Automation Pioneer Program

A Success Story

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Bots & People joined forces with T-Systems International and RWTH Busines School to organize the Automation Pioneer Program. The goal was to educate interested T-Systems employees on automation and related topics, including automation mindset, Process Mining, RPA, AI, and more.
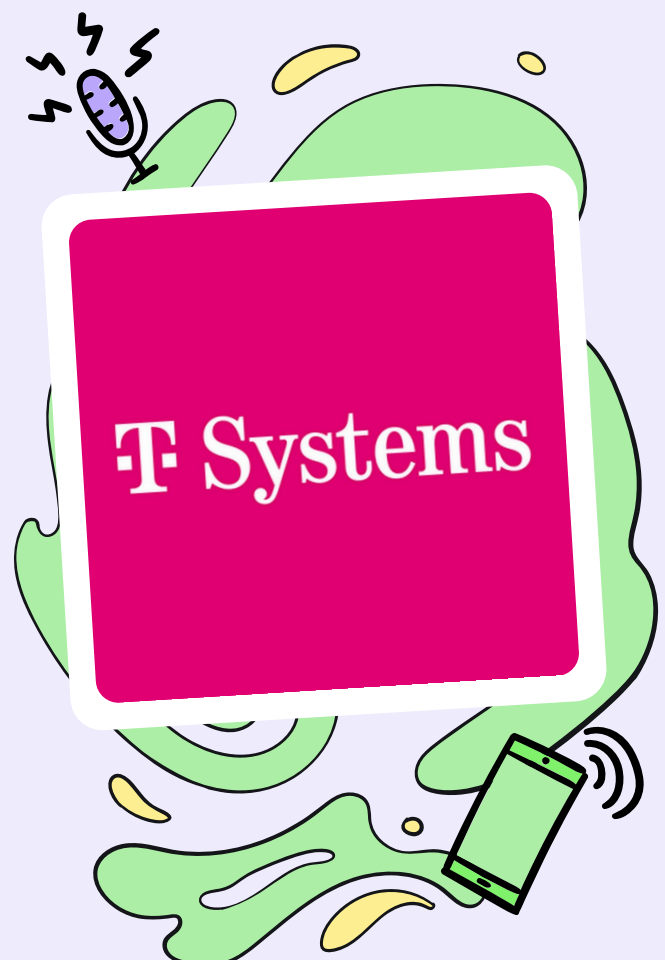
Introduction: Which Companies Did B&P Work With?

The two organizations Bots & People collaborated with on the project are T-Systems International GmbH and RTWH Aachen University.

T-Systems

T-Systems International GmbH is part of Deutsche Telekom AG, one of the leading telecommunications companies in Germany. The company is an information and communication technologies and services provider on an international level.

Headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, T-Systems employs thousands of workers and is one of the largest IT companies in Germany. Apart from telecommunications, it offers various solutions for other industries, including automotive, retail, finance, media, energy, and even government and healthcare. During its 20+ years of operation, the company has provided services to 400+ companies, including Daimler AG, Shell, BP, Microsoft, Philips, and many others.

RWTH Aachen University

The other company that joined forces with Bots & People and T-Systems was actually a university called RWTH Aachen University, which provides programs focusing on management and technology. RWTH also includes classes on Process Mining, analytics, and more. On top of that, some of the leading names in automation teach there, including the brain behind Process Mining, Will van der Aalst, with which we have recorded this podcast.

The Problem

Being a huge IT company, T-Systems needs to be at the forefront of technological innovation. That's why it wanted to train its employees to become technology consultants and sales staff in one of the growing fields — Process Automation.

The officials at the company recognized the great success achieved in the past in the area of Process Automation consulting used in the IT service management sphere. However, the company wanted to expand the expertise of its employees further and enhance their knowledge of automation by focusing on the concept of Hyper Automation in the Learning Journey. In addition to helping employees acquire automation skills, the goal was to inspire them and teach them the right mindset required to accept and get the most from Process Automation.

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A total of 80 T-Systems employees were selected to receive the education and upgrade their automation knowledge and skills. Most of them were scattered around the globe.

Having heard about Bots & People's expertise on the subject, T-System approached us to come up with the Learning Journey. The program was also supported by RWTH Aachen University, which is widely regarded as one of the best in Europe for Process Analytics and Process Mining.

The entire workshop was divided into several subtopics closely related to Hyper Automation:

- Business Process Management
- Process Mining
- Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Workflow Automation
- Automation Mindset

The Solution

T-Systems started with the Automation Pioneer Program on September 9, 2021. It lasted for three weeks, and each week, a different automation-related theme was covered. Tuesdays were reserved for experts teaching lectures.

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The Pre-Learning Phase

The team at Bots & People compiled a set of articles, e-books, webinars, and podcast episodes that are considered helpful for anyone starting to learn about automation. This served as a tool for the learners who wanted to prepare upfront. These content pieces were and still are accessible via the Bots & People Platform.

The Three-Week Learning Phase

The program was officially composed of three weeks of workshops and classes, while the fourth week was reserved for exams and the playground.

Learners took small quizzes and had to do quick tasks between weeks to remain engaged throughout the program. Moreover, they received insight into all necessary tools for automation, such as Blue Prism, Celonis, Integromat (now Make), Ityx, and more.

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Week 1

The following topics were covered during the first week:

Automation Mindset and the big picture – The lecturers discussed what it means to adopt the Automation Mindset and how it could benefit employees and the organization. Moreover, they discussed the essence of automation, tackling some of the most essential questions that newcomers would usually ask about it.

Business Process Modeling – The tutors introduced the concept of visually representing an enterprise's processes and creating a model so that the business process can be further analyzed and improved before automation.

Business Process Management – The lecturers introduced the concept of BPM and why it's relevant to develop and streamline business processes. Moreover, they discussed the relationship between BPM and automation.

Use cases – The tutors showed some real-life use cases of Process Automation from Volkswagen and T-Systems to bring it closer to learners and help them understand how automation works in practice.

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Week 2

The second week was reserved for Process Mining and process discovery.

Process Mining – The tutors introduced the family of techniques that show what a certain business process looks like and provide insights that can help analyze and upgrade a process.

Process discovery – The learners had an opportunity to understand how business processes are discovered with all their variations by using the recorded data from the current work methods and documentation.

Week 3

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) – Traditional RPA was introduced and how it's utilized for automation in the frontend (user interface). Moreover, students got a chance to learn the basic terms, templates, and use cases related to this automation branch. They also had a chance to discover the relevant tools used in RPA via Blue Prism, one of the leaders in RPA.

Workflow Automation – Students learned how automation works in the backend and how entire workflows are automated with tools such as Integromant. Relevant terms, templates, use cases, and key takeaways were covered related to Workflow Automation.

Artificial Intelligence in combination with automation – AI adds the "hyper" to Hyper Automation, and learners had an opportunity to learn why AI is required in automation. Moreover, how Machine and Deep Learning are used to automate business processes.

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Week 4

Exam – After learners have completed the course, they need to take an exam and receive a certificate as an award.

Automation Playground – During the third week of the program, participants were tasked to find use cases related to automation and discuss in during the playground in the fourth week. Participants can change virtual tables and engage in different expert-led discussions on various use cases. This can help them get hands-on experience.

The Lecturers

Experts from all fields covered in the program were guest lecturers. Here's a list of all who participated.

Workflow Automation
Sebastian Mertens

RPA
Michaela Brandl

Use Cases
Andreas Wentz

Process Analytics & BPM
Dr. Seran Uysal

Automation Mindset and the Big Picture
Nico Bitzer

Automation Playground
Maximilian Mehrpour

AI in Automation
Dr. Sandro Lombardo

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The Result

The 80 participants in the program received a certificate for the completed course. They acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to receive the title of Automation Strategist.

Knowledge

According to T-Systems, the participants managed to gain the following knowledge.

Getting familiar with real-life automation use cases from their company.

Understanding how Process Mining works and how results can be classified.

Understanding Hyper Automation and its importance in modern business Process Automation.

Knowing different automation technologies and their application to specific automation cases.

Understanding different process modeling tools, what they look like, and what their automation potential is.

Skills

Apart from gaining theoretical knowledge, participants had a chance to acquire some practical skills. They can:

- Explain the logistics of modeling a process and use a process model as an example to describe its parts.
- Discuss various methods for automatic process flow capture in the context of application scenarios.
- Make a clear distinction between terms such as RPA, iPaaS, and AI and explain them to colleagues or customers.
- Assist organizations as Hyper Automation consultants.
- Develop ideas for automation use cases and present them to the relevant parties.

Feedback and Testimonials

"*Process Mining and Process Automation are key digitalization technologies in organizations seeking transparency and optimization of business processes. The new Automation Pioneer Program is a great opportunity for participants to learn about these hot topics in today's industrial market.*" Dr. Seran Uysal

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The participants decided to share their thoughts about the program. Here are some of them.

- "Even though many of the terms were not new to some participants, the program helped them enormously put the individual topics into a general context. They were able to connect the dots and understand where I could start and which method to apply in specific cases."

- "Good content and a very good framework with enough time to exchange ideas and experiences."

- "General overview of the topics explaining when and how to apply automation — great!"

- "A superb overview. I recognized some things, but now I can understand them even better."

- "A good overview and classification of various technologies. Great additional content (blogs, articles, and more), so that you can easily and independently engage in further learning bit by bit."

- "Very good documentation. Good moderation. Understandable content. An appropriate level of difficulty."

What's Next for Learners?

Some attendees already had some experience in the field of automation, while others had little to no knowledge. Therefore, the Automation Pioneer Program allowed automation enthusiasts to expand their knowledge and provide basic training for newcomers to the sphere.

Most importantly, all program attendees can further improve their knowledge and skills through subsequent training as Automation Strategists. It's safe to say that the three-week program has provided them with a firm basis for further specialization.

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Automation

Strategist

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WANT YOUR OWN SUCCESS STORY?

If you want to start automation projects with your team, we are here for you. Together we look at where your company stands and what needs to be done to increase effectiveness and internal expertise.

Book a meeting with us and get a non-binding consultation. We look forward to meeting you!

Book a Meeting