

blueprism®

Robotic Process Automation Software



npower's digital workforce electrifies its commercial business with £10 million in annual savings



Delivering the **world's most
successful digital workforce.**

npower, one of the Big Six Energy Suppliers that dominate the gas and electricity market in the U.K., is no stranger to small, nimble competitors with low overhead and the ability to undercut energy prices. One of the earliest adopters of robotic process automation (RPA), the company in 2005 deployed a Blue Prism digital workforce to help it compete in the residential market.

The Business Challenge

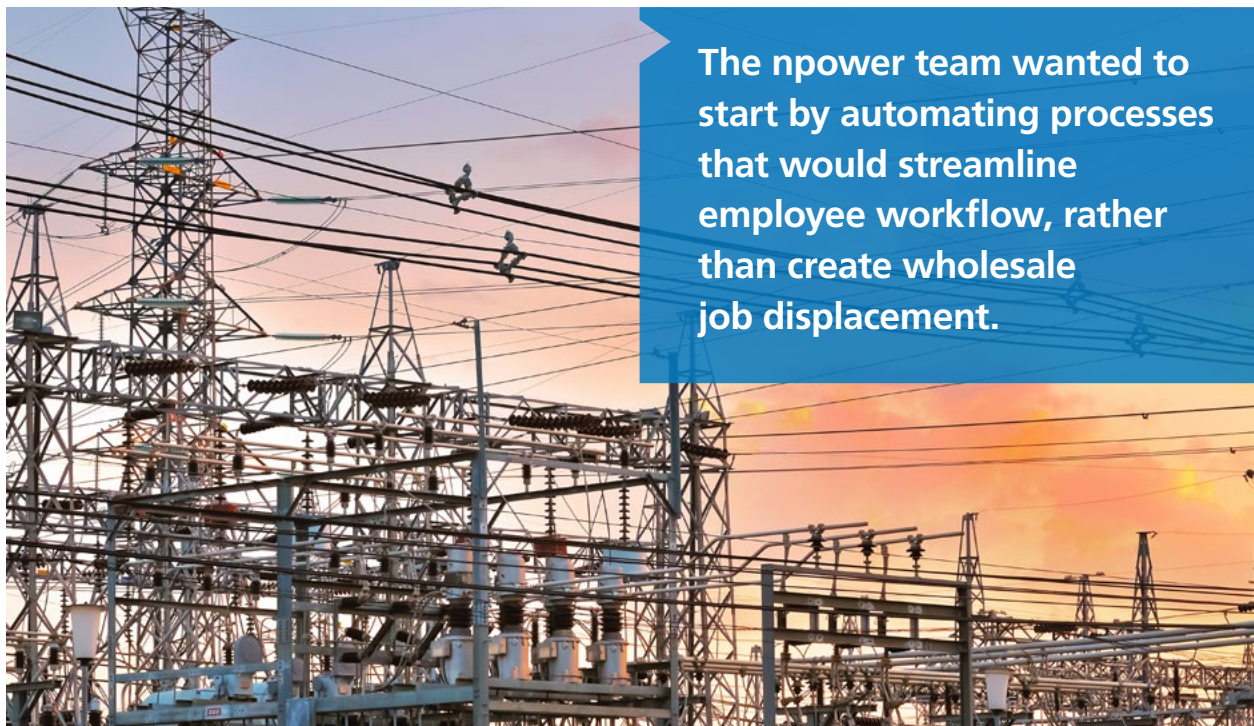
So, when npower's parent company placed pressure on its commercial service line to reduce costs, increase customer satisfaction and retention, and make the business faster and more agile, the business solutions group immediately had Blue Prism on its radar screen.

It was looking for a solution that could:

- adapt to rapid change, especially regulatory compliance
- deliver lower project costs and risks compared to conventional IT

- create faster lead times
- leverage more lifetime value from legacy systems without capital investment
- create completely new capabilities – not just reduce costs of existing processes.

Considering these requirements, Blue Prism's digital workforce was an easy choice; its power was already proven, and npower's IT division was already familiar with how to deploy its software robots without compromising security and governance.



The Solution

The npower team wanted to start by automating processes that would streamline employee workflow, rather than create wholesale job displacement. It looked for processes that:

- were relatively labor intensive, repetitive, and prone to human error
- required access to multiple legacy systems, slowing down processing speed
- followed set business rules
- were often assigned to seasonal or temporary workers
- had short lead times and fast payback for quick success.

Against these criteria, it selected three initial processes to automate with Blue Prism.

Invoice Statement Generation

THE BEFORE:

The data required for this process was housed in more than 50 systems, ranging from a COBOL-based billing system to spreadsheets and in-house custom built sales and customer databases.

THE AFTER:

The npower team developed a hybrid solution. Instead of Blue Prism having to go into multiple different systems, npower consolidated all the relevant data in one central repository. The Blue Prism software robots could then use that data and follow logical business rules to complete the 50+ required steps in the process.

After just three months of development, per invoice processing time dropped from 20 minutes or more to mere seconds, and npower avoided having to hire an additional 21 FTEs to meet a mandated compliance deadline.



Emergency Contact Detail Communications

THE BEFORE:

npower uses invoices to communicate vital information to customers. While that works fine for regularly invoiced customers, npower needed a solution that could identify and notify all customers that are intermittently invoiced.

A traditional IT solution would have required a code to extract the needed information from various systems and pool it in a central location, and four additional FTEs would have had to manually sort the data and make potentially error-prone decisions based on each individual circumstance. In addition to the added FTE overhead, this option would have cost an estimated £500,000 to £1 million.

THE AFTER:

Here again, npower devised a hybrid solution: scripts pooled data from disparate locations into one central pool from which Blue Prism's automated workforce generated a letter with the correct information to all customers that hadn't received an invoice for a determined amount of time.

The automated solution cut processing time from 25 minutes to maximum three minutes per transaction, eliminated the additional FTE and IT expenses, and removed non-compliance concerns.

“npower used Blue Prism’s digital workforce to create custom automated solutions that contributed to transformational change in the company’s B2B operations.”

Missed Contract Renewals

THE BEFORE:

Every npower commercial customer signs a contract for a set amount of time. At contract end, the customer is supposed to either renew its contract or switch to another provider. However, a minority of customers do neither. As they remain active in the system without an active agreement on contracted rates, npower can’t invoice them, causing potential risks to cash flow and working capital.

THE AFTER:

The automated solution identifies customers as soon as their contract expires, and enables the company to invoice them on higher, out-of-contract rates for their energy usage. This incentivizes customers to renegotiate a new contract, and lowers the number operating without an agreement.

npower has completely automated 95 percent of these transactions, leaving only five percent that need manual intervention due to unexpected variables.

The Business Impact

In its first year of deployment, npower saved the equivalent of 40 FTEs, accelerated the processes by 60 percent, and increased productivity by 8 percent across the entire service operation.

After just three years:

- npower is realizing £10 million in annual savings
- Blue Prism’s digital workforce is handling 2 million hours of work in 100+ processes
- Only two npower employees are needed to manage the full force of 400 robots.

Overall, automation enabled npower Business Solutions to maximize its legacy systems and resources, rather than requiring a new investment or traditional IT system enhancements. As its back-office processes are faster and more agile, the npower team has time to focus on customer-facing front-office processes, putting it in a well-poised position to succeed against its competitors.

About Blue Prism

As the pioneer, innovator, and market leader in RPA, Blue Prism delivers the world’s most successful digital workforce. The company’s software robots automate repetitive administrative tasks while meeting the requirements of the most demanding IT environments, where security, compliance, and scalability are paramount.

Blue Prism provides a scalable and robust execution platform for best-of-breed AI and cognitive technologies, and has emerged as the trusted and secure RPA platform of choice for the Fortune 500.

To learn more, visit www.blueprism.com and contact +44 (0) 870 879 3000 | +1 888 757 7476.