

Cancellation requests no longer have to be taken care of by customer centre staff. A robot can handle it faster and error-free.

„Sometimes we just watch it for hours in disbelief of what it can handle. We have already prepared some additional tasks for it. It has relieved us of annoyingly repetitive work and allowed us to spend more time servicing our customers in a more meaningful way.“

A customer centre staff member

1. REQUIREMENTS

- Automate the processing of full and partial cancellation requests from customers, and thus reduce costs
- Accelerate refunds to customers as part of cancellation request handling, and thus increase customer satisfaction
- Simplify the reception and handling of cancellation requests
- Shorten cancellation request handling time, especially in the high season
- Reduce human error
- Test the automation before it can be used for other contact centre services

2. SOLUTION

- Record and describe the customer ticket reception and handling process
- Conduct an audit and produce a process map
- Map customers' infrastructure
- Design a Robotic Process Automation (RPA) solution
- Complete the solution design, testing, pilot operation, optimization, and roll-out

3. OUTCOMES

- Cost saving (tens of thousands of euros) due to preventing the unnecessary transport of cancelled goods
- Fewer errors in handling customer requests
- More satisfied customers due to much faster refunds and request handling, even in the high season
- Cleaner data
- Employees not being forced to do robotic work, allowing them to engage in more meaningful activities
- Customer requests being handled by two different robots servicing different communication channels

Background

E-shop contact centres are usually very busy departments. When analysing their activities, companies often find that many customer requests are repetitive, time consuming, and expensive. This was also the case with one of our customers, who operates one of the largest e-shops in the Czech and Slovak markets. The company wanted to relieve its contact centre staff of repetitive tasks while also reducing contact centre costs.

Having analysed the customer request handling processes at the contact centre, our specialists realized there was a huge automation potential for a number of repetitive steps. A simple cancellation request alone initiates a sequence of multiple operations. It requires the staff to find the purchase order, check its status, stop the dispatch of an item from a supplier's warehouse, process the refund for the cancelled items and inform the customer. If the item has already been dispatched, they also have to find out its current location and return it to the warehouse.

Contact centres receive customer requests through various communication channels, sometimes in duplicate. A robot can connect to any of them (phone, email, chat, or web). It can check for duplications and handle the request automatically in real time.

Solution

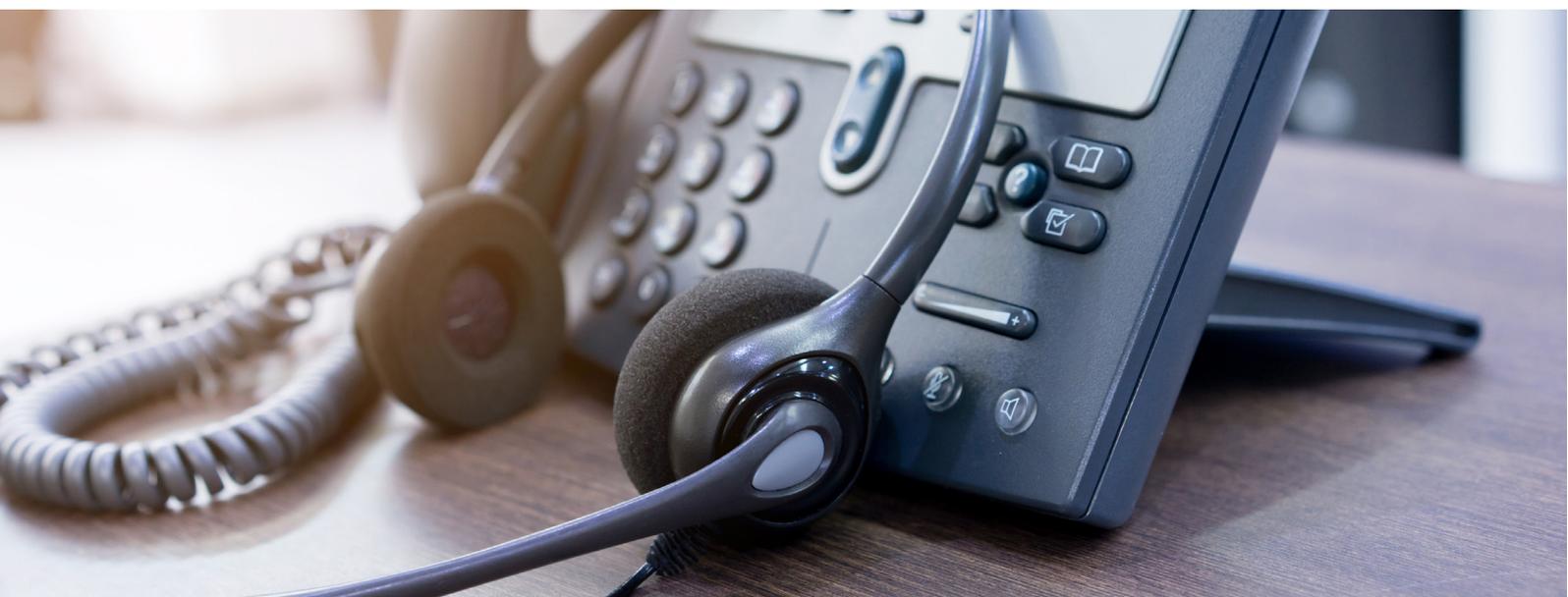
The start of every such project is always like a detective story. It is necessary to identify everyone involved in the process and describe their activities step by step, because only a perfectly described process can be automated.

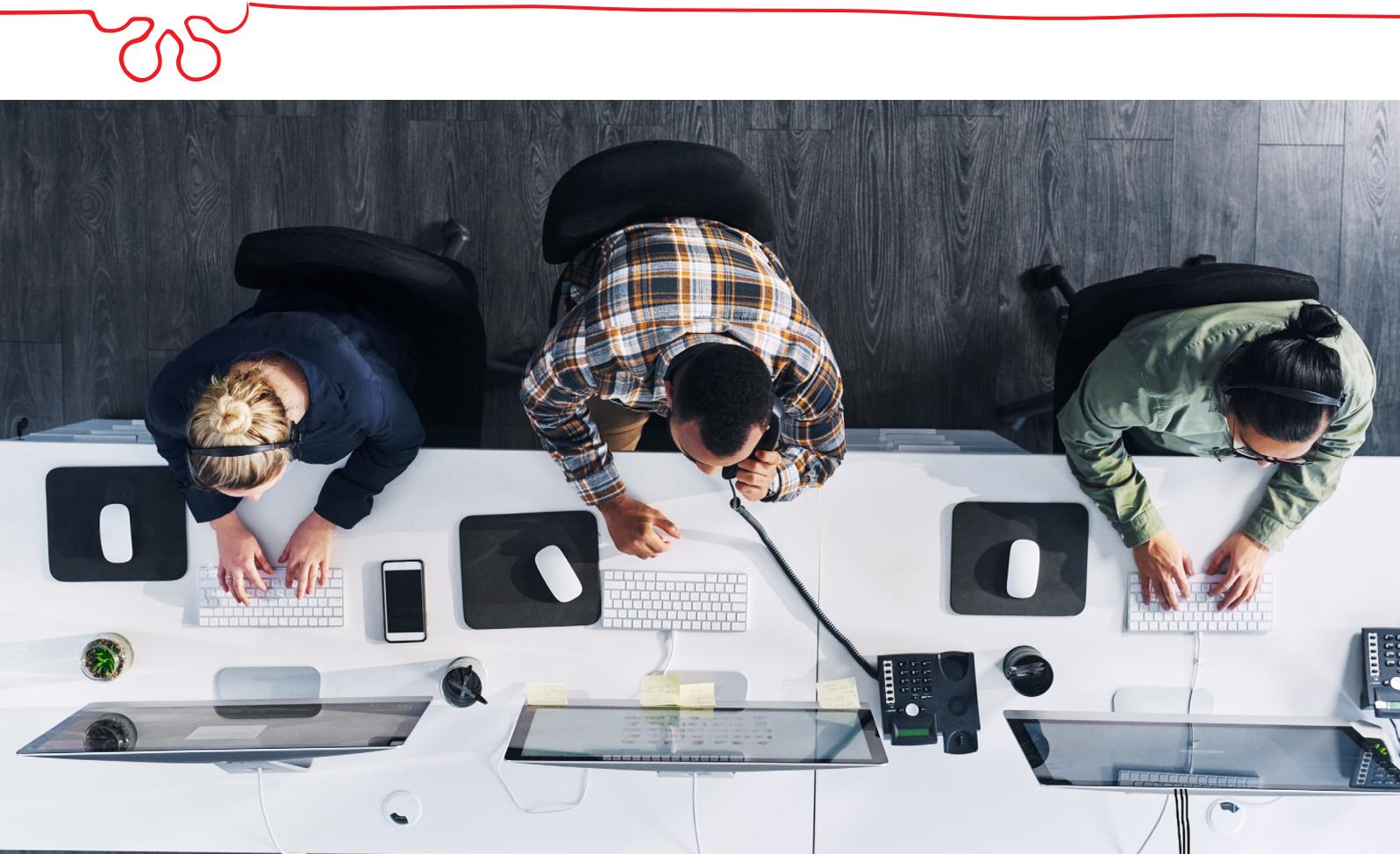
Soitron specialists spent dozens of hours with those in charge of the respective processes. In this particular case, the screens and all mouse clicks were recorded on selected workstations.

Once the process had been untangled, a highly branched process map was created. Initially, the only goal was to handle purchase order cancellations. There were many ways to perform this action. The audit report that we eventually produced was 250 pages long. In addition to mapping processes, it is also necessary to map the existing technologies and IT infrastructure when preparing a company for automation. Software robots can be integrated into existing systems in two different ways. One option is to use the API. It is a kind of software connector that is usually part of software applications, such as email clients. Using this standardized "socket", the software robot can connect to the application and receive data or send commands.

„It may take an employee dozens of minutes to handle a single cancellation request. In some months, such as before Christmas, there are thousands of such requests. The potential for time saving and reducing errors caused by overworked staff in contact centres is enormous.“

Viktória Lukáčová Bracjunová
Soitron, Business and Product
Development Manager and RPA
Specialist





If the application used by the client does not have an API interface, the software robot can learn to scan what is happening on the computer screen, read the data that way, make decisions, and act accordingly. In other words, it can do the clicking instead of a human.

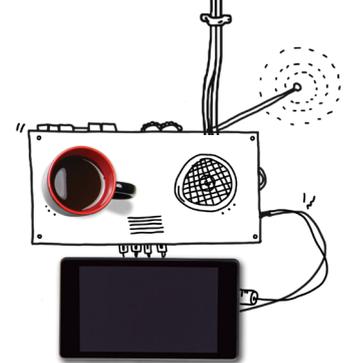
Having analysed the situation in this contact centre, the Soitron RPA team decided to combine both methods: some tasks are performed by the robot via API, and some other tasks are completed by scanning what is happening on the computer screen.

Once the robot is designed, the next step is testing, during which the robot is tasked with handling multiple simulated requests. It was no different in this case. After two weeks of training, the robot was skilled enough to be deployed in the production environment. The manager in charge can check the robot's work at any time using their mobile device.

Outcome

The robot checks every cancellation request received through one of the company's customer channels, such as an IVR phone, web chat, email, or web form. If it evaluates that it can handle the request, the robot will take care of it from start to finish. This means that it checks the purchase order number and finds out the status (e.g., "goods in warehouse" or "goods on the way"). Based on that, it notifies the logistics personnel in the respective system. At the same time, the robot checks if the customer has already paid for the goods and if a discount code or a voucher was used.

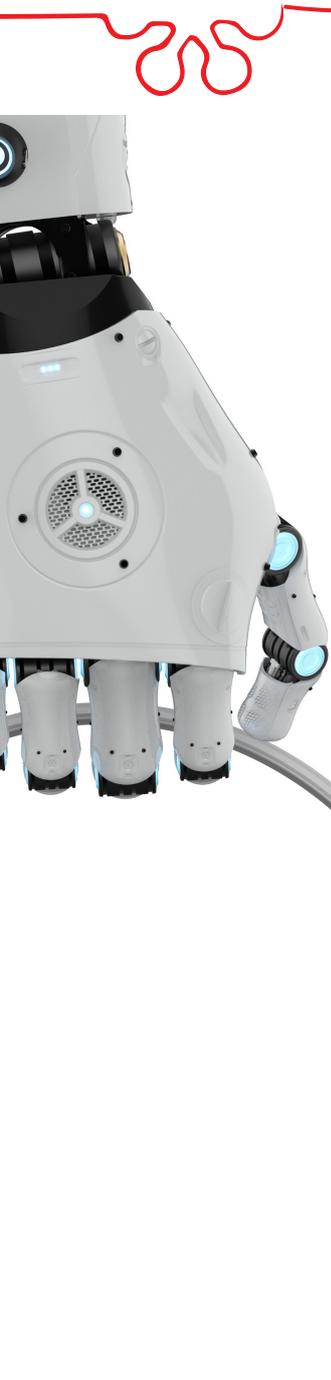
Another process that we have automated in the company concerns refunds. The robot can access the payment gateway and automatically send a refund to the customer while also handling any discount coupons and vouchers. Initially, the robot was able to handle half of



the cancellation request operations that originally had to be performed by humans. It is now gradually learning to do more and more. Today, cancellation operations are performed by two robots that are also able to handle partial cancellations, when the customer cancels only part of their purchase order. In this case, the automation saves dozens of hours of human labour every day. The customer department staff can now use their time to handle customer requests requiring more sophisticated solutions.

CONTACT CENTRE

TRADE AND SERVICES



Tasks that are boring and repetitive for humans are ideal for robots. They work with no rest and no errors. The robot can stop cancelled orders immediately, often preventing goods from being dispatched from the warehouse and saving the cost of shipping them to the customer and back again.

This saves tens of thousands of euros a year. Above all, the brand's customers are happier because their requests are handled faster. The company has also deployed the robot in the group's other contact centres and is preparing to automate other processes as well.

„The side effect was that the data, purchase orders, and cancellations are in much better order now, and the rework was almost completely eliminated. And there is much more that the robot could learn and help the customer with. We have already identified hundreds of additional hours a year that the customer can save with help from the robot.“

Viktória Lukáčová Bracjunová

Soitron, Business and Product Development Manager and RPA Specialist



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Soitron is a Central European integrator operating in the IT market since 1991. The company's philosophy is to constantly move forward, and that is why it is a leader in implementing unique technologies and innovative solutions. It offers its clients products and services in the field of robotization and process automation, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), IT infrastructure, communication and cloud solutions, IT security, IT services and outsourcing, IT advisory and applications, and IT department digitalization. Its product portfolio includes smart police car solutions – Mosy and cyber security services – Void Security Operations Center. Soitron, s.r.o. is a part of the Soitron Group and employs more than 800 international experts. The group brings together professional teams in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Romania, Turkey, Bulgaria, Poland, and the UK.