

Five Steps Toward Sustainable Process Improvement



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Gaining Visibility into Business Processes

While few organizations would dispute the need to maintain visibility into and continually improve their business processes, many struggle with this task. In fact, only 55 percent of change projects are initially successful, and only one in four are successful in the long run, according to the Towers Watson [2013–2014 Change and Communication ROI Study](#)¹. Why is that and what can be done about it?

Four primary challenges exist when addressing process improvement initiatives: complexity of the work itself, the numerous, disparate systems used, and the behaviors and mindset of the people executing the work.

Complexity. Some processes are simple and require very little human interaction. It is likely that many of these processes have already been automated. What then remains are processes that are complex, requiring multiple people, functions and systems to execute. For example, an insurance claim goes through many steps and is handled by many people, from submission and adjudication to payment and notification. At each step of the process, there are numerous variables that can impact handling of the claim, and the claim can end in more than one disposition – approved, declined, resubmittal, investigation, etc.

Systems. With a multitude of systems and “silos” of information, organizations can struggle to obtain a complete view of their processes. Often systems don’t “talk” to each other and data needs to be manually entered from one system into another. Managers struggle to link system data to end-to-end processes, lacking a holistic view of the process to help identify where the bottlenecks are and the opportunities for improvement.

Employee Behavior. While some processing data can be extracted from systems of record, very little of this data provides insight into **how** their employees execute the processes each day. Which applications do they access and when? What steps do they follow and in what order? How long do they spend on each step? How long should they spend? Are they following all the steps required for regulatory compliance?

Open Mindset. Even if you are able to capture complex, end-to-end processing data on the work and employee activity, implementing and sustaining process changes and improvements can still present a challenge. Sustainability requires a different employee mindset – one that is open to change and willing to adapt as systems, processes and goals change. This is the most difficult aspect of a continuous process improvement program.

Without a clear understanding of existing processes and the ability to modify and monitor them, organizations can be challenged to react quickly to day-to-day, bottom line-influencing issues. As a result, it can be difficult to know where and how to improve execution. This can make businesses vulnerable to a formidable array of consequences, such as the loss of customer goodwill and the opportunity for repeat business, increased employee turnover, diminished competitive advantage, damage to their reputation— even litigation and issues with regulatory authorities.

¹ [Change management: Do your leaders have the tools to make change possible?](#) Willis Towers Watson Blog, September 16, 2015.



Five Steps Toward Sustainable Process Improvement

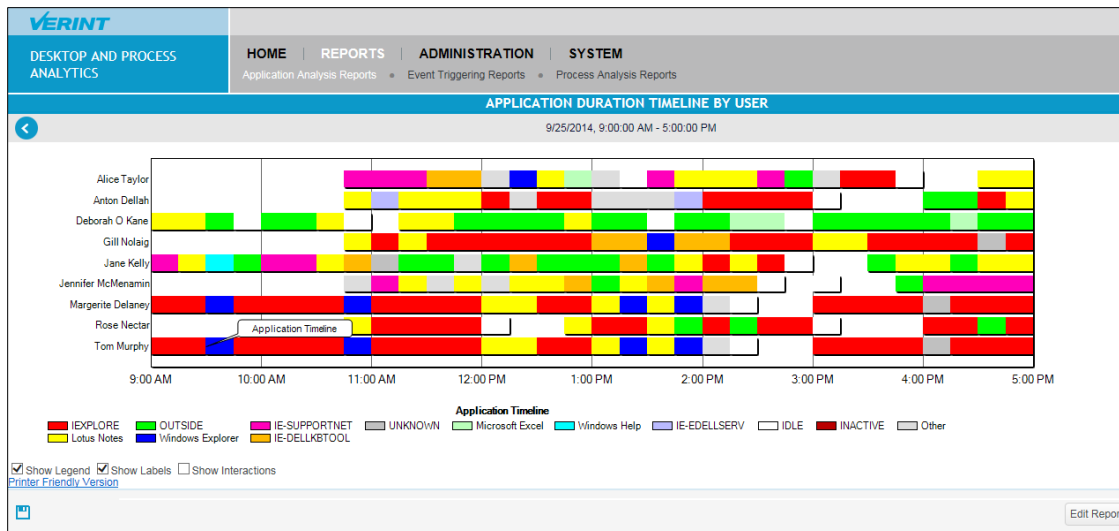
Solutions from Verint® Systems, such as [Verint Desktop and Process Analytics™](#), [Robotic Process Automation™](#) and [Process Assistant™](#), can help organizations understand how employees are executing processes and identify opportunities for streamlining, automating, and sustaining process changes. These solutions can provide the actionable intelligence executives need to:

1. Understand employee activity at the desktop
2. Baseline current state processes and all the different paths employees take to quickly identify bottlenecks and improvement opportunities
3. Automate processes and process steps where possible
4. Provide real-time process assistance to help ensure employees follow the right process steps as they are happening
5. Monitor processes for compliance, sustainability and continuous improvements.

Step 1: Understand employee activity at the desktop

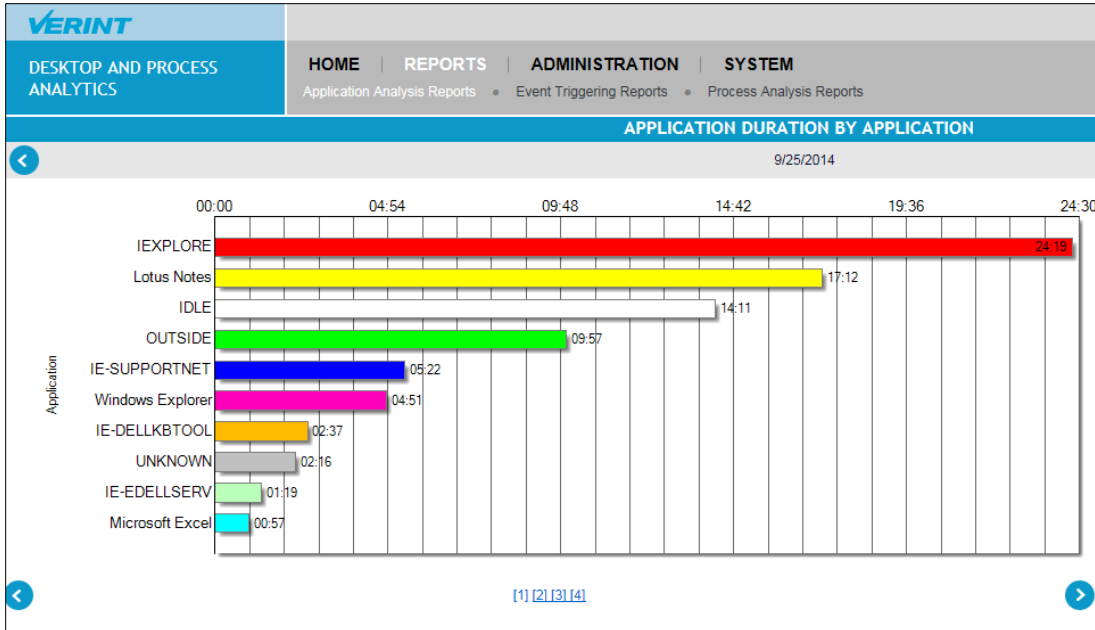
The employee desktop is the most often used and reliable source for processing activities and data. By understanding who is working on which applications, when, and for how long, organizations can better align application usage with business processes and identify opportunities for enhancing processes and employee effectiveness. Two components of Verint's [Desktop and Process Analytics](#) solution help capture and record employee activity directly from the desktop.

Application Analysis™ tracks individual employee application usage, which can be represented as a percentage of time spent in particular applications throughout the workday. This can provide critical insight into activity and productivity, particularly with phone states—such as administrative not ready, hold, and after-call work—which, in the contact center, are often viewed as lost time. In back-office operations, you could gain insight into lag time between work-item handoffs. It could also illustrate when an employee needs coaching or training on a process, as they are accessing applications not related to the customers they are serving or work items they should be processing.



Sample Application Duration Timeline by User Report

The greater value is seen when you view the data in aggregate across a team or multiple work groups – whether it is 10 employees or 5,000 employees. Now you can start to understand how and where time is being spent at the desktop and across the operations as a whole. These applications can then be grouped as production related or non-production related, so you can start to understand employee productivity and utilization.



Sample Team Application Duration Report, including Idle Time

Triggers respond to various employee actions, such as keys pressed, applications opened, and specific values entered into application fields, to detect and tag particular types of interactions or business functions based on the values of individual fields within applications. Triggers can help organizations perform a number of functions:

- **Identify process steps by desktop activity.** Based on easily created trigger rules, organizations can quickly identify the start and stop points of a process, then build the interim steps to create a holistic picture of the steps and activities involved in executing it.
- **Help ensure policy and process compliance.** Triggers can be used to alert employees in real time that they may be performing a task that violates policy or to remind them of steps in unfamiliar processes. A trigger can be configured to pop up a simple message when field values in the application indicate the transaction may be out of compliance. Triggers can also help ensure compliance to privacy regulations, such as PCI compliance. If you record calls or screens for quality monitoring, Triggers can stop and start a recording when sensitive customer information is being shared.
- **Alert managers to training needs.** When employees frequently cancel transactions, refer to certain help files, or

Additional Benefits

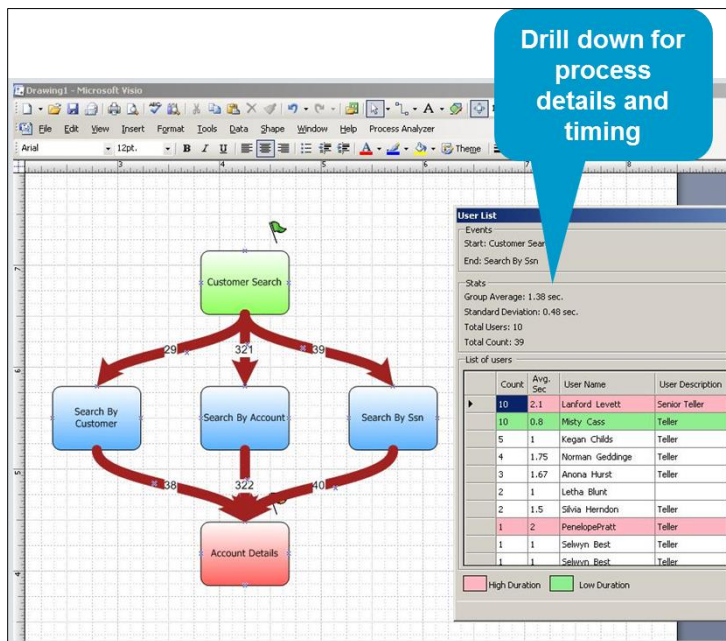
PCI Compliance. Desktop Analytics Triggers can identify events and field activity on the desktop, enabling companies to pause and resume recording of transactions to prevent the capture of personal information, such as credit card numbers.

Employee Utilization. Quantify hidden capacity by showing the amount of time spent on non-productive applications or instances in which there is no activity at the desktop. Uncover non-work-related activities, such as Web surfing, that can impact service levels and handle times.

perform other tasks that suggest they're struggling with an interaction, Triggers can send an email to the supervisor. To distinguish between normal application usage and real training or coaching needs, triggers can be configured to fire only after criteria have been met a certain number of times or after a threshold duration of application usage has been exceeded.

Step 2: Baseline Current State Processes

Real-time process diagrams can help organizations baseline current performance and reveal problems that might otherwise go undetected. Verint Strategic Desktop and Process Analytics™ includes Application Analysis and Triggers, as well as two strategic solutions – *Process Discovery™* and *Process Analysis™*. Process Discovery graphically maps, step by step, how employees execute business processes based on their actual desktop activities. The solution can capture event data from triggers or by importing application activity data from log files. The solution takes the data and creates process diagrams in Microsoft® Visio® showing all the paths taken to execute a process, highlighting frequently followed paths as well as process inefficiencies.



Sample Process Discovery process map

Additional Benefits

Eliminate the need for time-consuming observations and timings. With few systems providing end-to-end process data, most companies rely on periodic observation and timing of employees as they perform the process. Not only is this resource intensive, your results are likely to be skewed because the individuals will be on their “best behavior” when being observed. They may perform the step or process as they think they should rather than the way they typically do, and they may ignore typical interruptions that commonly impact process execution.

Managers and analysts can start by specifying as few as two event triggers indicating the first and last steps of a particular process. From this information, they can see process handle time and frequency by employee. This analysis can then be expanded incrementally by defining additional triggers representing key navigation points within the process, providing insight into various execution paths employees follow.

Drilling into any path on the diagram shows the employees following that path, the average step handle time, and the staff with the highest and lowest handle times. Visually displaying the overall process can make it easy to see where the exceptions and process loops occur on any monitored desktop in the enterprise. Data capture is performed automatically and continuously, without interrupting work or back-end integrations with critical corporate systems.



Once organizations can see and document how processes are currently executed, they can assess processes for opportunities to streamline or automate specific process steps or entire processes where applicable.

Step 3: Automate Processes and Process Steps Where Possible

Many operational areas have manual tasks, process steps or entire processes that are fundamentally rules-based and don't require human decision making and judgment. The activity could be as simple as a cut-and-paste of data from one system to another, or a complex, multistep process that consistently follows a pre-defined workflow. Verint [Robotic Process Automation](#)™ manages these tasks for you, automating process execution seamlessly with great accuracy and at a fraction of current costs.

Robotic Process Automation is comprised of software robots that automatically execute tasks across multiple applications by simulating the activities of an employee via the applications' user interfaces. By using the existing applications, there is no need to change processes or legacy systems, leading to a quick implementation. The robots can perform tasks that can be extremely repetitive and tedious when performed manually, and then hand off the work to employees to make decisions on the next steps or complete any remaining steps or tasks. By executing complete processes—or tasks within larger processes, the robots free up time from more valuable, more expensive “human resources” to concentrate on other tasks and handle more value-added work. Depending on process complexity and application performance, each robot can typically do the work of 2.5 to 3.0 full-time employees.

Additional Benefits

Improve quality and reduce costs. Eliminate human error and downstream rework. Offload tedious, error-prone processes, such as quote-to-cash, claims processing and other tasks that require data to be rekeyed into multiple systems manually. Reduce audit effort and costs.

Step 4: Provide Real-Time Process Assistance

Today's customer support and back-office processing employees are challenged with a wide variety of processes they must execute during their day. Many of these processes occur frequently, but others occur only occasionally and are hard to recall. Still others are subject to frequent changes due to evolving regulations, and can present a training challenge to organizations that need to make sure employees understand the changes but can't keep taking employees out of production to complete more training. Verint [Process Assistant](#) can help employees complete tasks faster and more accurately by providing guidance and automation wizards that overlay applications, showing staff exactly what to do, preventing them from proceeding in some situations, and even performing the work for them in others.

Process Assistant offers:

- “Show Me” functionality that animates the sequence of steps to be completed for a process, reducing the need for continuous training on processes that are performed infrequently.
- Guidance scripts with useful information for employees while they are completing a process.
- The ability to automatically block incorrect actions.

For critical tasks that aren't performed frequently enough for employees to maintain competence, these guidance scripts and wizards can help an employee complete a task quickly and accurately.

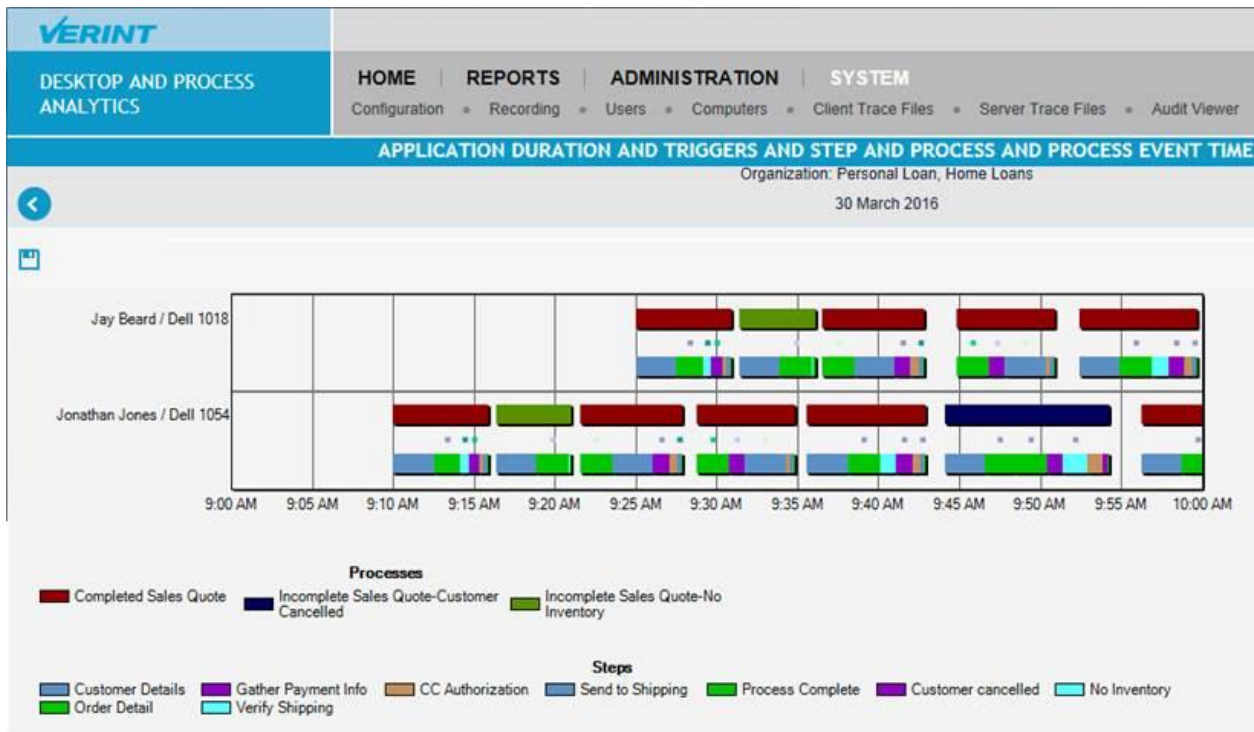
Additional Benefits

Reduce Training Time. By giving employees contextual, real-time process assistance, less time is needed in formal training to ensure new procedures are followed.

Step 5: Monitor Processes for Compliance, Sustainability and Continuous Improvements

With *Process Analysis*[™], organizations can define specific processes, and then track the volume and work items as they move through the process using trigger data. When the software recognizes a specified series of steps, it records the data. Graphical timeline reports illustrate which processes have been completed, how long they took, who performed them, and the steps involved.

The reports can enable organizations to establish process handle time standards or end resolution goals (see “Summary Statistics” in Timeline Report example), spot inefficient processes, analyze transaction values, and track account data at given steps.



Sample Process Analysis Timeline Report with Summary Statistics displayed

When processes are tagged with a common identifier, it is possible to follow an order, claim, loan application, etc., as it is handled by individual employees in multiple departments. Moreover, reports can enable organizations to discern patterns in process execution that may define best practices or signal activity outside of process compliance—a key factor for managing risk and liability.

When used as part of a well-defined management practice, Verint[®] Desktop and Process Analytics can help organizations use their resource capacity efficiently, maintain compliance, and achieve service levels to help ensure customer satisfaction.

Additional Benefits

Build better capacity models with more accurate handle times.

Process analysis captures actual handle time by process step, enabling organizations to more accurately forecast workloads and create better capacity plans.



Advantages and Benefits

The Verint Desktop and Process Analytics and Robotic Process Automation solutions can help organizations gain visibility into processes and create methods to ensure sustainable process improvement, including:

- Creating a baseline of current performance.
- Identifying processing variations, bottlenecks and improvement opportunities.
- Enabling the correction of process deviations while they are happening.
- Reducing processing errors and rework by automating process steps and providing personalized assistance to employees.
- Monitoring processes for adoption, adherence, sustainability and continuous improvement.

Case Studies

Telecommunications

A Latin American telecommunications operator was suddenly inundated with calls, due to a change in legislation requiring operators to activate pre-paid phones at the time of registration to inhibit the use of such devices by criminals. Deploying all components of Desktop and Process Analytics, the company was able to measure and analyze the process from end to end, reducing service time for the registration and activation of phones by 20 percent.

- The company realized a 15-percent increase in customer service agent productivity by eliminating duplicate data entry, and providing on-screen instructions and alerts to guide agents through the process step by step.
- The company was able to measure application usage and process efficiency, enabling it to quickly spot and address process bottlenecks while gaining a high level of traceability.

As an added benefit, the reduction in service time and increase in agent productivity helped the company decrease repeat calls. Overall, this translated into a 10-percent reduction in the cost of running the company's customer service operations, along with a simultaneous increase in customer satisfaction.

Insurance

A multiline insurer with a high caliber, internal Six Sigma organization used Process Discovery to identify variations in four key processes in its Group Benefits Organization. The company discovered:

- Many more process variations than originally thought. Not only were there deviations within the prescribed process, but also a high frequency of processes being completed at unexpected or inappropriate end points.
- Staff usage of systems that were not part of the defined process to complete the tasks, such as Excel, Outlook, Case Management, and their workflow system.
- Usage of many non-integrated systems to execute the processes. The company identified lost productivity of more than 100 hours per month from employees toggling back and forth between programs, or modifying fields to match systems.
- An additional 36 hours of lost productivity per month arising from the time spent waiting for a core system to refresh after key steps are performed by analysts.



The insurer is now working on redefining and documenting these processes, and providing additional training to staff to help limit variations and speed processing.

Additional Solutions That Support Process Adoption

The greatest factor that impacts process efficiency and compliance is your people. Solutions, such as Verint's [Performance Management](#)[™] and [Gamification](#)[™], can also help improve process sustainability.

- Performance Management Scorecards can help managers identify when an employee is falling short on their production goals. By drilling down into the data, they may discover that the employee needs a refresher in how a specific process is to be executed. From the employee scorecard, the manager can assign a coaching session or an e-learning clip, and track if there is any improvement to the employee's production score after it has been completed.
- Gamification can be used to disseminate process changes in the form of learning clips, quizzes, or simulations. Employees are motivated to consume the learning material to gain points, rewards and recognition for their activity. Campaigns can be run with specified timeframes to drive employee learning, and the administrative tools enable managers to understand who has consumed what content, and if the content helped drive the desired change.

Conclusion

Verint Desktop and Process Analytics and Robotic Process Automation solutions offer an efficient, effective way for organizations to improve the speed, accuracy, and effectiveness of their business processes. Organizations can overcome the challenges of capturing and monitoring **complex**, multistep, multi-touch processes across disparate **systems** by capturing activity directly from the desktop without the need for lengthy system integrations. These solutions give insight into **employees' behavior** and how they process the work, the steps they take, the length of time it takes, and the various handoffs that occur from start to finish. Being able to automate tedious steps, provide real-time assistance, and visually show employees their actual process maps can help employees appreciate the impact their behavior has on achieving processing goals and create an **openness** to change and help them adapt as needed.

With these new solutions organizations have the actionable intelligence they need to continuously improve processes and ensure the employees have the tools and insight to quickly adapt to process changes. In today's challenging economy, the solutions can help time- and resource-strapped operations enhance business processes, performance, and the cultivate customers for life.

Verint. Powering Actionable Intelligence.[®]

Verint[®] (NASDAQ: VRNT) is a global leader in Actionable Intelligence[®] solutions. Actionable Intelligence is a necessity in a dynamic world of massive information growth because it empowers organizations with crucial insights and enables decision makers to anticipate, respond and take action. Verint Actionable Intelligence solutions help organizations address three important challenges: customer engagement optimization; security intelligence; and fraud, risk, and compliance. Today, more than 10,000 organizations in over 180 countries, including over 80 percent of the Fortune 100, use Verint solutions to improve enterprise performance and make the world a safer place. Learn more at www.verint.com.