



CASE STUDY

Robotics help mining company set standards in procurement accuracy and efficiency



Abstract

A major mining company shifted a large portion of their human-intensive procurement processes onto the Infosys Robotics platform. This case study traces the approach adopted by Infosys to drive improved efficiency & effectiveness through robotic process automation (RPA), and thereby deliver operational savings and other benefits.

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The client landscape

A multinational mining corporation which had a varied procurement outsourcing landscape partnered with Infosys BPM to drive greater efficiency, standardization and effectiveness in its source-to-pay processes.

The mining giant faced several challenges. Its procurement processes were localized and fragmented, and it faced a significant shortage of qualified people to recruit into its procurement department. Moreover, its existing staff were heavily committed to transactional work leaving them with lesser bandwidth to focus on strategic aspects.

The journey to implement effective RPA and derive better benefits

Infosys BPM identified multiple opportunities for standardization and automation of its client's processes by focusing on two critical areas to achieve the end objectives:

- driving higher transaction volumes and
- improving turnaround time

Through leveraging Infosys' state of the art RPA platform, a hand-picked team from both partners drove automation for the existing procure-to-pay processes through a phased approach of process revision, standardization and setting up of a business rules engine. At each step, Infosys's subject matter & technology experts and change management agents provided significant support and guidance to pave way for the automation.

Automating processes, the Infosys way

To implement RPA wholly and correctly, it is critical to first have stabilized and harmonized back-end processes. Hence during the first stage, the team focused on stabilizing the process to ensure the

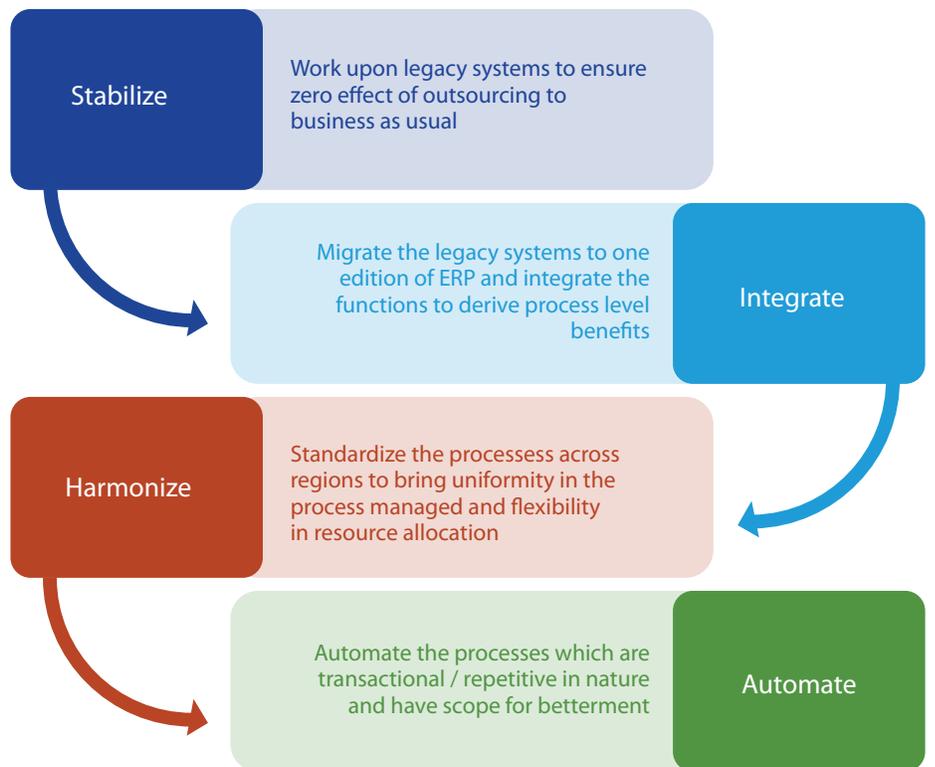
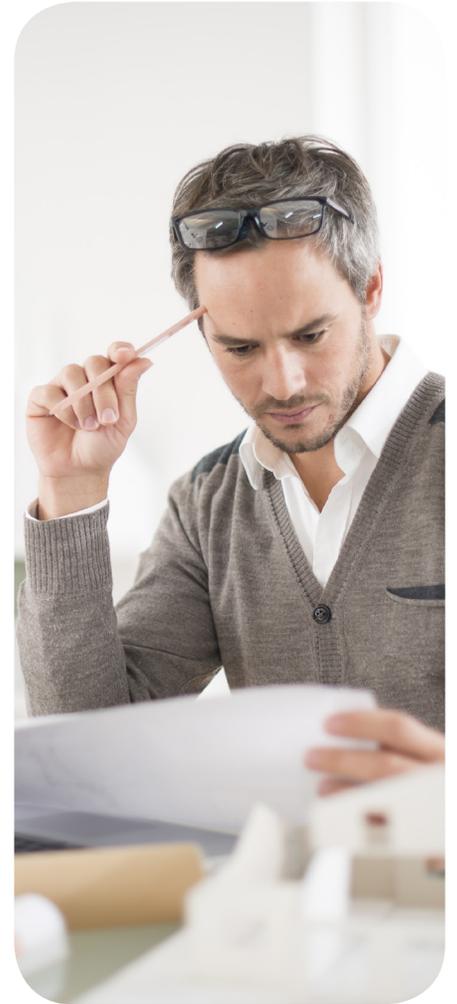
continuity of the business, and defining the "as-is" processes.

In the second stage, Infosys BPM integrated relevant functions bringing them onto a single platform. The process steps in the integrated platform were kept similar to steps performed in legacy systems.

In the next stage, using Infosys's best-in-class process harmonization framework, the thrust shifted to standardizing processes across the globe while building in flexibility to deal with local nuances.

Once the team had clearly stabilized and harmonized processes in place, Infosys RPA teams worked closely with operation teams, client stakeholders and domain experts to design the key automations across source-to-pay processes. Each design took into account the nature of the transactions and control points, and underwent a phase of testing to ensure there were no errors or deviations.

At each stage, the teams conducted detailed discussions with all stakeholders on every automation, before proceeding.



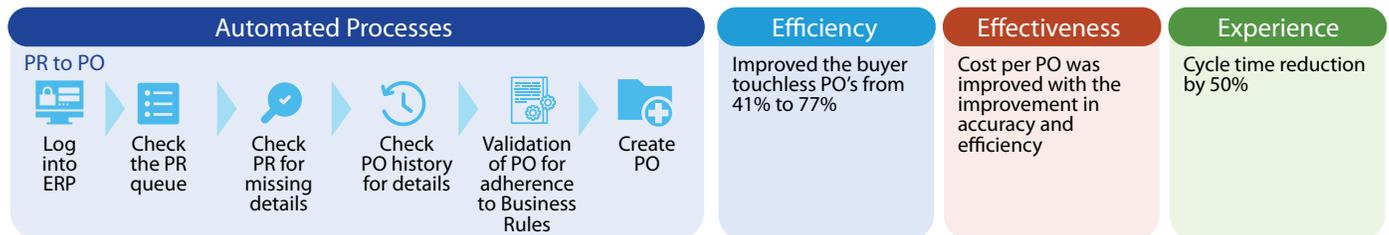
Key automations effected

While deciding on the processes to be automated, the team selected those that were highly repetitive in nature and required significant manual effort. Here are selected examples on the benefits of automating these processes.



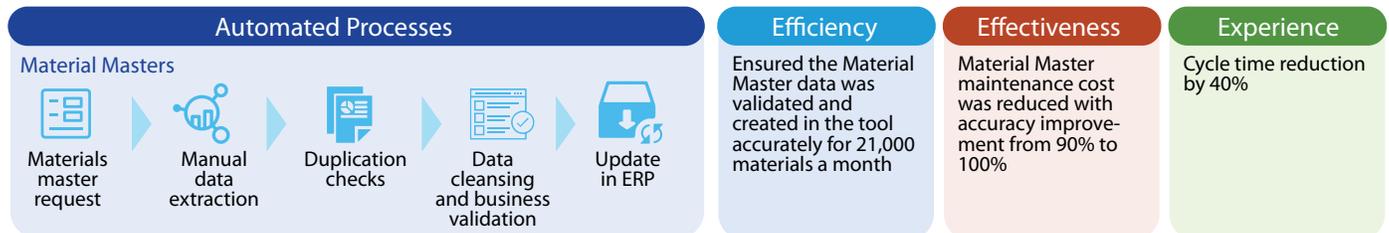
The purchase request (PR) to purchase order (PO) cycle: Rule based processing steps in the PR to PO process were time consuming and affected the PO processing time.

The team deployed a customized version of an Infosys proprietary tool to automate some 70+ rules for the conversion of PR to PO. The tool talks with the client ERP and performs tasks without any manual intervention.



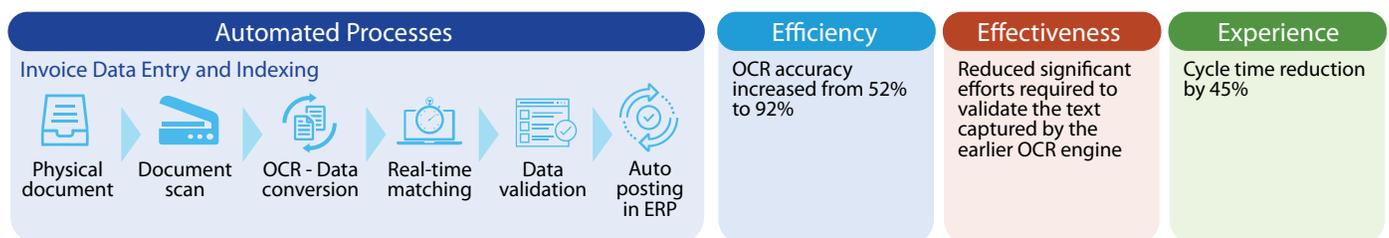
Duplicate Data Validation in Material master: The client was facing substantial losses due to mistakes and duplicates while creating material master, as these led to issues such as incorrect purchases, excessive inventory, or delay in purchasing.

Infosys designed a tool to validate the completeness of mandatory data as well as aid in creation of material description as per agreed standards. The Infosys team also created an exhaustive library of materials, their standards, and naming nomenclature as well as region-wise data entry templates and forms to aid the process.



Automation of Invoice Data Entry and Indexing: The client's current OCR tool was at the end of its lifecycle and technical support. The process was also highly manual due to the low scan read accuracy of the tool, differing invoice formats received from various vendors, and limited language support.

Infosys designed a tool to replace the existing one, with enhanced scan and read accuracy, machine learning capabilities, and support for multiple languages.



The bottom-line

Infosys BPM's value re-engineering efforts led to some significant transformations across key procurement processes for the client. These transformations using robotic process automation delivered 40%-50% overall reduction of cycle time, 36% improvement in efficiency, and 100% accuracy.

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