

WHERE THE CULTURE OF AUTOMATION FULFILLS STRATEGIC BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

Organizations are accelerating their adoption of RPA on an enterprise-wide basis to create business value and competitive advantages. Now they must understand how can they optimize their investments and broaden workforce acceptance in order to rapidly fulfill their prime business objectives.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY RESEARCH AT A GLANCE

RPA is a game changer, saving time and money on repetitive manual tasks, boosting productivity, and improving the overall employee experience.

To understand the current and future state of Robotic Process Automation (RPA), the research and analysis team within Futurum Research developed a research program based on a multi-question, double-blind survey presented to more than 500 high-level business and technology executives directly responsible for the planning, management, and use of automation technologies.

The survey and the resulting research focused on five major issues including perceptions of value, key investment drivers, top barriers and challenges, the impact on employees and organizations, and the most successful use cases driving investment in RPA solutions. Futurum Research set out to not only leverage this survey data for direct market insights, but to also be able to identify where organizations are successful in assimilating RPA into their organizations. Our goal was to understand workforce perception of RPA and how successfully organizations are communicating RPA's role and benefits throughout their workforce; specifically pinpointing the drivers for RPA investment and obstacles to RPA adoption, as well as exploring the impact is having on organizational operations and staff.

Specifically and within this paper, we identify the following top findings from our recent 2019 global RPA survey and RPA research, issuing the associated recommendations based on our ongoing analysis of business, technology and market trends in the digital economy:

ON THE TOPIC OF WORKFORCE PERCEPTIONS OF RPA VALUE

The perception of RPA is evolving, and organizations need to keep up. As RPA gains broader acceptance in enterprise settings and moves to more pervasive adoption, the challenges posed by the underlying technology and its potential as being perceived as disruptive should not be ignored. Enterprises also need to focus on looking beyond the hype surrounding RPA as a technology enabler and dig deeper into how RPA can bring unique technical advantages

KEY STATISTICS

95% of organizations anticipate enterprise-wide RPA implementations within the next three years.

49% say the overall feeling of the general staff toward RPA usage or adoption is mostly positive.

11% feel that management is doing poorly or very poorly in helping the general staff understand RPA.

38% view accessing and updating legacy environments as well as gaining a competitive edge as a top-tier areas of business objective success for driving RPA investments.

to business challenges such as dramatic reductions in operating costs, elastic scaling, and rapid ROI benefits. RPA should not be adopted purely because it is an emerging hot technology. Instead, business leaders spearheading this charge should look carefully at the potential use cases and ask tough questions of technical teams about the suitability of RPA technology to execute in any environment and across any scenario.

ON THE TOPIC OF INVESTMENT DRIVERS FOR RPA

Investment drivers for RPA are broadening and gaining priority. RPA unlocks the potential to substantially improve enterprise ROI, due to its rapid deployment cycles, particularly in relation to alternatives like business process outsourcing and adopting business process management platforms. As such, it's critical to understand the success factors driving RPA investment. Without insight into investment patterns, RPA suppliers diminish their ability to capitalize fully on enterprise spending priorities.

ON THE TOPIC OF ADOPTION BARRIERS

Identifying obstacles to RPA is essential to driving RPA adoption success. Understanding barriers to adoption is critical to a successful RPA implementation strategy. Organizations need to focus on the areas that are creating the most significant obstacles. Most organizations we surveyed had a sense that their workforce adaptation to RPA is mostly successful, although there is room for improvement in transmitting the direct benefits to front line workers and middle management.

ON THE TOPIC OF RPA'S IMPACT ON ORGANIZATIONS

RPA is moving beyond a tactical technology option to a strategic driver of organization digital transformation. As organizations broaden their embrace of RPA, communicating the value of RPA across the entire organization becomes essential. Often ignored in the push to adopt RPA is ensuring the staff understands the benefits of RPA to not only the organization, but also to the individual employees themselves. Without effective communication, enterprises risk inflating cultural resistance to RPA adoption and decreasing employee morale.

ON THE TOPIC OF USE CASES

Improving employee productivity and increasing business value (profitability) are among the top use cases for spurring RPA investments. While strategic drivers and use cases may vary between industries, these two use cases are consistently cited as the most common and successful justifications for RPA investments, laying the groundwork for driving growth and increased business efficiency and value.

FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

We believe RPA is a technology whose time has arrived, allowing for organizations and workers to effectively emulate and automate the actions of a human interacting within digital systems and business processes. RPA “robots” can be configured to capture data and manipulate applications – interpreting, triggering responses, and communicating with other systems in order to perform a vast variety of repetitive tasks.

In an era where data collection, data entry, and data manipulation are growing exponentially, the ability to better understand the converging dynamics of RPA assimilation and its impact on organizational culture is essential to powering successful business outcomes. In particular, the issue of how RPA is integrated into an organization is directly related to how organizations can optimize the effectiveness and efficiency of RPA solutions. RPA-enabled operations and business processes must be able to operate at scale and be able to meet ever-changing business demands, while considering the increasing demands for investment justification. From a business operations perspective, the ability to efficiently accelerate the deployment of RPA platforms is becoming an essential skill for organizations looking to leverage RPA to improve employee productivity, accuracy, and the auditability many need to meet their strategic business objectives.

In contrast to other traditional IT automation solutions, we believe RPA allows organizations to selectively, efficiently, and in a frictionless manner automate repetitive tasks at a fraction of the cost and time of other, more rigid approaches to automation. RPA solutions, when properly planned and implemented as part of an overall digital transformation initiative, can be purpose-designed, non-intrusive, and leverage existing infrastructure and assets without causing disruption to underlying systems (which could be difficult, costly and difficult to replace). With RPA, cost efficiency and compliance are no longer an operating cost but a direct result of the automation.

In the current business climate, as businesses are navigating the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen digital transformation happening at a rapid pace, especially as it relates to automation. We have seen RPA rapidly deployed to provide a much-needed assist to companies morphing to a remote work operating mode, and still striving to provide the highest possible level of customer service. We feel certain that once the current crisis stabilizes, the collective corporate focus will be on bringing revenue up to pre-crisis levels as quickly as possible, and RPA can play a significant role there. In addition, we believe that organizations who might have originally been slow to consider or embrace RPA will reevaluate the benefits automation – and the innovation it can spur – can deliver post-crisis and prioritize budget dollars specifically for RPA.

We have talked often during this current crisis of the need to rethink the post-pandemic business model. We believe it critically important to break it all apart – to rethink and rework our tried and true and, in some cases decades old business models – before

we turn our focus on rebuilding and recovering. That's where the true value of RPA will come into play, helping to lower operational costs, support a dynamic work environment, and helping to build resilience and agility into both the supply chain and the customer experience.

Looking forward, we anticipate that investments in RPA will continue to increase both in number and in sophistication. Further, we expect that as RPA technology continues to evolve and become more intelligent that enterprises will continuously uncover additional business processes of increasing complexity that are suitable for automation as well as develop operational processes that are new, designed with automation in mind, and offer additional business value and opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

RPA that is not embraced by, and supportive of, the workforce has limited value. Extremely limited value.

In this paper, *Where the Culture of Automation Fulfills Strategic Business Objectives*, we discuss the current and future state of Robotic Process Automation (RPA) and the role of software “robots” in the digital workforce. We discuss the different drivers of RPA adoption, evaluate the potential opportunities it creates, and discuss the potential pitfalls that must be avoided.

To understand and analyze the dynamics of this market, and to better inform our base of enterprise and services clients, Futurum Research designed and implemented a primary research program designed to address a number of issues and questions on the current and future state of Robotic Process Automation (RPA). This research program included a multi-question, double-blind survey presented to more than 500 high-level business and technology executives directly responsible for the planning, management, and use of automation technologies. Our survey covered the Americas, EMEA and AsiaPAC, as well as organizations across a wide range of industries including Banking & Finance, Healthcare & Insurance, Autonomous Driving & Transportation, Augmented & Virtual Reality, Gaming, Retail, Smart Cities, and providers of Industrial IoT.

Our analysis presented within this paper addresses five major topics, or issues, regarding RPA including perceived and realized value, key investment drivers, top barriers and challenges, the impact of automation on employees and organizations, and the most successful use cases driving investment in RPA solutions. Our intent was to not only uncover direct market insights but to be able to identify where organizations are successful in assimilating RPA into their organizations, addressing RPA’s impact on the future of work, including how leading organizations are communicating RPA’s role and benefits throughout their workforce and the impact these initiatives are having on business operations and front-line staff.

Specifically, we looked to identify and understand answers to the following questions:

- What is the state of RPA implementations today and what does the future hold over the coming years?
- What are the feelings and perceptions of enterprise employees toward RPA adoption and usage?
- How effectively is management conveying the business and employee value of RPA?
- Which business objectives are showing the most success from RPA investments?
- What are the top use cases and drivers for RPA investment, and what are the top obstacles that must be overcome?
- Which enterprise roles are driving RPA adoption both enterprise-wide and within individual business units?

After completing our analysis and evaluating the survey data against our existing understanding of the digital economy, we believe the rapid proliferation of resource and compute-intensive technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Real-Time Analytics, 5G-IoT and Edge Computing will require companies to adopt a more strategic approach in their assimilation of RPA solutions.

As RPA technology evolves and becomes more intelligent, enterprises will continuously uncover additional businesses processes of increasing complexity that are suitable for automation as well as develop operational processes that are new, designed with automation in mind, and offer additional business value and strategic opportunities.

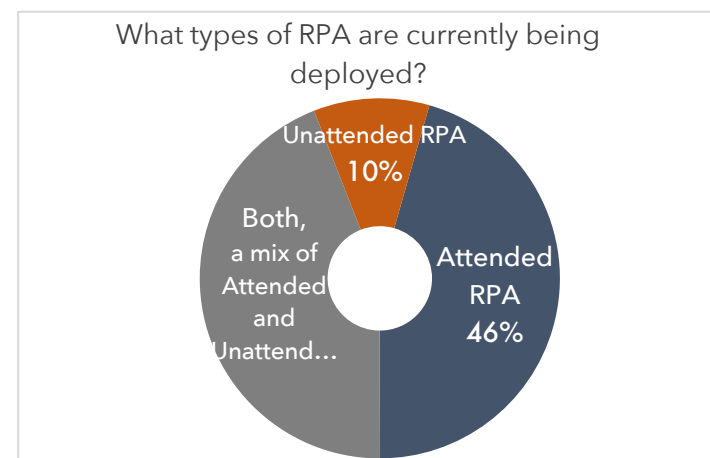
Organizations must approach RPA as integral to meeting their business objective in order to reap the full benefits of flexibly automating repetitive yet critical workloads across their entire organizations and achieving optimal integration with emerging technologies. We welcome your comments and your feedback—RPA and intelligent automation will continue to disrupt as it matures.

– The Futurum Analyst Team

1 WORKFORCE PERCEPTIONS OF RPA

Most organizations see their employees viewing RPA in a positive or cautiously optimistic light. Most.

RPA solutions can generally be grouped into two broad categories: Attended RPA (where a worker or employee oversees the automation directly) and Unattended RPA (where tasks are run autonomously, without direct supervision). To date, Attended RPA has garnered the majority of provider and user attention, but that is changing. At present, 44 percent of enterprises actively using or planning to use RPA are implementing a mix of both Attended and Unattended solutions. And while 46 percent are currently exclusively using Attended RPA, 10 percent have made the move to Unattended RPA exclusively within their organization. Why is this important? First, we believe that Unattended RPA will grow as a percentage of overall implementations. And second, understanding the type of RPA in use is key to understanding how RPA is perceived by executives, operational managers, and front-line employees.



Front-line, or general staff, have a fairly positive perspective on RPA.

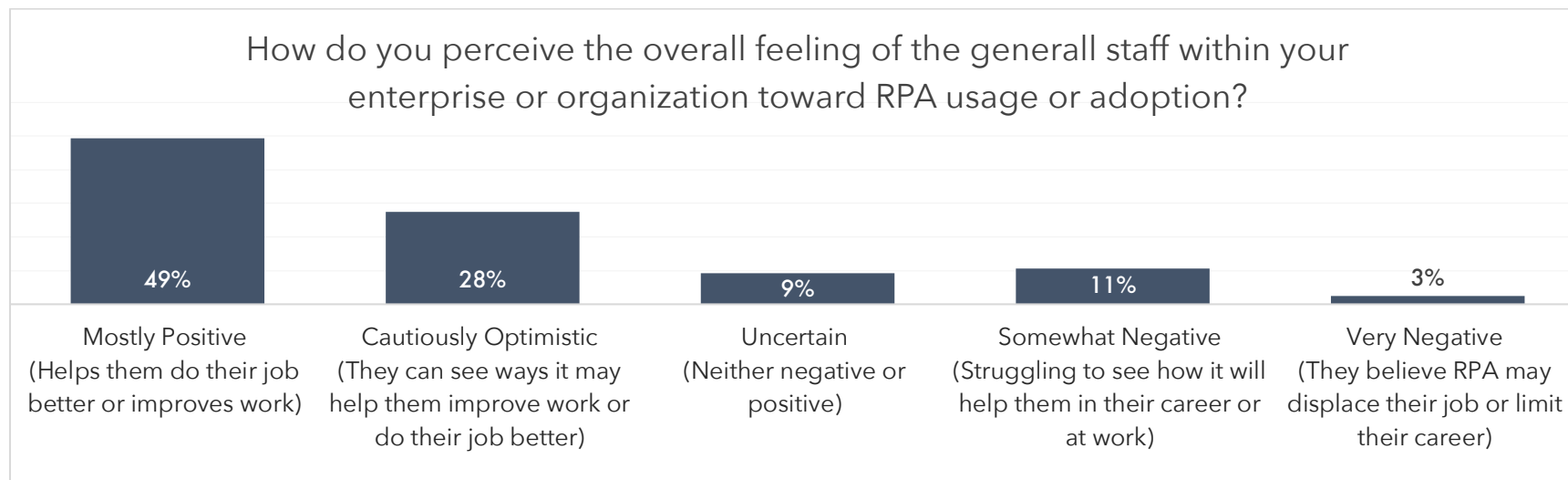
RPA is gaining broad acceptance across enterprises with 49 percent of organizations reporting a mostly positive feeling toward RPA among the general staff, with an additional 27 percent reporting cautious optimism. This constitutes a respectable 77 percent of organizations that see positive value in RPA. Only 11 percent of enterprises reported having a somewhat negative perspective on RPA, with slightly less than 3 percent reporting the feeling amongst their general staff is that RPA is perceived as a threat, or limiting influence, to their job or career.

77 percent of organizations have a Mostly Positive or Cautiously Optimistic perspective toward RPA, believing it improves their work environment and enables them to do their jobs better.

Overall, it appears organizations are generally avoiding the worst pitfalls that could undermine RPA adoption, especially for enterprise-wide implementations or in anticipation of ramping up to an enterprise-wide adoption. However, 22 percent still report their general staff is uncertain or negative on the value of RPA.

37 percent of enterprises implementing Unattended RPA exclusively report their general staff have an uncertain or negative sentiment towards RPA in contrast to only 21 percent of those implementing just Attended RPA.

This suggests enterprises still have room to educate and improve their ability to communicate the role RPA plays, as well as how it can benefit individual employees looking to improve their workflows, job experience, and overall future opportunities.



How management conveys the value of RPA is critical to employee acceptance and long-term success.

The good news is that a sizable majority of management teams (78 percent) are proactively helping their general staff to understand and embrace the value of RPA. The bad news is that almost a quarter of management teams (22 percent) are coming up short.

78 percent of organizations rate as successful the ability of management to communicate the value of RPA to their general staff.

The mixed results, although encouraging, suggests some enterprises must improve their communication abilities in support of their overall RPA deployment objectives. This is particularly true for those implementing Unattended RPA, where 37 percent report management has been unconvincing or unclear in conveying the value of RPA to their general staff.



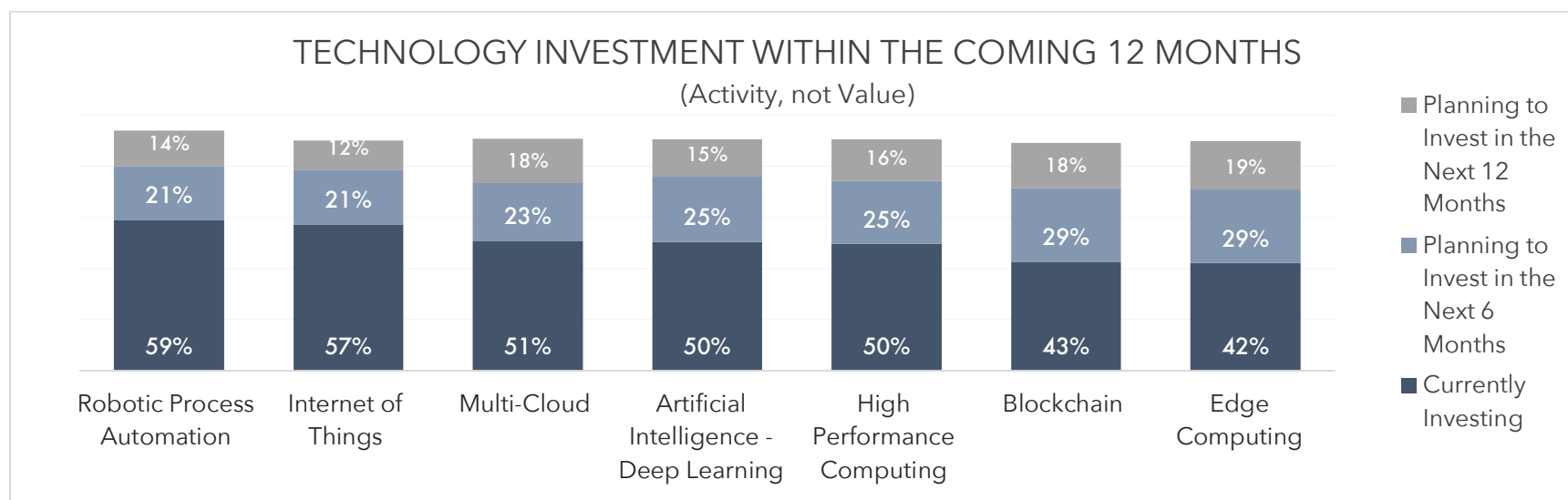
FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

The communications aspect of RPA implementations must not be neglected or viewed as optional – employee understanding and embracing of RPA is an integral component of both the near-term and long-term value. Proactive communications and education must also include suppliers and ecosystem partners and be based on relevant case studies, anticipated business and employee value, and be designed to minimize workforce misunderstandings or misperceptions of the value of RPA and its role as an enabler of employee productivity.

2 INVESTMENT DRIVERS OF RPA

RPA is becoming increasingly important as it pertains to investment decision making and influencing workforce perceptions. However, many enterprises still need to enlarge their investments.

RPA has become a priority for many enterprises. In fact, over 59 percent of the enterprises surveyed show a higher level of investment activities for RPA than other “hot” technology areas such as IoT, multi-cloud, AI, high-performance computing, blockchain, and edge computing.



RPA adoption is still in its infancy, with tremendous growth expected over the coming years.

Investment activity by itself lacks context, particularly when trying to assess the maturity (or stage) of investment and the potential for RPA spend and implementation support over the coming years. So where are enterprises today with their RPA implementations?

Close to a quarter of enterprises have reached the “enterprise-wide” deployment stage, defined as having automated more than 20 percent of the current processes that can currently be automated. Within the coming 12 months, 71 percent of enterprises expect to be active within this stage.

It's important to note that RPA implementations are not one-and-done activities but rather a continual evolution that will grow as RPA technology matures and new (more) processes are identified as candidates for automation. Notably, 23 percent of enterprises have already begun upgrades and improvements to their enterprise-wide deployments. Many of these upgrades and improvements will involve new proof-of-concept (POC) activities, highlighted by the 45 percent of enterprises that anticipating completing new POCs within the coming 12 months. Beyond the current year, 13 percent anticipate completing new POCs in the 12 to 36 month time frame (a number we anticipate will increase as new opportunities for automation are identified).

71 percent of enterprises believe they will have begun enterprise-wide implementations within the coming 12 months with 88 percent planning to achieve this landmark within just 24 months.

Looking forward, we anticipate that investments in RPA will continue to increase both in number and in sophistication. Further, we expect that as RPA technology continues to evolve and become more intelligent that enterprises will continuously uncover additional businesses processes of increasing complexity that are suitable for automation as well as develop operational processes that are new, designed with automation in mind, and offer additional business value and opportunities.

Who deviates from the norm?

RPA activity can vary considerably by industry. Only 32 percent of retail organizations expect to complete new POCs during the coming 12 months compared to 54 percent of banking and finance organizations (note that 34 percent of retail organizations have already achieved enterprise-wide status compared to only 23 percent of banking and finance firms).

Where is RPA producing the most successful investment outcomes?

A vital aspect in ascertaining the ongoing state of RPA investments is to identify where organizations' investments to date have yielded the most success. The top three areas where enterprises believe they have achieved the highest success (an excellent rating) include gains in productivity (41 percent), improved employee experiences (38 percent) and gaining a competitive advantage (37 percent).

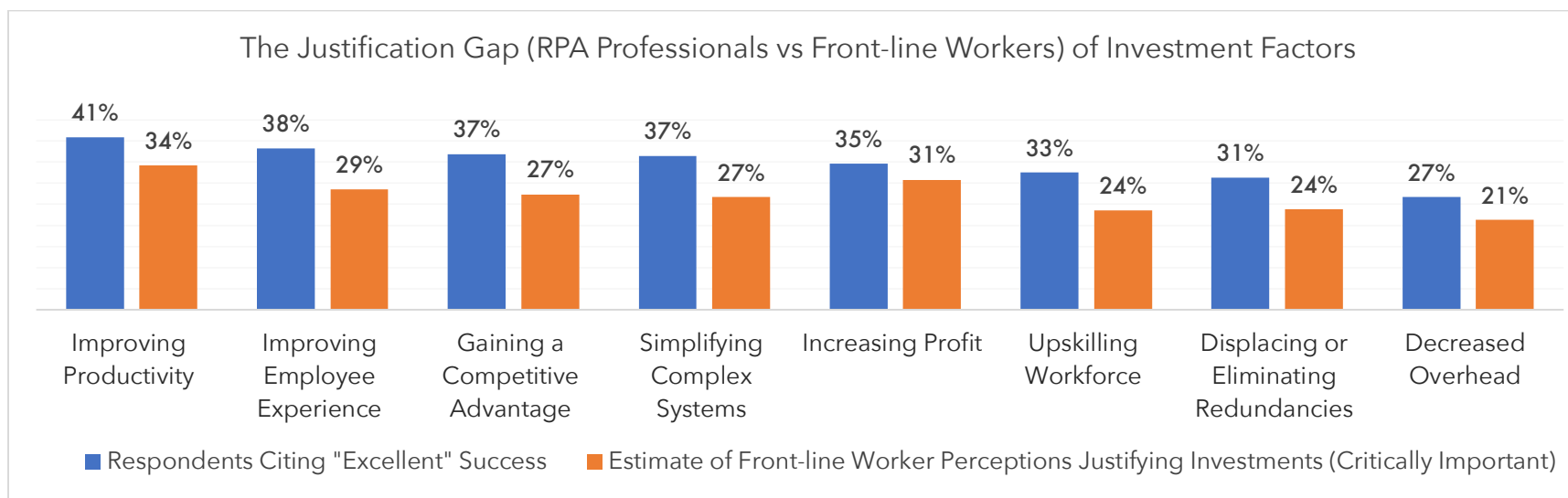


Overall, however, the results have a fairly narrow spread when evaluated as good or excellent success (ranging from a high of 82 percent citing improved employee experiences to a low of 68 percent citing decreased overhead). This would suggest that RPA investment benefits are broadly distributed and are not concentrated in any one area.

Only 27 percent say they've experienced excellent returns in the area of decreased overhead, but we consider this a clear positive. If you're using RPA to reduce employee count or costs you're missing the true value of RPA.

Employees and mid-level managers see RPA investments a bit differently.

When asked to estimate how front-line employees and middle or mid-level managers would rank similar factors as critically important (or primary) drivers of investment, the top three cited for both groups were improving productivity, keeping up with competitors, and increasing profits. That's quite different than what our RPA professionals cited as their choices for excellent investment success. More importantly, when we compare the two groups side by side we see the emergence of a justification, or perceived value gap.



Our survey respondents consistently do not believe front-line workers see (or can justify) the same level of success or value across the board. Some of this may be due to employee resistance (or fear) regarding automation. Either way, it is an issue that must be addressed for the value and success of RPA to be realized. Employee education on RPA is a good start, but organizations also need to be proactive and transparent regarding the goals and outcomes expected by executive management, and how those goals will be measured and the impact they will have on the entire organization (i.e., business model & operations).

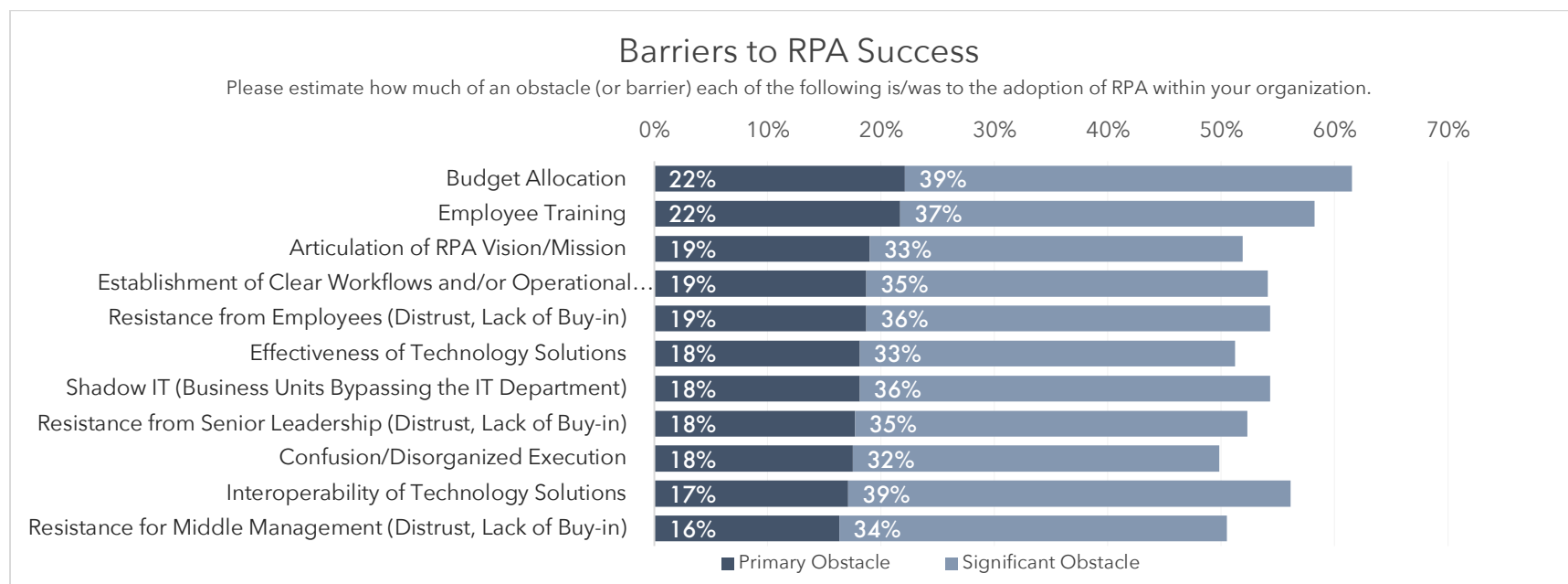
FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

While we anticipated RPA would gain near-term market momentum, we were intrigued by the expectation that RPA, within two years, will reach the enterprise-wide stage of implementation for the vast majority (88 percent) of enterprises. Moreover, our findings confirm that RPA adoption is fulfilling the two key business objectives of improving productivity and improving the employee experience. This immediately brought to our attention that RPA is an essential technology that all IT organizations must be ready to deliver to their enterprise users today. We believe the RPA market is poised for solid growth that will drive continued investments throughout the RPA ecosystem. Note: Enterprise-wide status indicates greater than 20 percent of current tasks that can be automated have been automated. However, given the ongoing evolution of RPA and the addition of intelligent technologies, we anticipate that many organizations will continuously uncover or create new processes that qualify for automation at a future date. In this scenario, 100 percent automation is not expected to ever be a reality for the majority of organizations.

3 BARRIERS & CHALLENGES

Barriers are ever present but knowing the top ones is vital to successful RPA adoption strategies.

Based on the responses to the employee perception and investment questions, it is clear that while support for RPA is broad, there remain challenges and room for improvement. What are the primary obstacles that our panel believe must be overcome?



Budget allocation and employee training are cited roughly equally by 22 percent of our survey panel as the top primary obstacles (and by 62 and 58 percent as overall significant or primary obstacles respectively). But other, more organizational issues are close at hand, including issues involving the articulation of a true mission or vision for RPA within their organization, a lack of clear workflows and/or operational guidelines, and resistance (in the form of distrust or a lack of buy-in) by front-line employees. In fact, the relatively narrow spread between budget allocation (at 62 percent) and confusion or disorganized execution of RPA implementations (at 50 percent) suggests that all of the cited barriers to RPA success are significant and must be addressed together in a holistic manner.

Who deviates from the norm?

Budget allocation is considered the top primary obstacle to RPA success overall, but is only cited by 13 percent of retail organizations and 15 percent of banking and financial firms as the top concern. So, what are their top concerns? For retail organizations it's resistance from senior leadership (21 percent) and for banking and financial firms it's a lack of employee training (24 percent).

FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

We find it interesting that so many respondents rated budget allocation and employee training as the two highest barriers given the generally high ratings assigned to employee perception of RPA implementations and investment benefits. While budget constraints are a commonly cited barrier to accelerating the adoption of emerging and effective technologies, the data point may suggest organizations are insufficiently funding RPA projects, potentially limiting rapid and broad-based achievement of their RPA and overall business objectives. The budget allocation barrier links to employee training, which also connects to the notable percentages attached to ineffective communications and uncertain/negative feeling of the general staff toward RPA. Organizations need to make the plausible conclusion that funding RPA projects requires more than supporting the technical and service components, but also allocating resources to strengthening employee training and boost internal communications.

4 ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

Everybody is concerned about the impact of RPA on employees and organization performance, but RPA adoption requires knowledge about the most likely changes to operations which ensue, the adaptability of various roles to new RPA realities, and understanding which business units are leading RPA assimilation.

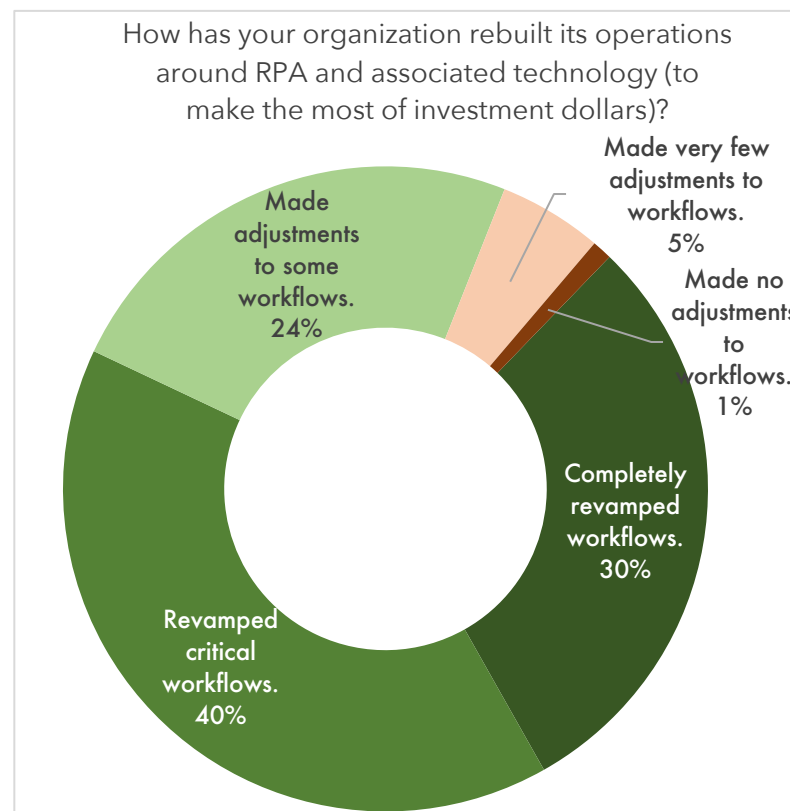
Understanding the ultimate impact of RPA on organizations requires an assessment of the adjustments and rebuilds organizations are making to their operations, identifying the key players and roles that are leading adoption, and discerning how well other enterprise roles are adapting (following and embracing) to RPA.

Organizations adopting RPA understand that workflows can be reworked for further gains.

RPA decisions, like many other technology-driven items, are often closely tied to business outcomes and key performance metrics tracked both by the business and by IT. And while RPA is commonly thought of as an automation play, it's also an opportunity to rethink fundamental business flows and drive additional efficiencies. But are enterprises doing this, and rethinking operations and business flows around RPA and associated technologies? They are.

Approximately 30 percent of organizations say they've already revamped their workflows to optimize RPA investments, while an additional 40 percent have focused their efforts on revamping only critical workflows. And while not necessarily optimal, at least 24 percent have made adjustments to some of their workflows (with 6 percent admitting they've made very few or no adjustments at all, and left incremental efficiencies on the table).

Our research data confirms that RPA is making significant inroads into powering the decision-making of organizations. Most organizations are justifying the ROI of their RPA investments by driving both the complete and critical revamping of workflows across their teams. This



pattern reflects RPA's growing recognition of value and acceptance among front line workers and middle managers and its influence in strengthening the overall employment experience.

But what about the 30 percent block of organizations that have made only modest (some, few or no) adjustments? We believe this may link back to budget allocation issues. More importantly, for RPA suppliers this represents an opportunity to advocate the necessity of broadening RPA investments to both improve the ROI benefits of investments and minimize existing obstacles that include insufficient employee training and buy-in.

Workforce Adaptability: Proactive support and training is critical.

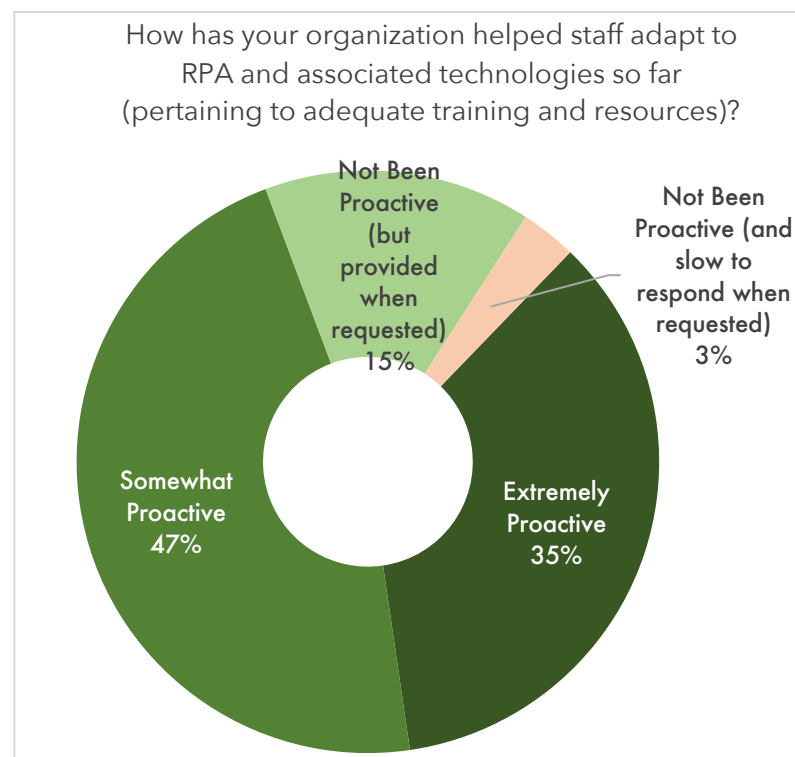
Proactive employee support, training, and access to necessary resources are critical to the success of any technology implementation. But for RPA the stakes may be higher than for many other technologies or aspects of digital transformation—RPA directly impacts the workflow of general employees and is, for many workers, a step up in the use of technology.

On the positive side, 35 percent of our panel say their organization has been extremely proactive in providing staff with adequate training and resources. But 47 percent believe their organization has been only somewhat proactive, or perhaps somewhat lacking, in training and support. More telling, 18 percent say their organization has not been proactive at all, only providing support when requested.

It's not surprising that a lack of proactive training and support would be cited in an environment where employee training and the absence of a clear vision or mission statement for RPA are cited as two of the top three barriers organizations must overcome to achieve RPA success.

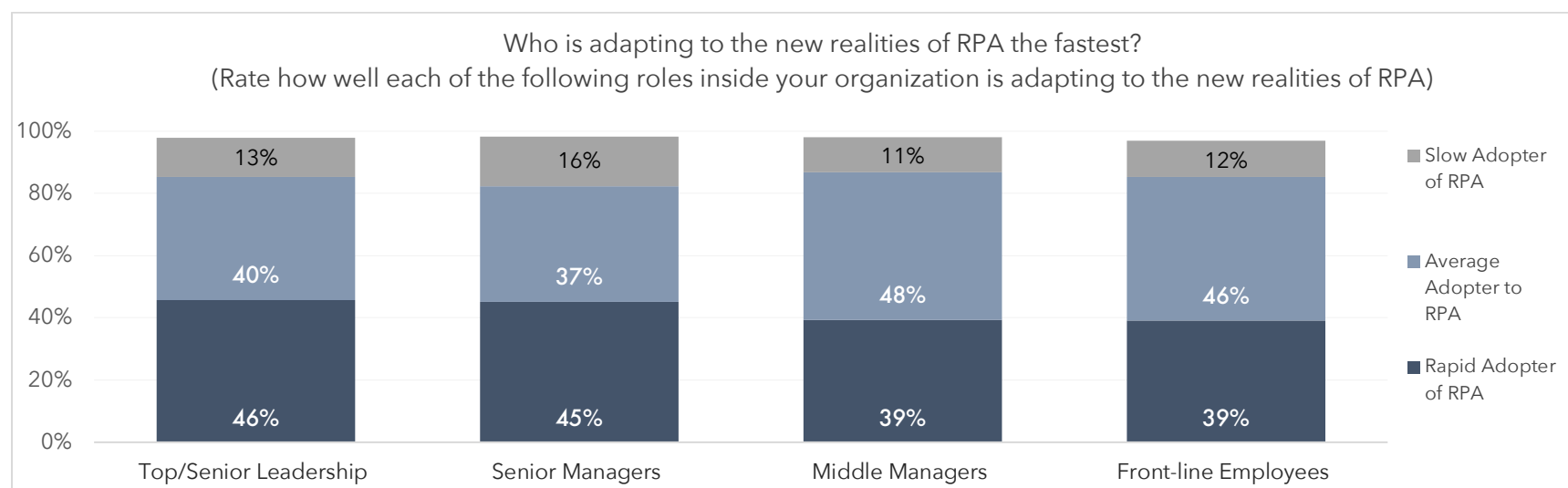
Given the issues surrounding proactive support and employee training, we were not surprised to see variations in how quickly different groups within the enterprise are adapting to RPA.

Those at the top, the senior leadership charged with the decision to implement RPA, are considered the most rapid adopters (46 percent), with 40 percent considered average adopters and only 13 percent of leadership considered to be laggards, or slow to adopt RPA. Similarly, senior managers have a positive rapid-average adopter edge, with 45 percent considered rapid and just 37



percent average in their embracing of RPA. But middle managers and front line employees? Both are more likely to be average adopters (48 percent and 46 percent respectively), and this is not a surprise given issues surrounding the perceived value of RPA, its role in the employee workflow, and a lack of proactive training on the part of many organizations. Put another way, the leadership of organizations are instrumental in recognizing the value of, and driving a successful implementation of, RPA.

Senior management has the highest percentage of slow adopters within the enterprise, at 16 percent, perhaps an indication of a vested interest in protecting the status quo from the unknowns of RPA integration.



IT professionals lead the RPA way forward.

Leadership in RPA is more than just being a rapid adopter, centering around the ability to champion and facilitate the introduction, training, and support needed both within an business unit and across the entire organization (between business units). Across nine business functions, the IT organization is the top-cited champion and facilitator by 44 percent of enterprises. Engineering (outside of IT), manufacturing and human resources round out the enterprise-wide champions at 31 percent, 28 percent, and 28 percent, respectively. Notably, IT is the clear lead, champion, and driving force behind RPA implementations, with most other business functions somewhat evenly cited, except for sales, considered a lead champion within less than a quarter of all enterprises.

This relatively even distribution is a positive sign that RPA support is widespread and, while there are clear leaders, there is a broad and consistent level of support with most organizations and individual business units.

Who deviates from the norm?

Enterprises in the AR/VR or gaming industries cite IT as the top champion and facilitator of RPA 63 percent of the time, followed not by engineering, but by human resources at 44 percent.

FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

RPA is no exception in the requirement that an emerging technology needs champions and facilitators in order to execute a successful adoption strategy. With their technical expertise, IT and engineering teams are often viewed as the ongoing leaders in technology implementation, and when it comes to RPA, that continues to be the case. On the other hand, it is somewhat surprising to see non-technical units, such as Sales, Marketing, HR, and Customer Service/Support identified as playing tangible leadership roles at both the organization-wide and business unit levels (i.e., 24 - 34 percent levels). While this attests to the growing impact of RPA at the enterprise-wide and business unit levels, it does not simplify the sales process for RPA suppliers and their partners. We believe that the RPA sales processes and cycles will become increasingly multi-unit and complex, although it attests to the expanding presence and influence of RPA, as well as the need for more comprehensive and holistic RPA sales packages.

5 RPA USE CASES

Knowing the customer means knowing their top use cases.

We know that improving productivity and employee experiences are the business objectives that have achieved the highest success rate through existing RPA implementations (cited by 41 and 38 percent, respectively), but what is the top use case that will drive, or consume, investment dollars over the current two-year planning horizon? In a word, profits.

Over 54 percent of enterprises cite increasing profit as the top (highly important) driver of investment dollars over the coming 24 months. Improving productivity (a driver we would consider to be a key enabler of higher profitability) is a close number two, cited by 52 percent. It's no surprise that improving employee experiences and simplifying complex systems follow evenly at 47 percent. There's a pattern here: Simple business processes yield an improved employee experience, which results in productivity gains that can drive increased profitability.

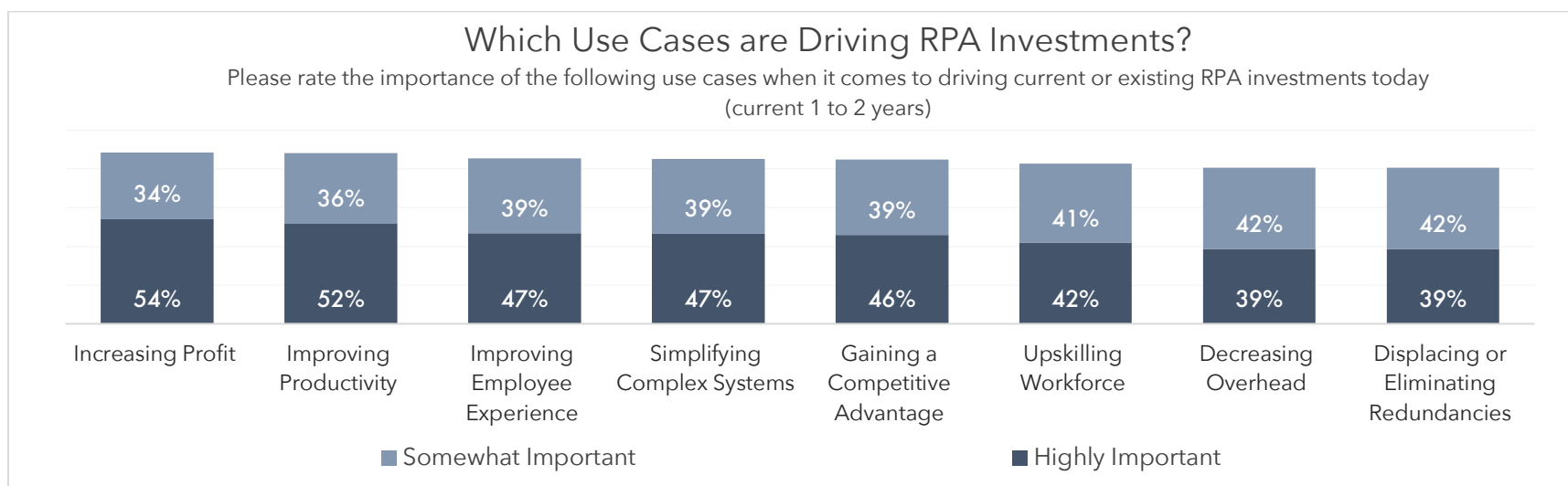
54 percent of organizations cite increasing profits as the leading driver of current or new investments in RPA solutions.

This focus on profits provides a notable distinction from previous questions regarding the overall success of past RPA investments and front line employee/middle management perceptions of RPA investment drivers. In each of those three question areas, the focus was on improving productivity as the top category (i.e., Excellent, Critically Important).

Who deviates from the norm?

Highly important drivers of investments in RPA by industry:

<p>Increasing Profit</p> <p>Smart Cities (63%) Healthcare & Insurance (62%) Banking & Finance (55%)</p>	<p>Improving Productivity</p> <p>Retail (61%) Industrial IoT (59%) Autonomous Driving & Transportation (45%)</p>	<p>Improving Employee Experience</p> <p>AR/VR & Gaming (55%)</p>	<p>Upskilling Workforce</p> <p>Smart Cities (63%)</p>
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FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

Only two percentage points separate the profit increase category from the productivity improvement category, which could denote a difference of limited application. However, its identification as the leading use case within the high importance tier signifies that prioritizing the profit increase use case up front establishes the business and operational foundation for productivity improvements as the lead driver for investment success and workforce perception of investment justification. RPA ecosystem players need to be aware that it's important to factor in simplifying complex systems (46 percent) and gaining competitive advantages (46 percent) as rounding out the top-tier of use cases identified by organizations, providing a competitive advantage over players lacking such knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS

The technology of RPA is changing, as is its role. Organizations need to keep pace with these changes in order to optimize and leverage the benefits RPA can offer today and in the future.

Based on our research and ongoing activities in the digital and RPA sectors, we offer the following key findings, recommendations and predictions.

KEY FINDINGS

INSIGHT ON THE ROLE OF RPA

Organizations must understand the growing acceptance and influence of RPA from a strategic perspective. RPA isn't just an automation technology any more. It's not just a part of technology, it's a driver and enabler of strategic business outcomes. Organizations are rapidly identifying RPA as ready for enterprise-wide deployments over the next two. This trend demonstrates enterprises are making RPA integral to both their technology and business development plans, further elevating the vital role RPA is playing, and can play, within enterprise strategic decision-making.

INSIGHT ON THE NEED FOR DRIVING INVESTMENT

RPA is becoming increasingly important as it pertains to investment decision-making and influencing workforce perceptions. For most organizations, RPA investments are fulfilling the two key business objectives of improving productivity and improving the employee experience. The connection between productivity gains and enhancing the employee experience demonstrates RPA investments are delivering ROI benefits simultaneously across the entire organization, as well as to individual employees, justifying expansion of RPA investments over the next five years.

INSIGHT ON BARRIERS

Enterprises must focus on reducing the leading obstacles to RPA adoption. Organizations must fund RPA beyond supporting the necessary technical and service components, but also allocate resources to strengthening employee training and boost internal communications. Without taking a holistic approach to RPA adoption and integration, enterprises risk undercutting their overall investments due to insufficient training and communications.

INSIGHT ON USE CASES

Profit increase leads the way. RPA suppliers need to take notice that the profit increase use case establishes the business and operational foundation for accruing additional benefits like productivity improvements and improving the employee experience in short order. Add-in the top-tier use cases of simplifying complex systems and gaining competitive advantages, RPA ecosystem players are in a position to focus their portfolio development and marketing on the areas that are most likely to build their presence and influence in fulfilling the use case priorities of enterprises.

INSIGHT ON RPA'S IMPACT ON ORGANIZATIONS

Enterprises must recognize the impact of RPA on organizational and employee performance. Organizations are concerned about the impact of RPA on employees and organization performance, but RPA adoption requires knowledge about the most likely changes to operations which ensue, the adaptability of various roles to new RPA realities, and understanding which business units are leading RPA assimilation. Moreover, RPA's expanding presence and influence warrant the need for more comprehensive and holistic RPA adoption strategies, including broad championing across the whole organization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Three recommendations for enterprises planning or implementing RPA solutions.

- **Develop Organization-wide RPA Strategies:** Executive teams and decision-makers must implement an organization-wide approach, especially in developing a communications strategy which conveys the benefits of RPA in augmenting the workplace experience, in order to hasten and enlarge acceptance across the entire workforce. Aligning the RPA adoption approach with the organization's overall digital transformation strategy can further streamline RPA assimilation and boost productivity gains.
- **Build the Right Ecosystem of Partners:** Despite being a well-established, proven technology, RPA is continuing to evolve at a rapid pace. New use cases and shifting employee/partner/customer demands should continue to uncover additional waves of opportunity (what is not suitable today for RPA may very well be in the near future). Identifying the right partners with both broad and targeted expertise is critical to properly anticipating opportunities and effectively deriving greater value through the intelligent use of RPA in the future.
- **Focus on Employee Augmentation:** There are many drivers, and benefits, of a well-designed and well-orchestrated RPA implementation. But the greatest success comes from those strategies that place growth over consolidation, efficiency over

cost reductions, and employee augmentation over employee replacement. The goal should be to leverage RPA to increase and expand operations in a more predictable, efficient manner, not the use of RPA as a cost-cutting, employee elimination opportunity.

PREDICTIONS

Three predictions on the future of RPA and intelligent automation.

- **Barriers to Adoption will Fall, Quickly:** At present, lack of budget and employee training are the top primary barriers to the adoption of RPA technologies and tools. However, RPA itself, through improved efficiency, reliability, and auditability (and thus higher performance at a lower relative cost point – a key value proposition) should help remove budgetary constraints – particularly where there is a reluctance to invest in new technology. It is clear the current crisis will have an impact on this reluctance based on the clear value proposition the integration of RPA and intelligent automation into business processes delivers. We expect budget issues to become less of a barrier as a result. Additionally, we believe that RPA tools will increasingly become easier to implement and manage, further negating the training barrier.
- **Employee Experience will Drive RPA re-Adoption:** 77 percent of organizations have a positive or optimistic perspective on RPA and believe it improves their work environment and enables them (employees) to do their jobs better. Better performance and working conditions are key to improving employee experience. We anticipate that employee experience (which is key to driving customer experience) will become increasingly important over the coming years, ultimately becoming a key differentiator in talent acquisition and retention. As employees shift lower-level functions to RPA, they are able to focus on higher-level, and more interesting or rewarding tasks. This value proposition is one that will result in employees themselves looking for new opportunities to upgrade or implement RPA to continuously improve their job productivity and satisfaction.
- **RPA Growth Could Accelerate to 40% CAGR:** The market for RPA is growing, and we believe it has the potential to reach a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) close to 40 percent within the 3 - 5 year planning horizon. Our data suggests that 88 percent of enterprises will have begun enterprise-side implementation within the coming 24 months. At this point, we anticipate the increased commoditization and bundling of RPA tools and technologies with higher-level orchestration and #AI-based systems (intelligent automation systems) that will help uncover new opportunities and drive the upgrading (or re-adoption) of RPA at successively higher levels of automation (and value).

AUTHORS SPONSORS

A brief word about the authors and sponsors of this research paper and the supporting study.

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[UiPath](#) is leading the “automation first” era – championing one robot for every person, delivering free and open training and collaboration and enabling robots to learn new skills through AI and machine learning. Led by a commitment to bring digital era skills to more than a million people, the company’s enterprise Robotic Process Automation (RPA) platform has already automated millions of repetitive, mind-numbing tasks for business and government organizations all over the world, improving productivity, customer experience and employee job satisfaction.

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APPENDIX DEMOGRAPHICS

This paper is based on the cumulative experience of the Futurum Research team and a primary market study defined by the following demographics.

OUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

During the 3rd quarter of 2019 we conducted a primary research study with the goal of better understanding how organization workforces perceive RPA, what are the investment drivers for RPA, identifying barriers, RPA's impact on organization culture and investment decision making, and the leading use case applications.

The survey consisted of 14 questions covering topics such as the current state of RPA deployments, organizational effectiveness in aiding staff adaptation to RPA, RPA implementation expectations, worker perceptions of RPA investment value, and identifying top obstacles and use cases.

The survey was a double-blind survey, with neither the participants nor Futurum Research knowing the actual identities of the other parties. Potential participants were randomly targeted from a pool of qualified individuals, and then further qualified within the survey itself, as noted in the demographics section below.

OUR RESEARCH DEMOGRAPHICS

Our survey panel included 520 panelists, spanning three major geographic regions across over a seven broad industry sectors, representing organizations with less than a thousand to more than 50,000 employees. These respondents offered a range of perspectives on the state of RPA adoption and the value propositions of RPA.

Industry Vertical Breakouts: To further understand our survey panel, we queried all panelists to identify in what industry their organization primarily operates.

Industrial IoT	38%
Banking & Finance	16%
AR/VR & Gaming	12%
Autonomous Driving & Transportation	11%
Smart Cities	8%

Healthcare & Insurance	8%
Retail	7%

The top-tier of represented industries are as follows:

- **AR/VR**, including scientific, research & engineering services, AR/VR design services, gaming, and other AR/VR offerings.
- **Autonomous Driving & transportation**, including auto software, auto equipment, R&D, support services and transportation.
- **Banking & Finance**, including capital markets and investment banking.
- **Healthcare & Insurance**, including medical equipment, health facilities/hospitals, related fields and insurance.
- **Industrial IoT**, including computing, cloud, mobile, software, AI/analytics, and IoT specialist organizations.
- **Smart Cities**, including public sector, public safety, energy/utilities.
- **Retail**, including brick-and-mortar stores, digital or online retail, and related shipping, warehousing and distribution centers.

Business Size: Our survey targeted organizations with a minimum size of 500 global employees.

- 13% between 500-999 employees.
- 50% between 1,000 – 4,999 employees.
- 28% between 5,000 – 49,999 employees.
- 9% with 50,000 or more employees.

Revenue Range: Our survey organizations with a minimum size of \$500 million (\$USD) in annual revenues global employees.

- 11% with \$10 billion or more
- 26% between \$5 billion - 9.9 billion
- 44% between \$1 billion - \$4.9 billion
- 19% between \$500 million - \$999 million

Geographical Breakdown: Our survey was designed to gather opinions from RPA business and technology leaders from around the world, with balanced distribution across Asia-Pacific (including China) 35 percent, EMEA 31 percent and the Americas (North/Central/South) 35 percent.