Robotic Process Automation in procurement – Virtual Buyer

SAMI TERVO, SCANFIL EMS OY

About Company and Presenter

Scanfil Sievi

Scanfil has been established in Sievi, Finland in1976. Started as sheet metal mechanics manufacturer

Today we focus on

- Complex Systems Integration

- Production Medical Devices

- Sheet metal Mechanics

- Mechanical Assembly

~300 employees

26 000m2 floor area

Sami Tervo

Operational Technology Manager, Scanfil Group

24 years in manufacturing service business (last 13 in Scanfil)

RPA and Business Process flow generator

Lean Manufacturing specialist

ERP specialist

Process fanatic

Backround for Reboot

Scanfil SMART and Reboot IoT Factory

Some Years back we started to put more focus and effort to "Digital Revolution" and things like Industry 4.0, Internet of Things and so on.

That evolved to something called Scanfil SMART what is a program focusing on automatization and digitalization like storage automation, material handling automation, Cobots, RPA, Machine IoT, Digital documents, big data etc.

As most of us understand that is a huge field to study and for us it was a great chance to get to participate Reboot IoT Factory project together with, not only with leading finnish manufacturing companies, but also with all related research organisations and different SME companies

For us Reboot has enabled much faster implentetion of new technologies and solutions than would have been without this Reboot Project and related ecosystem

Backround for RPA and Virtual Buyer

RPA

As mentioned before, we had some idea about using RPA in the office automation but really the project got into bigger gear with Reboot when we sorted out different options for software and partner.

Software selected was Kofax RPA and partner for getting started, and later creating actual solutions was Festum Software Oy

In the beginning Festum provided our personnel generic level training on robots and their possibilities

Later on our competence has been developed by working together with festum and learning by doing.

Virtual Buyer

After selection of the software it was time to look into process to automate, look for the firs Proof of Concept.

After some analyzes we selected procurement process, and in more details creationand sending the Purchase orders to suppliers based on MRP created requisitions.

Reason behind was that there are lots of daily transactions and process is quite standard in all our sites.

Technical solution

Technically robot is using mostly standard features of the ERP system,

Firstly we created a configuration file that robot is using. That makes it easier to maintain variables that may change more or less frequently, sometimes you want robot to stop handling certain supplier or maybe change the value limits on the orders it creates. Configuration file makes it easy to maintain without need to actuall touch the robot "code" itself.

Secondly we created a report inside ERP to do mass analysis of the data, built in sql query is faster to handle bigger data amounts. Robot is using the values from the configuration file to run the report.

Robot itself is using the standard process in ERP to create orders and send them to suppliers either via e-mail or EDI

In the end of the process robot creates a summary file of the results and sends that via e-mail to responsible persons

Result and benefits

Without going to details, at the moment approximately one third of purchase orders in Sievi are created and sent by RPA

Time savings are noticable, but also a big benefit of the bot is that these orders that are created are reducing repetetive and sometimes monotonic work from the buyers, and release more time to actually follow up the purchase orders and focus on more demanding tasks.

Since process is pretty much standard, and we can give site specific limits in the configuration file, we are also able to roll out same process to our other sites and multiply the benefits

Summary of RPA and Reboot

During this project we have learned a lot about Rpa as a tool and got some understangit of the strenght and also weaknesses of the method.

We can see clearly that also in the future RPA has a role in our toolbox to automize and streamline processes. We still have many options of Kofax that we have not utilized in full but the development will continue also after reboot.

What comes to reboot we have gotten a big boost to implementation of RPA as a new technology. Not just by buying a solution from a supplier but also increased out internal competence and capability in this field.

Time for Questions

Thank You for Your interest

SCANFIL