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# Robotic Process Automation in Government

What is the role of Robotic Process Automation  
in the digital transformation of governments?

Whitepaper

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## Executive Summary

Digital Transformation and its growing adoption have had a significant impact on the public and government sector in recent years. Several public sector agencies across the world are leveraging digital technologies to eliminate redundant repetitive tasks and churn out increased government productivity. This whitepaper focusses on the application of Robotic Process Automation (RPA) in government workplaces and how NEC can play a significant role in the journey.

The government sector faces various challenges such as an ever-changing economic landscape, budgetary pressures, recurrent changes in the administration and constantly fluctuating public demands among others. Advances in robotics have made automation a viable and innovative way to address the challenges faced by the public sector today.

RPA can reduce the amount of time staff spend on repetitive and routine activities, allowing more time to be spent on interaction with the public and jobs requiring a greater degree of complex problem solving or human judgement. Data improvements driven by RPA can also improve the quality of information available for management decision making. RPA can therefore, contribute to cost reduction targets, drive productivity and allow organisations to refocus on delivering critical public services.

A recent Deloitte report refers to the use of RPA in the public sector as 'the new machinery of government'. By incorporating bots in the workforce, processes are streamlined and the effectiveness and productivity of governmental institutions are boosted. The application of automation significantly leads to improving citizen services and enhance the productivity of public agencies.



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## Contents

Executive Summary .....	2
Section One: How is RPA transforming business? .....	4
Section Two: Challenges faced in the government sector .....	5
Section Three: Role of RPA in government and public sector .....	5
Section Four: NEC as a partner in the process automation journey .....	9

## Section One: How is RPA transforming business?

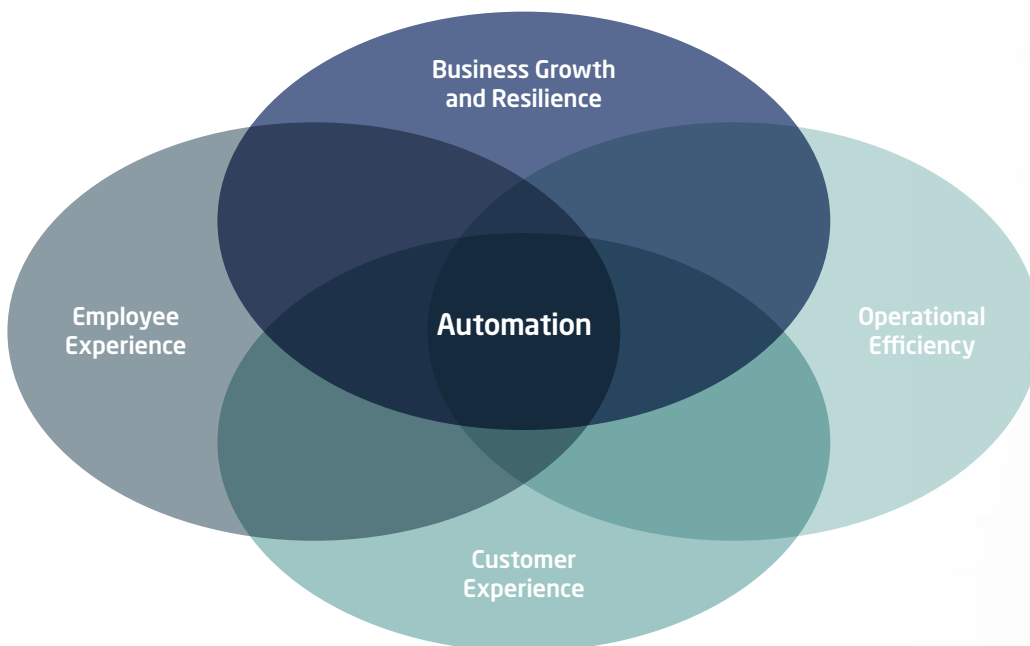
Digital transformation has become a central feature of business strategies for almost every organisation, large and small. Using digital technologies to automate business processes has become a focus for delivering the benefits of transformation initiatives. RPA is playing a key role in quickly and easily enabling new and evolving digital business models.

In a recent survey conducted by Gartner, it has been found that business leaders worldwide now see RPA as the second most important transformational technology. Organisations that have deployed automation, report significant benefits in a wide range of business areas including cost reduction, process efficiency, business performance improvement and enhanced customer satisfaction.

Today, organisations that are increasingly driven by customer and employee experience are turning to RPA as the stimulant for fresh, innovative thinking and business strategies. The emergence of intelligent automation - the integration of RPA with AI and other disruptive technologies are enabling new levels of agility as enterprises across the globe struggle with highly competitive and unpredictable business environments and rapidly evolving operating models, such as the need to 'work from home' during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Business leaders worldwide now see RPA as the second most important transformational technology.

KPMG - Technology Industry Innovation Survey, 2019



## Section Two: Challenges faced in government sector

The government and public sector today is grappling with several challenges and problems such as:

**1**

Budget constraints, overburdened employees, transactional bottlenecks and ever-evolving compliance requirements.

**2**

A growing backlog of work, and limited capacity to tackle it. Government agencies are heavily burdened by forms and processes

**3**

Lack of agile interactions with citizen services, shifting workforce demographics and frequent policy changes that need to be integrated into business practices.

**4**

Shifting employees priorities from low-value to high-value work and eliminating the burden of mundane, repetitive tasks to help public institutions focus on citizen related processes.

**5**

Federal and state workers often have to dedicate a large portion of their time in operational tasks such as collecting, moving, cleaning and re-purposing data. While strategic tasks such as data integration and analysis are left in the back burner.

Digital transformation initiatives like the implementation of automation throughout the agencies' core processes can significantly help the public sector (e.g. federal, state, and local governments) bodies overcome the listed challenges and eventually lead to improved performance, productivity and efficiency.

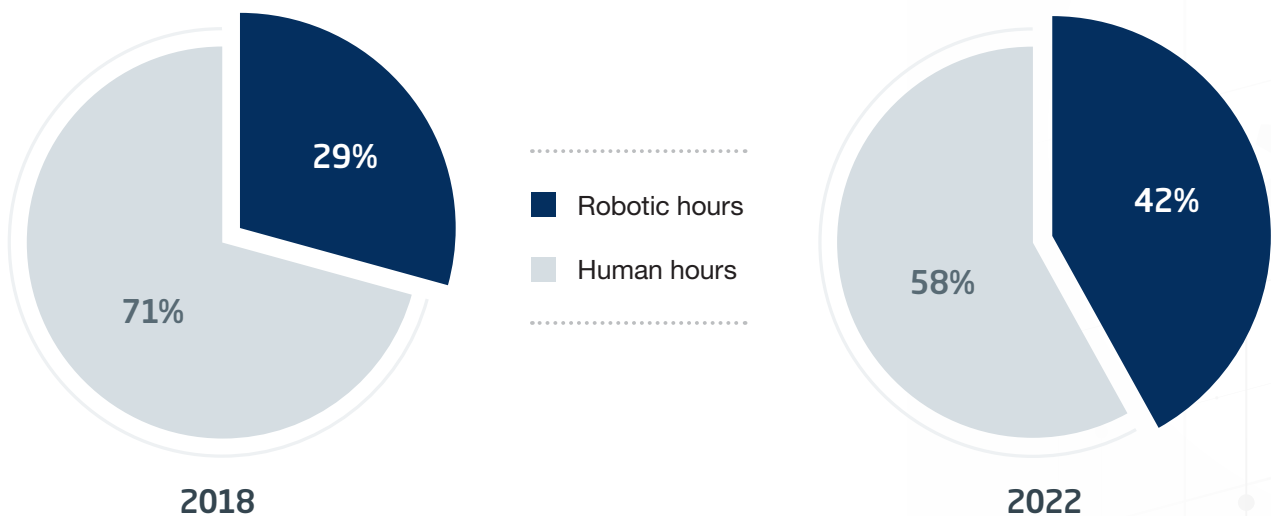
## Section Three: Role of RPA in government and public sector

The public sector is in continuous turmoil, due to various challenges. Economic shifts, the corresponding pressing need to control costs, recurrent changes in the administration, or constantly fluctuating public priorities, making the provision of effective service to citizens a difficult target to attain.

# The World Economic Forum is predicting that by the year 2022, robots will perform 42% of work

The adoption of robotic process automation in the government and public sector is a step towards digital transformation, which is likely to improve efficiency, reduce costs, improve productivity, and provide a more responsive interaction with citizens by better addressing their changing demands.

## Increase in robotic task hours between 2018 and 2022



## RPA applications in government and public sector

### Document handling and validation

Transactional tasks are crucial for the proper functioning of the sector, yet a significant cause for overburdening staff members with mundane repetitive tasks. Using RPA software the rule-based transactional work can be implemented by bots in a fatigue-free 24/7 manner, leading to significant improvement in the performance of the government program.

A further consequence of RPA deployment for document handling and validation is the reduction of operational costs.

### Reconciliation and reporting

The need for reconciliation processes is highly variable and so are the resource demands. Therefore, a scalable workforce is what is needed for the most efficient goal attainment when it comes to reconciliation and reporting.

Whether the requirement is reporting as a whole, general ledger reconciliation, or the activation of fixed assets, offloading these tasks onto software robots results in efficient resource utilisation, which automatically translates into significant cost reduction.

## Financial management and audit trail

Invoice processing is amongst the typical use cases of RPA in finance. The steps towards financial management are an epitome of automation because they are rule driven, error prone, and unfortunately highly intolerant to error. Software robots can routinise decision logic and eliminate keystroke errors, resulting in quasi risk-free audit readiness.

## Form processing

Adapting to the 21st-century trend, local government services offer residents the possibility to access, fill in forms via web portals to apply for various services (e.g., permit applications, contract administration) and support.

Service inquiries from the public are highly standardised, so the process is stable and rule-based. Use of RPA can streamline the process and lead to the most accurate results in the least amount of time, advancing customer service way beyond what human staff would be able to do.

## HR tasks

HR tasks that can be automated include data management, compliance, payroll administration, on-boarding and off-boarding. RPA promises more efficient data management, and consequently, it streamlines rule-based HR processes.

Fast updates to relevant files with accurate information about current and past employees, applicants, contractors, or new hires regarding, wage deductions, contractual or temporary modifications, payroll, attendance, etc. is a key benefit of robotic process automation in the public sector.

It simplifies the process and frees people working in governmental HR departments to focus on other value-added activities.

## RPA applications in government and public services include:



### Federal Government

Universal credit and benefits calculations, tax calculations, anti-fraud checks, license application processing.



### Local Government

Revenue collection, permit applications, incident reporting, case management, contract administration.



### Health

Coding, diagnostics, discharge processing, outpatient clinic outcomes, cashing up.



### Policing

Fixed penalty processing, intelligence reporting, crime reporting, firearms license processing and replacing the need for officers to double key the same information into different systems.



### Education

Managing admissions and enrolments, student timetabling and estates utilisation, student finance management, course assessment data handling, alumni database maintenance.

## Benefits of RPA implementations in government and public sector

With the introduction of RPA, agencies will be able to reduce costs, shift repetitive and mundane work to digital workers, and move employees off low-value work into high-value work.

### Enhance citizen experience

RPA provides flexible technology that enables agencies to keep up with citizen demand and desire for consumer-grade service levels.

### Improve service delivery

From input through to compliance and reporting, RPA enables smoother, faster, service delivery, by automating high-friction/ bottleneck steps in processes.

### Minimise improper payments

Introduce 100% accuracy to fund distribution and invoice payment processes with RPA bots designed to execute the same way, every time.

### Interoperate with any system

RPA is designed to work with any system from legacy to cloud. Free human talent from connecting the dots between systems to focus on high-value work.

### Automate government forms processing

Optimise data collection, consolidation and indexing to set up all processes with the right information, right away.

### Lower contractor costs

Reduce reliance on external resources with bots able to handle complex government process tasks quickly and securely



NEC is at the forefront of the RPA revolution, driving innovation, informing public policy and supporting our clients

## Section Four: NEC as a partner in the process automation journey

NEC is at the forefront of the RPA revolution, driving innovation, informing public policy and supporting our clients to adopt and manage this new technology. At the heart of our offering is a comprehensive methodology for RPA implementations.

For organisations beginning their RPA journey, we can provide strategic guidance, answering questions such as:

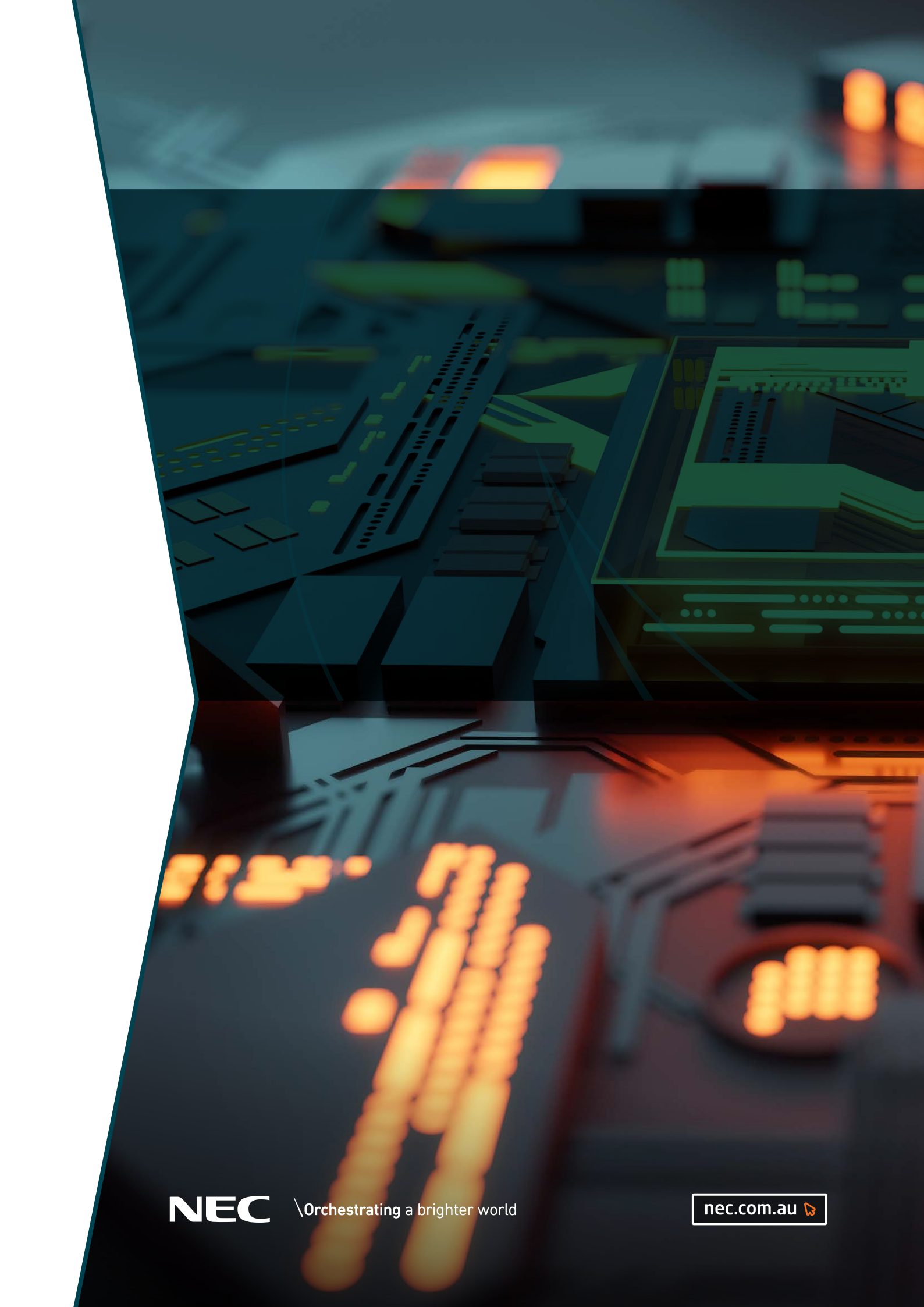
- What is the potential size of the opportunity, and how can the benefits be maximised?
- Who are the leading vendors, and what differentiates their products?
- What deployment and robot management strategy should be pursued?

To demonstrate the capability of RPA for our clients we also conduct a simple proof of concept test, or by piloting a process in their live environment. Both of these services can help clients understand what a full-scale deployment will feel like, what technical skills are required to code a robot, and what the change management implications are for larger scale implementations.

Finally, we have extensive experience assisting clients with full-scale implementations. Our team of developers and testers can build a robotic workforce, and once deployed, monitor and enhance it from afar as a managed service.

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