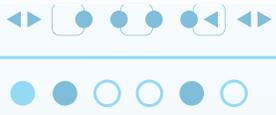


Regain Time and Become an Innovation Champion

Buyer's Guide: Workload Automation for Financial Institutions



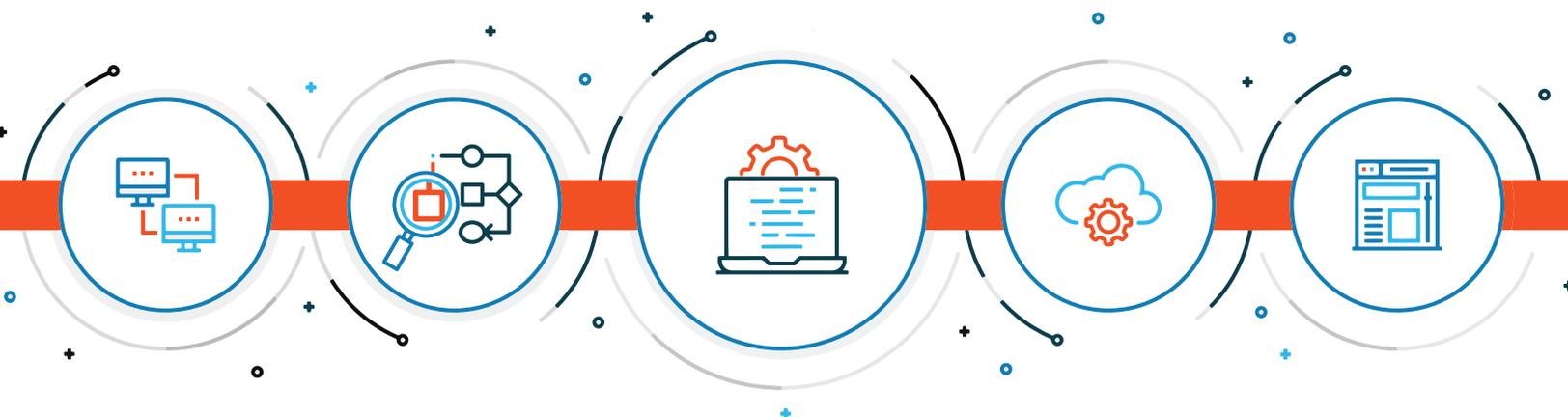


Table of Contents

Part 1- What is IT process automation?.....	3
Part 2- Smarter automation, better results.....	4
Part 3- Features of a modern automation platform.....	5
Part 4- Implementation & training	6
Part 5- How OpCon can help.....	8



Part 1 – What is IT process automation?



ACH processing takes **10 minutes** post automation.

Organizations no longer have the luxury of slow ACH, end of day, and share draft/checking processing. Old-school platforms that only do batch scheduling just can't keep up with the demands of modern environments, because the number of jobs and third-party apps has far outpaced human ability to reliably execute and monitor them. Financial institutions offer more services than ever, and almost all those services are available online and through mobile apps. The sheer number of tasks creates a complex monitoring environment that can overwhelm even the best IT teams. This is why credit unions and banks are upgrading their systems to bring in better IT process automation.



On average, **70%** of manual processes can be automated during installation.

IT process automation software can help organizations:

- Increase IT efficiency and boost overall productivity.
- Identify and resolve issues before they become significant problems.
- Reduce operational costs.



Errors from manual processes reduced by **over 90%**.

IT process automation is the methodical implementation and execution of IT processes through a workload automation (WLA) platform. If a process has repeatable steps, it can be scripted. If it can be scripted, it can turn into an automation workflow. We encourage clients to approach IT challenges with this mindset, because automation turns the IT team into the innovation champions that help the broader organization achieve business results.

Part 2 – Smarter automation, better results.



Time saving

The limiting factor for many IT teams is time – not talent. Time spent juggling multiple daily/weekly tasks eats up mental bandwidth and causes stress. IT employees handle processes with a mix of manual jobs, ad hoc automation, and an outdated batch scheduler that frequently requires intervention. It's time to give them a more powerful tool; a platform that offers event-driven workflows to turn almost any IT task into an automated workflow.

“We were able to automate over 70% of manual processes immediately.”

- Nick Wilcox, Frandsen Financial

Efficiency and time saving comes from allowing contingencies to be programmed into workflows, meaning the system can take action where manual intervention used to be required. Here are just a few examples:

- Automatically rerun failed jobs, rather than holding up the entire schedule.
- Workflows monitor and restart critical services when failure is detected.
- Arrival of files, such as ACH, automatically trigger the full range of workflows needed to successfully run the entire process.
- Workflows interface with 3rd party apps to orchestrate processes across the environment.

Superior monitoring and alert capabilities combined with self-service workflows bring serious time-savings to your team. Personnel don't need to watch the system and wait for one process to end so they can begin another. Instead, they can work on other initiatives and the automation platform will alert them if something needs their attention. Self-service lets your accounting team initiate the next step in the ACH process after they've handled exceptions, without needing to contact anyone in IT. The end result is a more effective and efficient IT environment, and an IT team that can focus their energies on higher value work.

Institutional knowledge

Keep your organization smart by locking your best practices into automated workflows. Employees move up and sometimes they move on, but the business processes they develop don't have to leave with them. Save time on training new people and keep your systems humming when key team members are unavailable by capturing your institutional knowledge.

Scalability

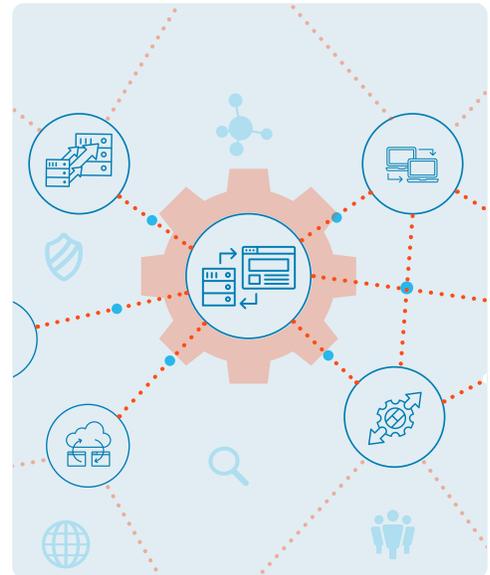
Scalability is another key benefit of implementing a smarter automation platform. When Jack Henry & Associates wanted to scale, they were able to go from 7 to 300 production servers while only adding one IT I&O team position over 10 years. If your IT team is already stretched to the max, that will inhibit your organization's ability to grow. Adding a better automation platform to your toolkit lets you scale your processes with the people you have, which is of particular benefit if your organization is located far from tech hubs.

Part 3- Features of a modern automation platform

Advanced workload automation platforms take a more sophisticated approach to process, establishing a set of controls and procedures while allowing organizations to accommodate continually evolving business needs.

Modern workload automation platforms should:

- Provide a single interface to design and orchestrate workflows across multiple applications both on-premises and in the cloud.
- Integrate with a broad variety of apps, ERPs, and Operating Systems via API, agent, or Web Services Connector.
- Facilitate event-driven workflows with flexible trigger conditions to automatically react and execute commands when conditions are met.
- Give IT and non-IT personnel the ability to execute complex workflows using a simple self-service automation interface.
- Keep you informed with advanced scheduling, monitoring, visibility, and alert features that let you know system status at all times.
- Manage resource provisioning and spinning up and down of virtual machines on-premises and in the cloud.
- Orchestrate complex data pipelines between different applications to ensure data gets where it needs to be when it needs to be there.



Future proofing is a critical consideration to keep in mind. The usage lifecycle of an automation platform is often 10+ years, and many buyers are in the market for a new one because the old one failed to innovate and provide new features as the years went by. SMA Technologies, by contrast, offers a yearly large release for OpCon, along with smaller releases of new features approximately every six weeks. What's exotic today becomes the standard tomorrow, which is why we've invested in developing our solutions for clients looking to move to container and cloud-based architecture.

Does your automation platform provider listen to your feedback? Over 25% of the features included in OpCon were developed as a direct result of client requests, primarily from financial industry customers. As a result, our UI, agents, and integrations match the real world needs of our users.

Sharing knowledge is a powerful value multiplier. User communities are invaluable sources of information for operators and managers looking to optimize their systems without using budget on consulting engagements. SMA's Innovation Lab, for example, offers scripts, connectors, and utilities developed by both our consultants and clients so you don't have to spend time working on a challenge that's already been solved.

Part 4 – Implementation & training



Implementation doesn't end at installation. A successful process features an end-state where the IT team feels comfortable in administering their new OpCon environment and creating new workflows. Lack of preparedness among the IT team is a result of lack of training and support from the vendor. SMA's approach takes these factors into consideration and ensures that your team is prepared to go live and manage your environment during hand-off.



Step 1 - Requirements gathering

During this phase, we work with the client team to document all of the existing processes that need to be included in the first phase of their automation roadmap. Along with those processes, we also gather all system requirements and details of the client's IT environment that can potentially impact implementation, including required integrations with third-party applications and security and regulatory compliance.



Step 2 - Analysis and planning

Our consulting team examines the processes, identifies opportunities for optimization, and creates the implementation roadmap in coordination with the client team.



Step 3 - Installation and training

This is week one of a typical two-week engagement. During this phase, our automation engineer works with your principal operator(s) to install OpCon, test connectivity with the SQL database, and train the team to convert the processes from steps 1 and 2 into automation workflows through the OpCon interface.



Step 4 - Testing and fine-tuning

During week two of our implementation engagement, our automation engineer continues training the principal operator(s) while testing and making any necessary adjustments.



Step 5 - Go live and monitor

With our automation engineer still available to help handle any unforeseen complications, the environment is pushed live and monitoring begins. Once all processes are functioning normally and the client is satisfied, the engagement is complete, and a follow-up is scheduled. At this time, operational support is transferred to SMA's 24/7 support team, who can resolve over 90% of issues on the first call.

Part 5 – How OpCon can help

SMA Technologies has built our reputation by providing an innovative and reliable product that is trusted to handle critical processes for many large financial institutions through our dedicated integrations with Fiserv, Corelation, and Symitar core processing platforms.

Our expertise with financial industry clients is proven with our integrations. In addition to the core processing platforms listed above, we also have advanced agents for IBM i, z/OS, and connectors for major ERP and ITSM systems like SAP, Infor, and ServiceNow..

OpCon offers many features out of the box:

- Self-service automation
- Real-time monitoring and alerts
- White glove onboarding
- Free and unlimited basic training
- Vast library of agents and connectors

Our Deploy (change management) and Vision (total environment monitoring and analytics) modules also come standard with any task-based contract.

Managed Automation Services

Our managed automation service gives you experienced automation engineers who become an extension of your team, well-integrated with your mandates and goals. This is an excellent option for organizations that want to seriously speed up their automation initiatives.

Automation Consultancy

Have a project that your team doesn't have time for but will bring high value to your business? Let our automation consultants utilize their years of experience and industry best practices to knock it out for you. You'll save time and money in the long run by using our experts to execute projects that might be outside your team's comfort zone.

The image shows a case study document for Veridian Credit Union. At the top, it features the OpCon logo and the SMA Technologies logo. The title is "Veridian Credit Union" with a subtitle "Reliable automation helped improve accuracy, efficiency, and work-life balance". The text describes how Veridian moved from Fiserv 992 to OpCon in 2019. A quote from Veridian states: "The time-savings and work-life balance it brings is incredibly valuable. Without this tool, we'd have to increase staffing significantly in this area." Below the quote, it lists benefits: 40,000 users, 200,000 members, 100,000 lines, and 200 branches. A "VIEW CASE STUDY" button is at the bottom.

Ready to let us prove we can walk the walk and accelerate your automation plan?

[SCHEDULE A DEMO](#)