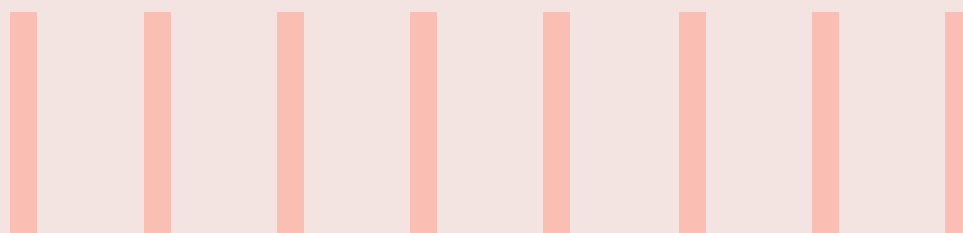# A HEALTHY RECIPE FOR DECLUTTERED AUTOMATION

How an Automation CoE from Infosys BPM saved millions for a Fortune 500 F&B enterprise

Abstract

Noah Jackson, the Chief Operations Officer at a leading Fortune 500 food enterprise, sought to unify its fragmented automation landscape and stop revenue leakages in his order-to-cash process. With Infosys BPM's help he built an intelligent, scalable automation centre of excellence, saving $2 million within just its first year of operations apart from recovering $1.31 million in dispute claims.

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Dealing with too many cooks

Noah Jackson kept replaying the conversation from his meeting with the division heads as he drove away from the office. He had just heard that some of the core functions within the enterprise were struggling to manage a disconnected set of automation solutions. As the Chief Operating Officer at one of the largest US-based Fortune 500 food and beverage enterprises, Noah knew how important it was for functions and processes to operate at optimal capacity. Towards this end, he had supported the introduction of robotic process automation (RPA) wherever possible over the years. While it improved operations in some areas, it led to an unforeseen challenge - a fragmented automation landscape.

The Fortune 500 enterprise had more than 220 automations spread across its IT, finance, and supply chain functions, led by multiple partners and third-party vendors. Naturally, the enterprise had accumulated numerous licenses but lacked a consistent or centralised control framework by which to monitor performance and compliance. Certain automations had even outlived their usefulness and needed to be upgraded or shelved to make way for new processes. To make matters worse, Noah found that the order-to-cash (O2C) process was losing revenue due to the lack of a systematic dispute review and recovery process. He knew he needed to find a solution quickly.

The next day, Noah called the division heads together to brainstorm a solution. It did not take them long to reach a consensus; what they needed was not a piecemeal solution, but rather, a scalable, measurable, and intelligent automation centre of excellence (CoE) that could centralise governance and outcomes. Since building a CoE was a major undertaking, Noah searched for service providers with experience in Build-Operate-Transform-Transfer (BOTT) models and who could handle transformative projects at a global scale.

Before long, Noah met a team from Infosys BPM who won his trust with their vast technology expertise and project experience. Although Infosys BPM had its work cut out for it, Noah was confident that he had found the right partner. Once due processes were completed, the Fortune 500 enterprise entered into a partnership with Infosys BPM.

The ingredients for that secret sauce

Rishabh Jha, an experienced transformation specialist from Infosys BPM, was assigned to lead the initiative. So, he quickly gathered a team of Infosys BPM experts and got to work, guided by the principles of the BOTT model.

Approach summary

- Designed the automation CoE organisation
- Transitioned 220+ automation and O2C processes
- Onboarded 23 resources for O2C
- Systematically reviewed O2C claims
- Rationalised licenses and decommissioned 50+ automations
- Deployed a core-flex staffing model
- Transferred 30 FTEs, with 23 FTEs set for repatriation

In the first build phase of the model, the team designed the CoE organisation as they established structures, roles, and governance frameworks in the form of playbooks, policies, and controls. They created job descriptions for each role and defined recruitment processes to be followed during interviews, background verification, and onboarding. To build a portfolio for the CoE, the team identified use cases and built business cases, calculating targeted savings for the first year. For the automations that already existed, the Infosys BPM team created detailed process documentation to enable them to transfer processes from third-party vendors without affecting business continuity in the following operate phase.

The task of transitioning began once the foundation for the CoE was set. The team executed a multi-phase knowledge transfer, established service-level agreements and key process indicators, and provided support for IT migration projects as needed. With the help of dashboards and reporting, the team maintained control and transparency, running regular compliance checks and audits. For the O2C process, in addition to transitioning processes from third-party vendors, the Infosys BPM performed systematic claims reviews to prevent further loss of revenue. They also rapidly onboarded 23 resources that included the core team and those hired externally.

Once the transition was complete, a portfolio triage helped assess the value of the automations. This process helped identify automations with diminishing value and led to more than 50 automations being decommissioned. The team also optimised RPA licenses to allow the enterprise to focus investments on use cases with a high return on investment. Quality checks and RPA enhancements further optimised the automation. The Infosys BPM team then employed a core-flex model for staffing to help them rapidly expand resources and capabilities at an optimal cost.

At the end of the transform phase, the CoE was streamlined and fully mature. The Infosys BPM team then transferred the automation CoE, along with the people, processes, and technology, back to the Fortune 500 enterprise. A total of 30 full-time equivalents (FTEs) were transferred, with a process in place to repatriate 23 FTEs at a later stage.

With the transfer of the automation CoE, Rishabh and the Infosys BPM team had fulfilled all the stages of the BOTT model and presented Noah with a rapidly scalable operating model built with sharper governance and transparency.

Delicious outcomes

Noah was delighted to see the automation CoE come to life under the expert guidance of the Rishabh and the Infosys BPM team. As he reviewed the results of the project, he was impressed to note that the CoE had delivered a massive $2 million savings in the first year, with a $1.8 million savings pipeline identified for subsequent years. Moreover, the O2C process, which was previously leaking revenue, recovered $1.31 million in dispute claims in ten months with the help of the structured dispute analysis and recovery mechanism instituted by the team. Besides the savings in revenue, Rishabh explained how improving the efficiency of the infrastructure and consolidating support had reduced operating costs for the enterprise.

Key benefits

- Saved $2 million in the first year
- Identified $1.8 million savings pipeline
- Recovered $1.31 million in dispute claims in 10 months
- Reduced operating costs
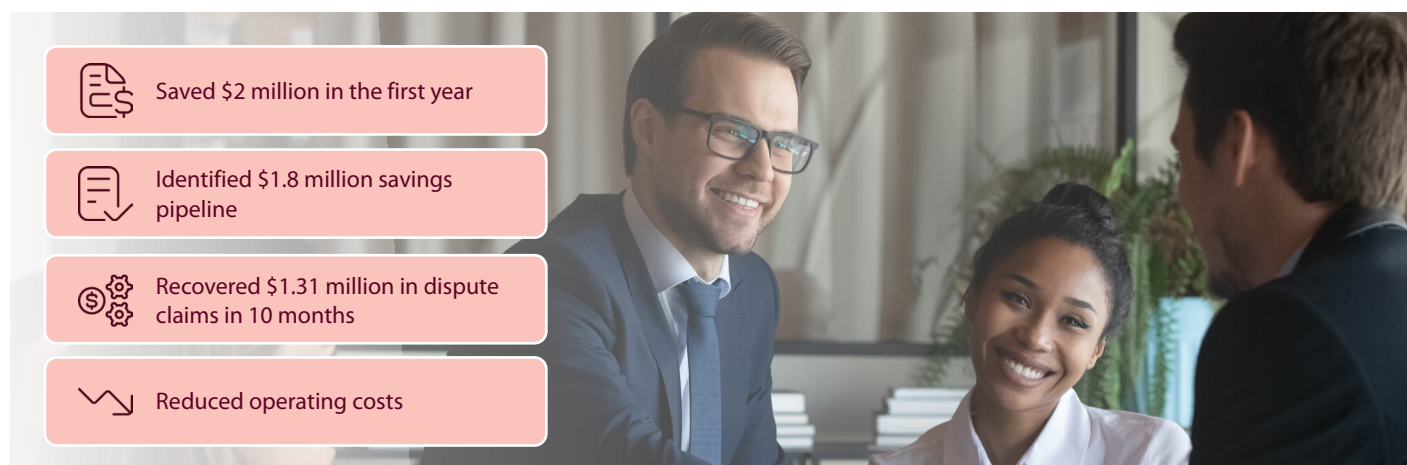
In terms of the quality of the portfolio, Noah noted that the effort expended by the Infosys BPM team to not only transition the existing automation but also decommission low-value bots and optimise licenses had paid off. The operating model was scalable, and yet the use of a flexible staffing model proved invaluable as it helped control costs. Additionally, the inclusion of dashboards and other compliance mechanisms provided Noah and his team with sufficient insight and control over operations.

The expertise and care shown by Rishabh and the Infosys BPM team at every stage resulted in an operating model that helped solve the dual challenge of fragmentation and performance issues in the O2C process. Noah was confident, as the early results indicated, that the investments in the Automation CoE would lead to greater savings and efficiency for his team and the larger enterprise in the years to come.

Names have been altered to preserve the identities of the people involved.

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