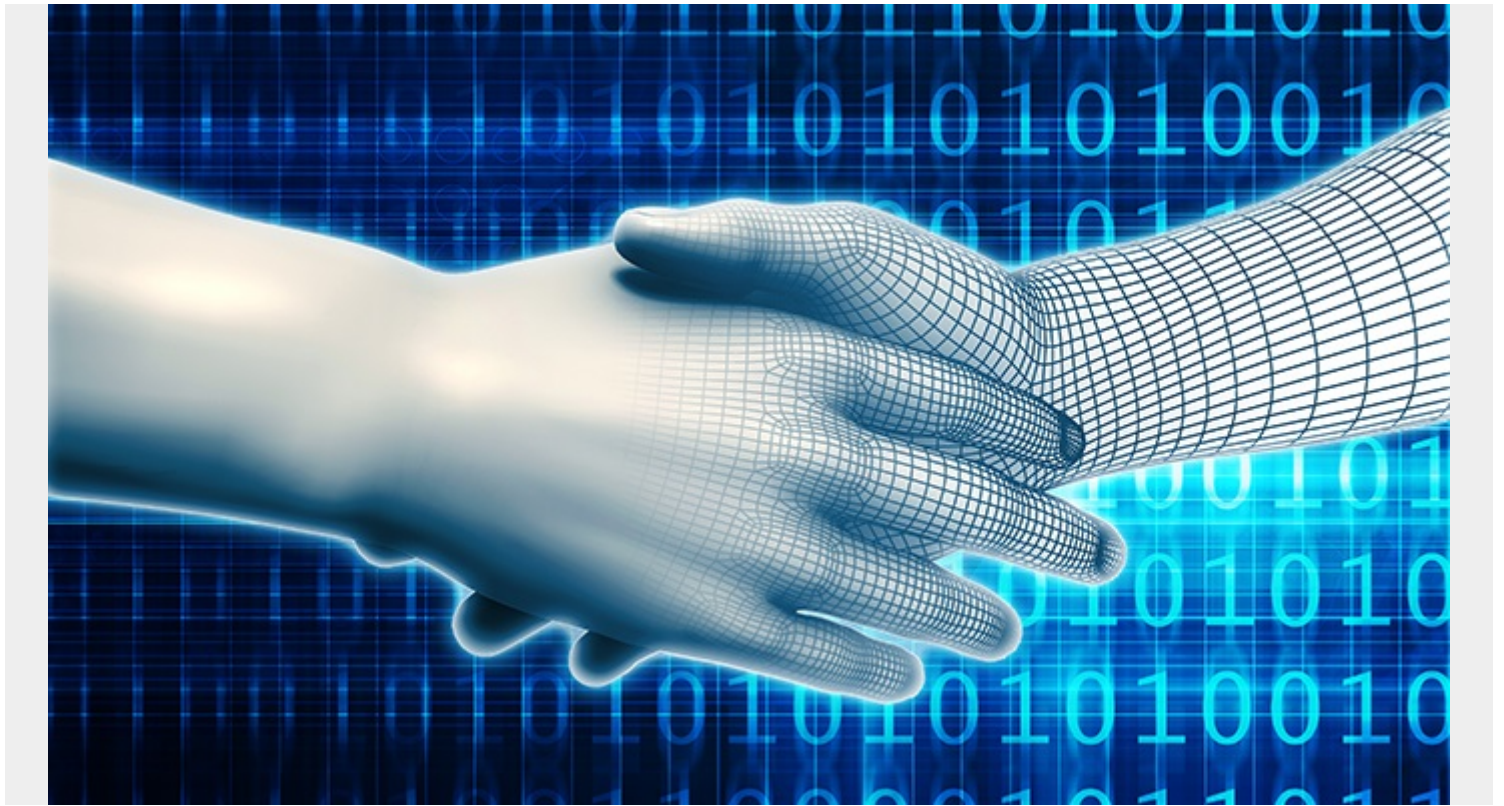# A DYNAMIC DUO: WORKLOAD AUTOMATION AND ROBOTIC PROCESS AUTOMATION

Despite having worked with Control-M for over 20 years, I am hesitant to call myself an expert on the topic of workload automation. What I prefer to say is that I have heard lots of stories from people on how they have - or hope to - increase the level of automation to improve the delivery of critical business services. Me being an expert can be up for debate. What cannot be debated is that I have heard many such stories!

Over the 20 years as mentioned earlier, in addition to the discipline of workload automation (WLA), I remember hearing about many other types of automation such as: IT Process Automation (ITPA), Business Process Automation (BPA), Run Book Automation (RBA), and Robotic Process Automation (you guessed it… RPA) – just to name a few. These types of automation, including workload automation, often live separate lives, sometimes compete with each other, but I think most accurately should be seen as complementary to each other – especially when it concerns workload automation and robotic process automation. Some things are just better together – Laurel and Hardy, Yin and Yang, and sweet and sour, to mention a few. And I think the same can mainly be said when it comes to RPA and WLA.

Robotic Process Automation is software that automates actions - things a human would otherwise perform like mouse clicks, keyboard entries, or selecting information from specific fields or screen locations. RPA is ideally suited for automating human-machine interactions – actions involving a person manually interacting with a user interface.

Workload Automation, the discipline I have been involved with for so long, is software that manages and monitors tasks that help deliver business services. These tasks run in complex multi-cloud environments and encompass a vast array of applications and data sources.

I can think of quite a few stories over the years where both disciplines needed to work together to help deliver a business service.

Take this example:

- every time a customer creates an account in a retailer's mobile app, at the end of the account creation a database extract occurs, creating a file that contains data associated with the new user account
- every time the prior step occurs the file is transferred to another machine where a Business Intelligence (BI) tool is used to manipulate the data
- the data from the prior step is merged with data that comes from a screen scrape task running in an RPA tool, that involves a legacy application inside the organization, resulting in a newly enriched version of the file
- this resulting file gets transferred to another machine where a data lake resides
- a series of Hadoop jobs run, ending with the creation of a report file
- this report file gets sent to multiple internal business units at the company as well as to an external business partner

This example is a mildly complex flow of jobs or events that need to occur – sometimes with high frequency, but always with very tight time tolerances – to deliver a business service. The third step is the sweet spot for RPA, but that step in and of itself does not deliver the business service (which is the report that gets generated and distributed in the final step). The business service needs all those steps to happen at the right time, in the right order, without exception. And that is Workload Automation's sweet spot. Orchestrating a complex set of events on time, every time.

As a witness to this and the many other customer stories I have seen and heard, it is the combination of these two automation disciplines that result in happy customers because of excellent business service delivery!