

BPM-D® CASE STUDY

SIGNIFICANT EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENT THROUGH RPA AT A TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPER

Summary

This fast discovery engagement analysed the 'Invoice Matching' process and identified pragmatic automation opportunities with annualised savings of over £400k and 50% FTE redeployment.

■ Organisation background

The organisation generates ~70% of its revenue from transport infrastructure construction and urban development on a global scale. It develops mobility solutions to enhance economic competitiveness and strengthen social bonds by designing, building and maintaining transport infrastructure and fostering urban development. The organisation also manages street lighting networks through various subsidiaries and joint ventures.

■ Business Challenge and Opportunity

The leadership team identified the 'Invoice Matching' process as one that could possibly benefit from automation. However, they were in the early stages of understanding RPA and required support in designing a solution that included automation interventions.

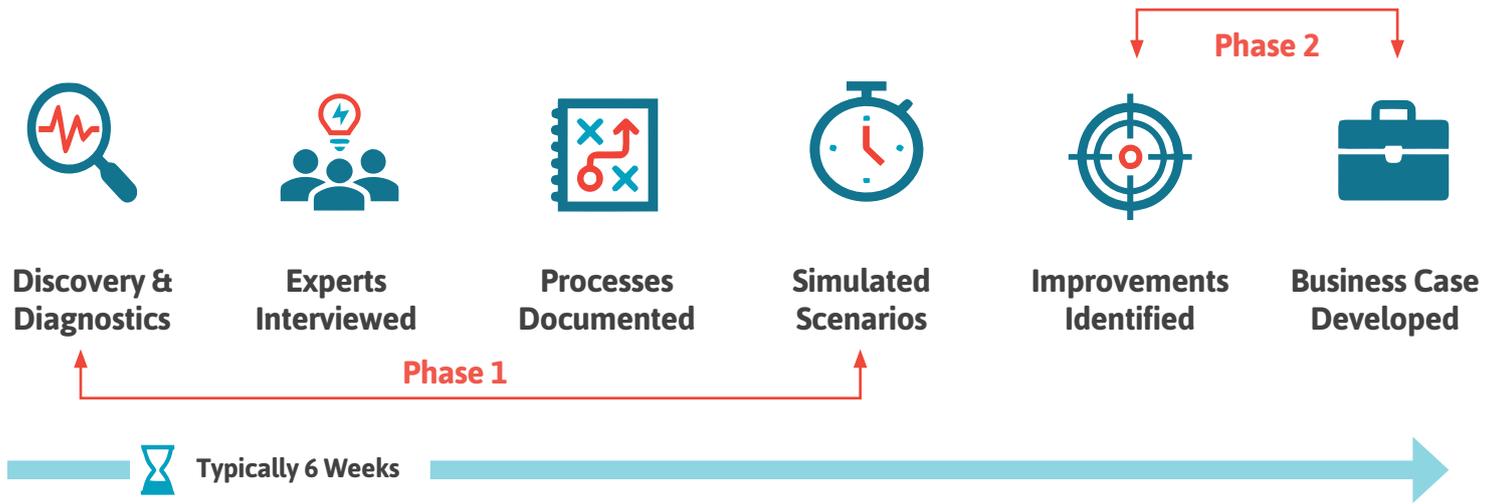
The Accounts Payable (AP) Team receives approximately 200k invoices per year via post, email or e-invoice in paper-based, PDF, or Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) formats. The process of matching and posting invoices to the General Ledger involves many manual

tasks prone to human error resulting in late supplier payments, which subsequently impacted their ability to deliver core business operations. Overall, the process held a lot of potential opportunities for automation which would help reduce employee workload and increase efficiency.

The primary focus was initially what was described as an end-to-end process with various bottlenecks. Due to discrepancies originating from various stakeholders involved in the process, there was poor source data for the Accounts Payable Team to process which increased their workload considerably.

Additionally, the Accounts Payable Team was manually communicating across teams to resolve issues instead of maintaining a central database capturing contacts to send requests to. With multiple stakeholders, poorly managed internal databases and lack of definitive rules, information was not efficiently documented. Therefore, obtaining consistent figures across the business for costs and savings proved challenging.

BPM-D conducted a fast Process Discovery to determine where the major bottleneck in the process of unreliable source data was. Focusing directly towards resolving issues / expectations in invoices and automating request workflows as outlined in the diagram below.



Phase 1 – Process Discovery, Data Gathering, Process Documentation, Optimisation and Simulations

Phase 2 – Automation Interventions and improvements identified with a compelling Business Case

Figure 1 | BPM-D Approach to RPA Discovery & Implementation

■ BPM Enablement

- As-Is processes in the overall invoice matching area were mapped and documented at a field-level of detail. Performance issues were logged in readiness for the subsequent improvement initiatives.
- Processes were re-defined and potential automation interventions were evaluated by calculating the time and cost restitutions obtained by running process simulations.
- Process optimisation and improvement actions were documented, and 5 automation interventions were shortlisted based on value additions made to the process.
- Costed Business Case and Implementation Plan presented to client board – savings were calculated on the reduction in workload and increase in efficiency enabled by the automation interventions.

■ Results

- A compelling, fully costed business case that yielded the following benefits:
- Highlighted major bottleneck in the process of unreliable source data
 - Focus redirected towards resolving issues/ exceptions in invoices and automating request workflows
 - An efficiency improvement of 69%
 - Gradual redeployment of approximately 50% FTEs
 - The benefits to the Accounts Payable Team would produce an annual saving of over £400k
 - Immediate realisation with full payback in 6 months
 - Recognised various activities to optimise the process by standardising the supporting documentation to match the invoices

Figure 2
Costed Business Case and Implementation Plan

