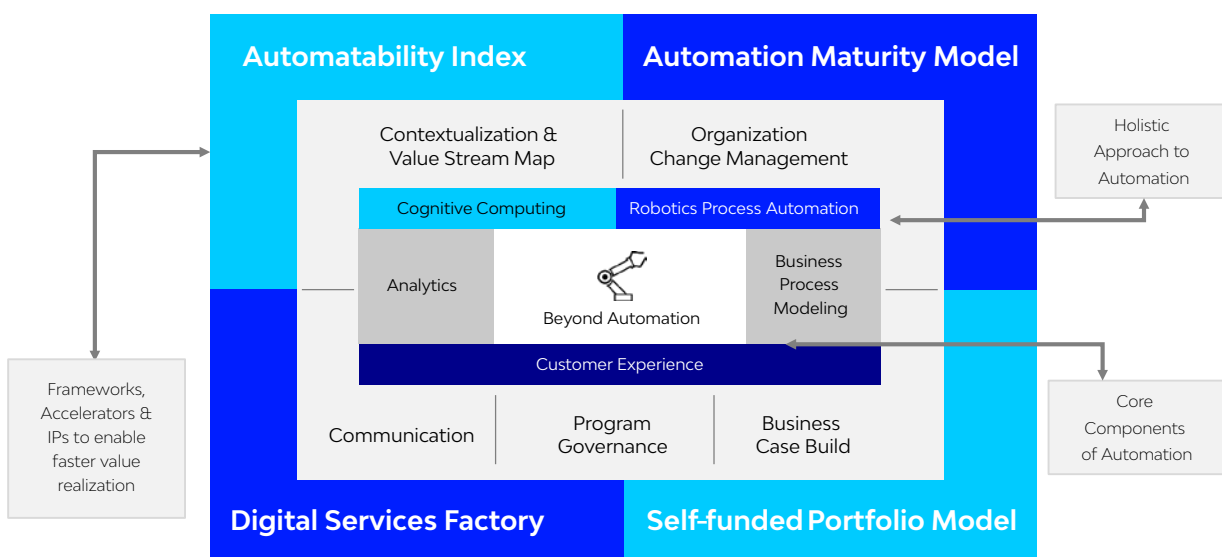


- **Automation strategy:** Establishing automation goals while Identifying the key constraints.
- **Automation roadmap:** Determine automation priorities and develop an RPA operating model, in conjunction with other digital enablers such as AI, ML, NLP, Advanced OCR and so on.
- **Platform evaluation:** Thorough evaluation of the platform and allied business processes.
- **Automation implementation:** Develop project plans and build, test and deploy RPA.
- **Continuous Improvement:** This should be a pragmatic approach of best practices

Beyond automation

In order to achieve the objective to automate and move a step forward, there should be a thorough understanding of the requirement and need for automation, a robust framework, accelerator components/ processes, value stream mapping, coupled with a good program governance.

Below figure displays one of the approaches of embarking beyond automation.



The road ahead

Going forward, enterprises will focus on keeping RPA as the nucleus while integrating it with other cutting-edge technologies to achieve higher business impact. RPA ++ will drive quick RoI in the areas of Clinical Development, Regulatory Submissions, Pharmacovigilance - to name a few. How organizations continue to blend different digital levers to not only maximize their RoI, but also realign their employees towards better strategic roles, will make or break the RPA case.

Author



Dr. Seema Nair

Life Sciences Lead - Customer Success Team, CMT

Seema is Life Sciences domain lead at LTI, with 10+ years of experience spanning R&D and Regulatory & Clinical Operations. She has worked with global research and consulting companies and drives LTI's digital transformation journey in the Life Sciences Industry. she is responsible for designing solutions and new capabilities development across Life Sciences areas including Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices. Seema has a Doctorate from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand and research experience in medical device and mass spectrometer development.

LTI (NSE: LTI, BSE: 540005) is a global technology consulting and digital solutions Company helping more than 360 clients succeed in a converging world. With operations in 30 countries, we go the extra mile for our clients and accelerate their digital transformation with LTI's Mosaic platform enabling their mobile, social, analytics, IoT and cloud journeys. Founded in 1997 as a subsidiary of Larsen & Toubro Limited, our unique heritage gives us unrivaled real-world expertise to solve the most complex challenges of enterprises across all industries. Each day, our team of more than 30,000 LTites enable our clients to improve the effectiveness of their business and technology operations, and deliver value to their customers, employees and shareholders. Find more at www.Ltinfotech.com or follow us at [@LTI_Global](https://twitter.com/LTI_Global)