# ROBOTIC PROCESS AUTOMATION

## IN PLAIN ENGLISH
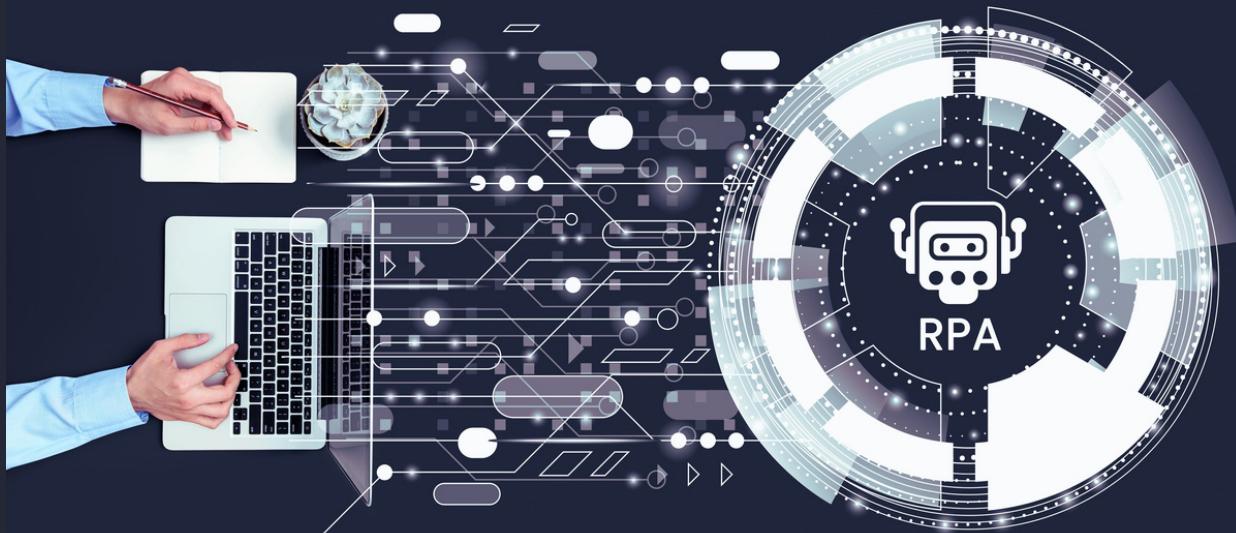
THE APIFY GUIDE TO WEB RPA FOR BUSINESS SERVICES

# Contents

# A brief introduction
## to web RPA

Type robotic process automation or its acronym (RPA) in Google Images, and you're bound to see many photos and illustrations of humanoid robots typing on a keyboard or screen, shaking hands with a human being, or striking a pensive pose.

If you know a thing or two about RPA, you probably roll your eyes every time you see such images. If you don't understand the eye-rolling, then perhaps RPA is entirely new to you.

So, let's bust the first myth about RPA from the get-go. Robotic process automation has nothing to do with robots in the mechanical sense.
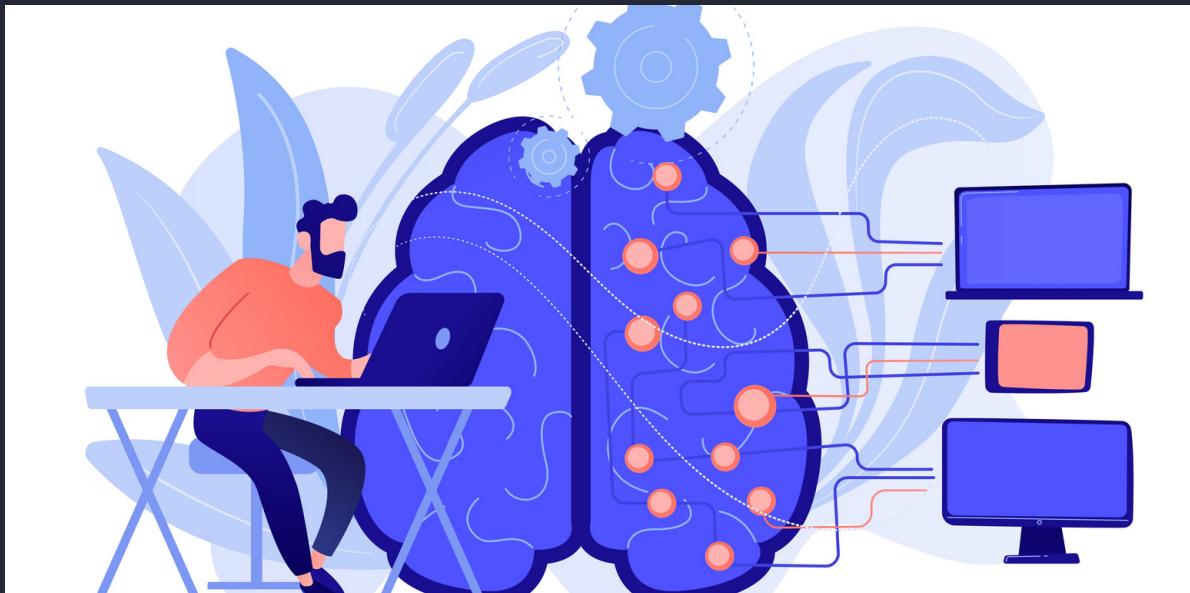
The robots in RPA are software robots, or 'bots' if you're on friendly enough terms with them to use abbreviations.

If you're in the know, you're probably aware that robotic process automation is the ruthlessly efficient method that machines will use to rule over humans after the digital apocalypse. Just kidding! That's the second myth.

Fortunately (or unfortunately, if you were hoping for a more dramatic read), RPA is not the stuff of science fiction movies. RPA is simply a form of business process automation (BPA).

RPA automates repetitive, digital data-based tasks that we would rather outsource than perform ourselves. You could say that RPA is fundamentally outsourcing tedious tasks to bots.

That's not to say that RPA will replace you and take your job. Bots are not here to embarrass you by making you look slow and incompetent in front of your boss. On the contrary, RPA improves your efficiency, increases your productivity, and saves your company money. How? Simply by supporting or replacing the monotonous and error-prone digital processing tasks that take up a disproportionate amount of human time and attention.

Let's take an HR department, for example. HR teams must contend with repetitive processes and a considerable amount of paperwork. By outsourcing work like data entry to RPA, an HR department can focus on the things that require personal contact.

In other words (as paradoxical as it might sound), RPA can augment the 'human' in Human Resources. You can leave jobs like inputting data to bots so you can handle the creative and complex tasks that require creativity and a human touch, such as inducting new staff, leadership training, or workshops.

## Key takeaways

**RPA is a way of automating business processes**

**Bots are your friends. They'll help you do your job better**

**High volume repetitive tasks that rely on digital data = you need RPA**
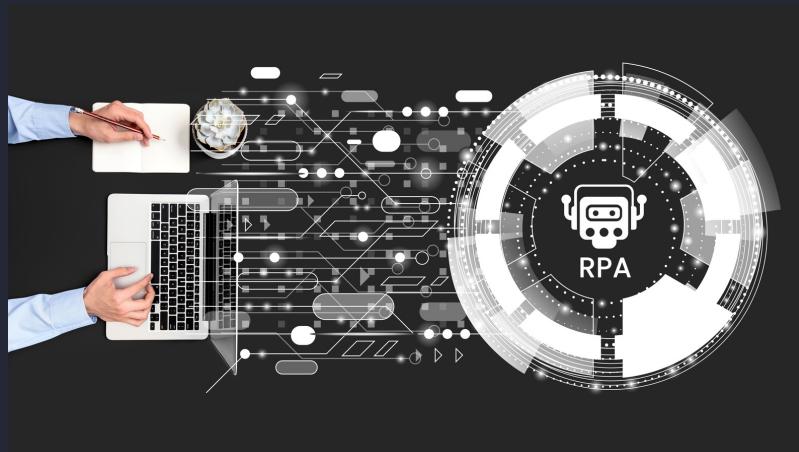
# What is web RPA?

There is only one difference between RPA and web RPA, but it is significant. Most RPA is focused on desktop applications, while web RPA is all about browsers. Desktop applications are programs that run locally on a computer device, such as a desktop or laptop. Web browsers require an internet connection or a network to function.

This means that while conventional RPA can automate, for example, spreadsheets or accounting systems installed on a computer, web RPA can automate anything you do manually online in a web browser.

# Now is the time
## for web RPA

Not long ago, the web was completely static, and websites were more like catalogs than the full-featured applications we know today. Microsoft Office only existed as a desktop application. Today you can run the full version of Office directly in a browser. Websites have become web applications, and the browser is your new operating system.

This shift from desktops to browsers has created space and demand for new products and services that use and combine web app functions.

This means that web RPA is now poised to take center stage in the automation arena. As a result, the days of conventional RPA may be numbered.

According to the latest data from Forrester Research, the RPA software market will reach $6.5 billion by 2025. Yet it also predicts that growth will begin to flatten in 2023 with companies shifting to more AI-based automation solutions.

This forecast indicates that demand for automation services focused on implementing such complex solutions is expected to grow even more than RPA software.
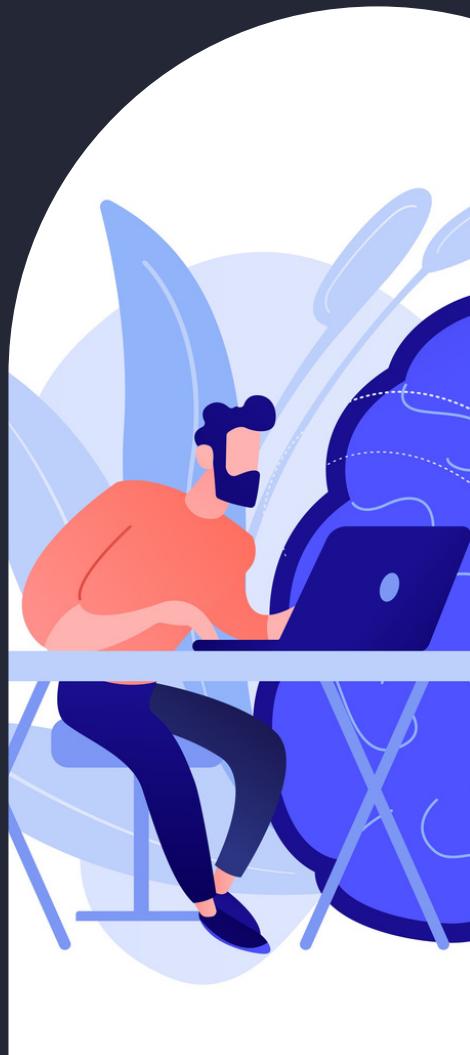
According to Forrester, RPA-related services could reach $16 billion by 2025, almost three times the software they're trying to help implement.

You don't need a bot to tell you that if you combine the services and software, the RPA market is predicted to reach a whopping $25 billion by 2025.

This is good news for web RPA, which focuses on machines communicating with each other through APIs (application programming interfaces). APIs act like intermediaries or translators that enable two different programs to communicate, even if they were built using completely different technology or don't have the same programming language.

This means that with web RPA, we can make the web more programmable, get machines to do manual tasks for us, and enable greater human efficiency.

# How can web RPA help my business?

## Invoice processing

If you're one of the few people in this world who love invoice processing, we recommend you skip this part. Otherwise, we're about to make your day.

Invoicing is typically a time-consuming process involving manual data entry, logs, and excel spreadsheets and is subject to human error. That makes it a prime candidate for RPA.

With RPA, work orders can be generated in real-time as they are completed. That amounts to reduced processing time.

# Key takeaways

Web RPA can:

**Reconcile financial data**

**Process payments**

**Generate reports**

**Flag discrepancies**

**Update accounts**

All of this means increasing accuracy, reducing human error, and improving the overall efficiency of your finance and accounting departments.

## Report generation and distribution

If spreadsheets and reports are a daily chore for you, then web RPA can automate them for you. This will save you time, money, and a lot of grief. Your business can use web RPA software to automatically generate and distribute this kind of information on a daily, weekly, or quarterly basis. Web RPA can also trigger report generation based on a particular occurrence, such as a backlog.

In other words, web RPA can equip your business with the reports needed to work efficiently with little to no effort. At the same time, it can empower you to make decisions that benefit your department or company, allowing managers to spend more time on core tasks.

## Key takeaways

> Set up time-based or event-based automation for report generation

> Make better decisions and free up time for core tasks

## ERP integration

ERP (enterprise resource planning) is an application that automates business processes. More specifically, it draws on a central database that collects data from multiple departments such as HR, accounting, marketing, and sales. When essential information is spread across disconnected systems, finding the data you need is like looking for a needle in a haystack. What's more, once you find it, you might not even have access to it.

For example, accounting and sales departments might have different spreadsheets with different figures for expenses. An ERP system compiles that information to provide visibility across departments.

That's ERP in a nutshell, but what does ERP integration mean? Succinctly put, ERP integration allows automated systems to receive information from the ERP and feed information into it. The result is that systems can work from the same dataset, and a company can have one unified source of business data. It also helps to eliminate data inconsistencies and prevent time from being wasted on moving information between systems.
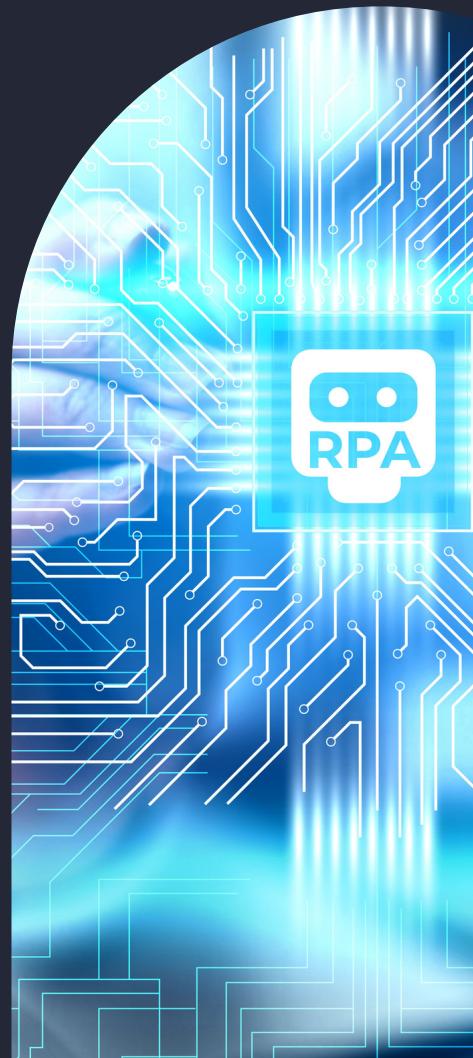


## Key takeaways

**Eliminate data inconsistencies**

**Unify business data and systems**

## Email and message automation

Most employees spend large chunks of their working day sifting through and replying to emails and messages. A large number of them are not even relevant to their work tasks.

For a long time, companies have been contending with inefficient work processes sapping time and energy from their employees, often with little success. Email and messaging automation is a simple solution. Instead of handling every message in an inbox, company staff can use web RPA to organize daily communication tasks. This way, you can send automated responses to some and direct everything else to specific folders for closer attention.

That is message automation at a fundamental level, but web RPA can provide much more nuanced and sophisticated opportunities.

A web RPA provider can create an automation tool for you that sends messages on social media whenever a keyword or hashtag is identified. That can be a powerful tool for reaching potential clients or handling inquiries online.
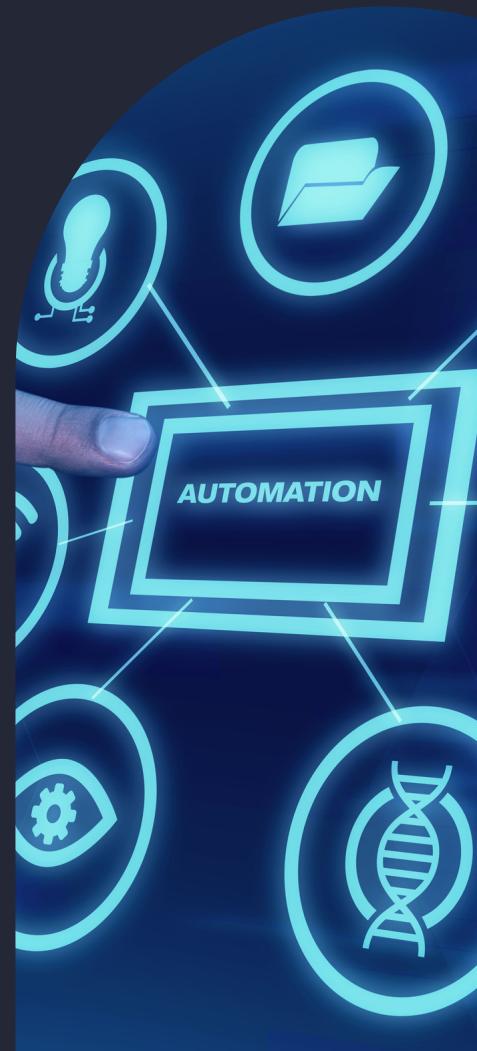
## Key takeaways

**Automate employee inboxes**

**Respond to messages quickly and efficiently**

## Website updates and subscriptions

Web RPA is ideal for automating repeated processes involving entering or updating a website's information. That could be anything from inserting information into an online form to scanning a website to identify errors, sending out alerts via text, email, or Slack to stakeholders, or keeping track of and updating subscription statuses.

With web automation, you can rest easy knowing that your bot minions are running checks on your website 24/7, adding, deleting, updating your web data, or ensuring you are not being billed for subscriptions you don't want.

Let's take Truebill as an example. Truebill is a money app that gives you greater control over your finances. To fulfill its pledge to fight unfair billing, the company needed to use automation.

Due to the significant increase of different subscription-based services for music, movies, and video games in recent years, consumers have faced a new problem: "how do I keep track of all my subscriptions?". Unsubscribing from every service can be a tedious process. So Truebill came up with a brilliant idea. They turned to [Apify](#) to provide a solution and take care of all the backend processes related to unsubscription workflows.

Automatically unsubscribing from services on behalf of a user is not a simple task. Many challenges are associated with creating a functional workflow that can avoid being blocked by the services. So Apify created a custom RPA tool that emulates a real user's behavior in a virtual browser. The job of this tool is to navigate through all the steps of the unsubscription workflow without being detected as a bot. As a result, Truebill can instantly find and track your subscriptions and cancel services on your behalf.

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# How do I get started
# with web RPA?

Whether you want to automate accounting tasks, report generation, or web content aggregation, you need support from web RPA experts. That's why Apify has its own dedicated pool of RPA wizards, known as Apify Freelancers.

These are an elite team of web RPA developers handpicked by Apify to provide custom RPA solutions for your needs. They deliver the solution via our platform, where the software is hosted and run. This guarantees safety, the convenience of having everything in one place, and no maintenance issues in the future.

# Contact Apify for your custom RPA solution

The process of getting a web RPA solution for your case is a simple four-step process.

**1**

## Tell us what you need

[Request a custom solution](#) by filling out a quick form; our web RPA experts will contact you promptly.

**2**

## Receive and review your project proposal

You'll receive project proposals and quotes with a timeline for delivery. Apify will discuss all aspects and terms of the project with you and agree on a proof of concept.

**3**

## Track progress

The web RPA developer working on your project stays in contact with you throughout the process.

**4**

## Receive your solution

You can test any developed tools or software and improve and approve the solution provided.

We'd be happy to discuss your RPA case, so reach out to us and let us know what you have in mind.