



Building Resilient Operations with Intelligent Automation

One of the major pandemic knock-on effects companies and governmental organizations are seeing is a substantial increase in time-consuming, manual back-end tasks.

Staffing shortages to process these tasks are resulting in inordinate delays and take away precious staff time from higher-value work. Adding more staff is not a financially viable option.

How can companies and governmental organizations still maintain the same level of customer or citizen experience? The answer is Intelligent Automation (IA).

CGI has been working on IA for several years and we are seeing a dramatic change in the drivers for IA adoption – from an agent of efficiency to an imperative of survival.

All industries are on the brink of a revolution in determining how to best support their customers and citizens while managing through a period of rapid change. The current economic landscape has resulted in a number of financial and operational changes across all industries that has increased the focus on IA as a solution.

Cross-Industry Financial and Operational Challenges

Financial Relief



Organizations across Canada are working with customers to provide flexible solutions, on a case-by-case basis, for managing hardships caused by recent developments.

Workforce Transitions



The future of work is here. Most workforces had to suddenly shift away from traditional working practices to accommodate new social distancing policies.

Supporting the Customer



Customer contact centres are experiencing significant wait times and ongoing support requests from customers. Many organizations are having difficulty keeping up with demand.

Reactive Approach to Regulatory Shifts



COVID-19 support from the government and other avenues changes by the day. Organizations should consider taking time now to streamline their operations and keep pace with regulatory requests and changes.

Inventory & Support Staff Shortages



Inventory shortages are all around us, from our grocery essentials to life-saving healthcare equipment. Many businesses are unable to keep up with demand and are having trouble finding enough talent, quickly, to manage the overflow in demand.

Citizens First



Citizens normally getting services through City Halls or other in-person methods are no longer able to do so without experiencing significant wait times.

These are a just a few examples of the knock-on effects caused by this pandemic that are creating Intelligent Automation (IA) opportunities across industries. Adopting IA is effectively mitigating future unexpected economic impacts while freeing up workforce hours for higher-value activities, or even just to keep pace with demand.

Execution speed is essential, especially in times of crisis. Given the urgency of the process changes discussed above, implementing IA guarantees a faster time to market than if changes were made to core systems. The speed is realized through rapid development cycles, following Agile methodology, with an interdisciplinary team of leaders, process owners and practitioners in order to mobilize quickly and effectively. The key is to develop and deploy a solution as quickly as possible.

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Drawing on our experience implementing IA, and evaluating the current situation, we are noticing several applications where IA has cost-saving impacts across functions within organizations:

Workforce Recruitment and Talent Management

For organizations that must expand workforce numbers to meet growing needs or lay employees off due to economic impacts, IA and process optimization are able to help process terminations, applications, and resource qualifications in advance of secondary screenings, significantly reducing processing times.

Enhanced Self-Service for Customer/Citizen Interactions

To alleviate new pressures on contact centers for organizations experiencing a surge in customer interactions, intelligent self-service portals drastically reduce processing times by triaging customer requests and routing them to the right teams. Additionally, document recognition and processing capability accelerates processing times.

Customer and Citizen Relief Solutions

For those organizations offering financial hardship relief on a case-by-case basis as economic activity slows, IA enables quick implementation of process irregularity without major changes to underlying systems. This ensures approved customers are not put into the collections process by flagging accounts for short-term accommodation.

Digitization Supporting Working Remotely

Reduced reliance on paper enables greater opportunity for teams working remotely. Process reengineering and automation efforts streamline operations, and Optical Character Recognition functionality integrated into bots facilitates the translation between physical and digital records.

While the benefits of implementing IA are immediate, it sets the stage for a broader digital transformation that will build operational resilience to last well beyond the crisis:

Enhancing Operations



Help scale optimization enhancements so employees can spend more time on value-add activities that support the front line.

Adapting to Change



Leverage innovative solutions that help organizations react quickly and maintain their resilience in constantly changing environments.

Accelerating Efficiencies



Reduce manual work while capitalizing on time savings with more effective team allocation and work integration.

Augmenting Digital Transformation



Produce a positive change in day to day work operations alongside bots who mimic human actions.

Intelligent Automation includes Robotic Process Automation (RPA) solutions (e.g. chatbots) to help organizations handle the sudden spike in customer support requirements, process speed, and optimization.

IA in Action

When Canadian banks announced plans to provide financial relief to customers impacted by COVID-19, they experienced a significant increase in call volume with requests for mortgage payment deferrals. To accommodate the increase, more back-end staff were required to manually process these requests.

CGI worked with a major Canadian bank to develop an RPA solution to analyze daily payments due for mortgages, identify and cancel the payments of customers who had called in and qualified for payment deferral, and provide end-of-day reports of successful transactions and exceptions for business review.

The CGI Intelligent Automation team created the bot in 76 hours and implemented it over a weekend. This solution removed the need to make changes in complex mainframe applications, which saved significant operational efforts and freed up work hours to focus on providing customer support.

In another example, a government client saw a spike in calls to their health helpline since COVID-19 reached the province, forcing citizens to wait up to an hour for advice. We collaborated with health and government agencies to develop a chatbot (Digital Assistant) to triage information requests on their websites. The project was delivered in a few weeks. The chatbot fielded over 300,000 information requests within the first week of its launch.

Intelligent Automation can save organizations thousands of work hours and related expenses, and enable them to respond rapidly to unplanned circumstances. Adopting these intelligent solutions can also be an opportunity for organizations to re-visit their long-term growth strategies and service design during crises and their immediate aftermaths. Paired with the increased global appetite for this technology in the months preceding the pandemic, RPA will likely see continued momentum and adoption as early as the second half of 2020.

This analysis of current technology and business trends during the COVID-19 pandemic is intended to help our audience make informed and innovative business strategies. If you have any further questions, CGI's industry experts may be able to help you. Please contact us at info@cgi.com.

Respond
Rebound
Reinvent

Respond. Rebound. Reinvent.

Rely on us for practical solutions, co-created with clients, to solve complex challenges. Throughout the pandemic crisis, our local experts in 400+ locations, combined with our global resources, help you respond to unprecedented challenges, rebound at the right pace, and reinvent ways of working. We are committed to supporting you and the communities where we live and work.

Visit cgi.com/canada/3R to learn more.