



RPA Tools Comparison:

Insights into the top RPA Providers

2023



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Choosing the right RPA platform for your business might seem daunting to you. As you survey the landscape of options, the jargon and marketing can often be more confusing than clarifying. How do you know the total cost of a particular solution over time? Will it scale cost-effectively as your needs grow or change? Is it truly secure?

To help you understand the complexities of today's most popular and commonly deployed RPA tools, we have compiled a report covering five unique platforms with analysis sourced from our own experiences as well as third-party research. Designed to identify the most promising aspects of each platform while laying out any accompanying risks and flaws, this report addresses topics such as the security, flexibility, speed of development, and cost of each RPA tool.

The solutions being reviewed in this report include:

- Automation Anywhere
- Blue Prism
- Microsoft's Power Automate
- NICE RPA
- UiPath

We've selected these offerings specifically because they have been recognized by users and technology gurus alike to be the best of the best that RPA has to offer in 2023. We'll tackle each RPA tool alphabetically and unbiasedly — highlighting pros and cons, as well as the hidden costs and caveats behind every marketing elevator pitch.

Ultimately, whether your priorities are cost, security, scalability, or time-to-deployment, this report will help you better evaluate the market leaders in RPA solutions, leading you to the right partner and a more efficient, streamlined, and people-centric workplace.

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RPA Solutions: Automation Anywhere

Overview

Automation Anywhere addresses key processes across every department within a business via desktop automation sequencing. It can automate any part of a client's business, saving time and money. Automation Anywhere boasts millions of bot deployments globally with a cloud-native, web-based automation platform combining RPA, AI, ML, and analytics.

Focus

Robotic Desktop Automation (RDA)

Pros

- Robust UI element identification
- Basic automation solution out-of-the-box
- Large “Bot Store” marketplace with additional pre-built solutions

Cons

- Changes require manual intervention and may incur additional costs and time
- A one-process, one-bot model limits scalability
- Less robust analytics than other platforms

Scalability

Scalability limitations are worth noting in Automation Anywhere. As an RDA-only solution rather than true RPA, it creates one bot to solve one process. Scaling a process means precisely that — any scaling performed will be for that process only. Each subsequent process must be scaled as a separate effort. However, multiple levels of cloning capabilities can ease the process for skilled users.

Required Level of IT Assistance

An Automation Anywhere user is required for script recording. Any process customization demands higher than average IT expertise, sometimes at a level not available in-house, requiring third-party support. As a result of the one-bot, one-process model — customization may cause costs and development times to rise as deployments increase.

Technical Alliances

Automation Anywhere is expanding its technical alliances with a technology focus versus business use. Given the level of third-party support needed for customization, this is a good strategy overall, but end users may not see the benefits as easily.

Security

Humans must oversee log files, a manual recording approach that creates potential security risks. Automation Anywhere's recommended security add-ons can help mitigate these risks, but this may increase costs and delay deployment times.

Productivity/Features

- Script Oriented; recording includes human delays
- Desktop automation only
- Client productivity is reduced

Integrity

- Sometimes seen as an imitator of competitor innovation
- Clients have expressed discomfort at a perceived lag between AA and competition

Insights

- Analytics for RDA but not RPA
- Analytics focuses on bot activities rather than covering true RPA

Summary

Automation Anywhere is very good at performing one specific process, and for many organizations, that may be a good fit. Automation Anywhere may fall behind more complex organizations and enterprise structures due to labor-intensive scaling, rising security prices, and the lack of utility provided by a more robust solution.

Automation Anywhere is a good solution for small, uncomplicated organizations that have a single major process to automate. Higher complexity requirements will need a more functional solution to be cost-effective and scalable.

Report Card:

Scalability:	Room for improvement
Security:	Room for improvement
Productivity:	Average
Analytics:	Average
Overall:	★★★★☆

RPA Solutions: Blue Prism

Overview

Blue Prism is an enterprise-grade “Digital Workforce” powered by software bots with live blue-chip customers. A market leader for 16 years, Blue Prism essentially invented Robotic Process Automation. With 160+ large enterprise customers and 30+ Leading Partner technical alliances, Blue Prism delivers on a business-owned, IT-supported Digital Workforce for Fortune 500 and the public sector market.

Focus

Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

Pros

- Enterprise-grade RPA tool with “business-led” no/low-code approach
- Speed of implementation is enhanced by browser-based automation anchored to coding
- Code insertion capabilities offer a unique advantage over traditional development tools

Cons

- Integrated OCR technology could be improved
- Slow moving to adapt and evolve offerings compared to the competition
- A bit on the pricey side at roughly \$14,950 with mandatory support (as of May 1, 2022)

Scalability

Blue Prism includes nearly every capability out of the box, providing great scalability in the RPA market. Additionally, with the ability for a single environment to have Digital Workers in the thousands, Blue Prism’s platform can grow horizontally and vertically with the size and speed businesses require.

Required Level of IT Assistance

Blue Prism is designed to meet any business’s specific IT infrastructure needs, offering on-premises, private/public cloud, or SaaS with burst pricing deployment options from a single SKU. Added low/no-code platform gives process owners additional control.

Technical Alliances

Blue Prism enjoys the reputation as “The Original Platform” for the digital workforce. It boasts a robust partner ecosystem and a joint engineering approach through the Technology Alliance Program that includes tight integrations with companies such as Appian, CyberArk, Celonis, ServiceNow, and Splunk, all of which are found on the Blue Prism Digital Exchange.

Security

Within Blue Prism’s platform, everything is automatically recorded. This built-in security prevents interference with log files, creating immutable nonrepudiation logs that will hold up as legal, court-admissible evidence. Compliance credentials include HIPAA, SOX, and PCI DSS C.

Productivity/Features

- Object-Oriented: allows for reuse, saving time when there are changes
- An intelligent wait state reduces load times
- Debugging mode allows tests to placeholder data
- One BP app server can handle up to 200 bots

Integration/Customization

- Easy to customize and integrate
- Blue Prism can securely run Control Room in a web browser
- RPA functionality can change without re-coding

Integrity

- Blue Prism wields a committed client base with over 2000 customers across 170 countries
- Only RPA to meet all IEEE criteria
- 98% renewals

Insights

- Analytics capability is strong; everything is logged, and out-of-the-box dashboards provide configurable views on process and environment statistics
- Analytic pane within Blue Prism allows users to easily create drag and drop tile-based reports
- Built-in capabilities allow exporting of data to other databases, Splunk, Grafana, Power BI, Tableau, search engines, or any other HTTP endpoint

Summary

Blue Prism is recognized by many as the original innovator of the RPA industry. However, it has needed help keeping pace with the speed of innovation among competitors in recent years. Blue Prism supports the business user’s end goals without competitors’ serious security or scalability concerns. Blue Prism brings a lot of RPA power to one solution without additional pricing at the cost of heavy reliance on a partner ecosystem.

With Tier 1 security, flexibility, integration, and scalability, Blue Prism continues to reach the top echelon of RPA. Blue Prism’s 98% renewal rate attests that it can continue to meet customer needs in a competitive market.

Report Card:	
Scalability:	Good
Security:	Excellent
Productivity:	Average
Analytics:	Good
Overall:	★★★★☆

RPA Solutions: Microsoft Power Automate

Overview

Microsoft's RPA product, Power Automate, is a low-code SaaS-based intelligent automation platform run in Microsoft's Azure ecosystem. Power Automate surfaced in 2020 and has quickly risen to become an RPA leader. Augmented by the program's free offline-use desktop application, Power Automate Desktop (PAD), Microsoft offers an end-to-end RPA platform that combines API integration and orchestration suitable for citizen developers and IT professionals alike.

Focus

Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

Pros

- A robust portfolio of features offers automation, integration, analytics, and low code app development in one platform
- Integration with widely used Azure apps
- Windows 10/11 users receive free access to Power Automation Desktop (PAD) — Microsoft's RPA solution for local task recording and Power Automate's RPA Runtime (which does not interact with Azure cloud and apps)

Cons

- Power Automate relies heavily on PAD to run its RPA bots in many cases. PAD is exclusive to Windows OS, posing significant limitations to Mac and Linux natives
- Single user pricing models are cumbersome for a large user base
- Complicated UX, with difficulties navigating between Power Automate's Web-prioritized startup and PAD's manual application launch

Scalability

Power Automate grants access to RPA capabilities necessary for business users to diagnose and solve their process problems with one solution, and Windows OS users can deploy their first automations in minutes at no cost through PAD. However, full functionality remains locked for free users before upgrading to the paid, Azure-focused Power Automate platform. In addition, further scalability, particularly for large enterprises, is limited by Power Automate's continued reliability on PAD and the platform's single-user pricing model.

Required Level of IT Assistance

Power Automate boasts Low-code app development, ideal for citizen developers and business users. However, bot deployment and management remain highly technical and will require additional support.

Technical Alliances

Microsoft has a global partner program and many technical alliances available to support Power Automate, with consultation costs ranging from no cost to \$200,000.

Security

Power Automate's security needs are covered by Microsoft 365 and Azure AD.

Productivity/Features

- Power BI analytics
- Process Advisor process mining
- AI Builder low code/prebuilt apps
- Chatbots

Integration/Customization

- Access to automated flows in Azure's cloud
- Free access to low code RPA software for Windows users

- Large repository of available training videos and resources

Integrity

While Power Automate offers end-to-end solutions, the reportedly confusing pricing with little help from Microsoft representatives could lead to frustrations.

Insights

- Solid capabilities for Microsoft users utilizing Microsoft's cloud-based suite
- Attractive entry-level features for small enterprises
- Several problematic options to weigh for larger businesses

Summary

Power Automate could easily be a favorite choice for business users engaged with Microsoft's expansive cloud-based Power series and other Windows-exclusive apps. Power Automate easily mixes API-based automation with AI and quality UI. Citizens developers on Windows OS can easily wield the platform to identify, design, and program RPA in the free PAD version or with a paid, all-inclusive Power Automate License. However — past programming — bot deployment may require IT support or, at the very least, help from a comprehensive library of available resources. Despite Microsoft's desire for enterprise-wide RPA on a large scale, Power Automate has difficulties scaling up to support a more significant number of users, and attempts to decode the issue with Microsoft support have yielded few results.

Power Automate is a solid choice for small Microsoft-oriented enterprises and single users running Windows. It contains all the capabilities of a leading end-to-end solution, some of which come at no cost. However, larger organizations may have difficulties getting Power Automate up and running.

Report Card:

Scalability:	Room for improvement
Security:	Average
Productivity:	Excellent
Analytics:	Excellent
Overall:	★★★★☆

RPA Solutions: UiPath

Overview

UiPath is a leader in the “automation first” digital transformation, leveraging a complete RPA software platform to help organizations efficiently transform business processes through automation. With solutions for Citrix, SAP, and BPO automation, UiPath seamlessly fits within global environments and complies with all security requirements, offering an enterprise-level solution for integrated automation capabilities.

Focus

Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

Pros

- Seamless integration with leading enterprise software suites
- Strong technical alliances within IT communities
- Innovative Task Capture feature for process documentation

Cons

- May not be as cost-effective as other options for budget-conscious users
- Some changes require manual intervention, which may incur additional costs and time
- IT experience could be required for independent management

Scalability

Unlike some solutions that allow business-level users to create, build, and deploy processes, UiPath may require a higher level of technical expertise to perform these tasks. Priorities may slow development, which can be a hurdle toward scalability. A second consideration is UiPath’s à la carte modular purchasing model. Because of the nature of modules, customers may become confused about what they need, and cost/development times could ramp up quickly. However, any uncertainties can be offset by mapping out an implementation strategy upfront with help from a certified UiPath partner.

Required Level of IT Assistance

On-premise installation of UiPath may require a deeper understanding of IT to develop, deploy, and manage processes fully. However, Cloud installs include access to UiPath’s team of experts and additional resources to help complete the installation.

Technical Alliances

UiPath is improving its technical alliances through careful positioning and expansion, focusing on benefits for both IT and business end-users.

- Emphasis on no-code/low-code app development enables business users to create simple solutions for process problems without jeopardizing high-level functionality for IT professionals.
- Low-code UX app builder interfaces with cloud and on-prem applications, including ERP and legacy systems.

Security

UiPath’s cloud platform utilizes core Microsoft Azure services for security, including compute, storage, networking, SQL database, app configuration, encryption, and identity and access management. The on-premise product requires third-party security/firewalls, calling for security-conscious IT departments to follow best practices. Customizable logging profiles allow for monitoring at both the bot and orchestrator levels of automation.

Integrity

UiPath’s web-based documentation and training continue to improve over time.

Insights

- Able to harness actionable insights for RDA
- Limited in-depth analytics for some clients’ needs
- Potential security concerns could create uneasiness

Productivity/Features

- Object-based, IT-focused
- Strong functionality for desktop automation
- Enterprise-scale governance

Summary

UiPath is a powerful product that has been designed to benefit both citizen developers and IT professionals. As a Windows-based platform, UiPath will make sense in certain corporate enterprise environments utilizing Windows as a primary OS., particularly for businesses with the time, IT expertise, and resources to deploy a fully on-premise solution. Small companies or budget-conscious users who can troubleshoot technical questions can rely on off-prem or cloud-based applications to develop and deploy powerful low-code software.

Integration/Customization

- Exclusively uses Windows operating system, limiting macOS and Linux users
- Developer support is required for on-premise integration of UiPath with applications

UiPath is an excellent choice for organizations with ample IT staff to support an on-premise install. While an emphasis on flexible low-code software softens the education barrier for smaller companies without a dedicated IT — additional complexity and price-per-bot models can easily be leveraged for success by engaging a certified partner. UiPath continues to develop at a rapid rate with new technology in productivity continually raising the bar for RPA competitors.

Report Card:	
Scalability:	Above Average
Security:	Good
Productivity:	Excellent
Analytics:	Excellent
Overall:	★★★★☆

RPA Solutions: NICE

Overview

We've seen NICE RPA as a recent but promising arrival to the top echelon of RPA leaders, overtaking a previous frontrunner, "Workfusion". NICE combines artificial intelligence, process discovery, Automation Studio, and optical character (OCR) recognition functionality to bring results for business and technical developers.

Focus

Broadly focused on text and speech use cases with a strong emphasis on supporting contact centers.

Pros

- Wields powerful desktop automation AI capable of real-time speech analytics, inventory checks, and next-best-offer recommendations.
- Automation Finder process discovery tool specializes in advanced process prioritization.
- Relatively low barrier to entry.

Cons

- Heavily geared towards improving contact centers — not the most robust option.
- Cumbersome at times requiring separate logins and startups for multiple programs within the solution.
- Limited bot testing for unattended RPA.

Scalability

NICE is a low-priced RPA option with minimal start-up costs. Multiple pricing models make NICE an attractive answer to varying scales of RPA problems. Flexible purchasing options include subscription-based, one-time-purchase, use-case or transaction-based models. NICE is used by both small businesses and large enterprise developers globally.

Required Level of IT Assistance

NICE utilizes some low code functionality to tackle simple tasks, but full functionality of the software will require a stronger background in programming. Furthermore, the software's limited real-time collaboration features make solution development between business developers and IT users a challenge.

Technical Alliances

NICE has balanced a mix of IT and business end-user partnerships including Cyberark, Celaton, Microsoft, Amazon AI, ABBYY, and more.

Security

NICE utilizes security features that are similar to other offerings — including user access controls and authentication.

Productivity/Features

- NEVA AI desktop attended automation
- Automation Finder process discovery tool
- Click to Automate feature scans employee desktop data and provides actionable improvements with the click of a button.
- Automation Studio for building both attended and unattended automations, although unattended functionality is slightly limiting.
- OCR and speech-driven automations improve content intake and processing
- Visualized bot management

Integrity

- NICE sponsors and promotes many ways to develop the next generation of technological professionals and decrease age and gender gaps.
- While NICE boasts a simple to use and easily adopted interface, user reviews indicate otherwise.
- NICE adheres to strict AI ethics and users must agree to its ethical code for robotics use.

Insights

- NICE provides many analytical tools that can diagnose and course-correct everyday processes within an organization. Further tools to keep tabs on the health of running RPA bots seem limited.

Summary

NICE RPA has several noteworthy features, including NEVA desktop automation AI, Click to Automate, and advanced process discovery. Users that rely on NICE to improve customer service and customer centers will not be disappointed in the abilities they will gain to quickly improve workflow tasks with voice-enabled automations and text analytics. However, these attractive features begin to wane outside of desktop automation and attended RPA, and some users will experience frustrations when trying to quickly create and deploy custom automations in a variety of apps under separate logins and clunky UI.

NICE RPA is doing one thing really well — improving the quality of life for users operating in contact centers. Their dedication to building a greater community of technology professionals is admirable, particularly as their software demands a bit more coding experience than other, more user-friendly solutions. Businesses looking for a great desktop automation solution should consider NICE. Those desiring a more robust portfolio of features may want to consider other options.

Report Card:

Scalability: Excellent

Security: Average

Productivity: Good

Analytics: Average

Overall: ★★★★★



About KeyMark

KeyMark is a leading provider of intelligent automation solutions focused on enabling better business outcomes through a comprehensive list of solutions such as capture (OCR), workflow (ECM), case management (DCM) and robotic process automation (RPA) solutions, artificial intelligence, and machine learning technology. KeyMark helps clients leverage this technology to maximize productivity and decrease manual labor in almost every industry including financial services, healthcare, insurance, manufacturing, distribution, utilities, logistics, and the public sector.

Through decades of proven experience and partnered with the industry's leading vendors in automation, KeyMark can source and supply tailored-fit solutions, allowing organizations to scale effectively, achieve operational agility, and receive award-winning Extended Support. Additionally, KeyMark is the creator of Forms InMotion, an innovative software-as-a-service solution for forms automation; and CloudCapture, a business process outsourcing (BPO) service that includes invoice processing, digital mailroom outsourcing, data processing outsourcing, and document conversions.

For more information, call 864-343-0500 or send an email to sales@keymarkinc.com.