

How AFerry used RPA to create up to 50% more capacity in their Finance Department

"The way Lean Robotics configured the bot to make it simple was very smart and enlightening – it enabled us to get up and running quickly and easily add new operators onto it ourselves – this was exactly what I asked for"
– Sam Fletcher, CFO, AFerry

The Company

AFerry is an online ferry ticket marketplace that allows travelers to compare and book global ferry routes. Established in 2000, this family run business has an online presence that generates 35m unique visitors per year and over 600,000 bookings annually.

The Challenge

The Finance team spent 60% of their time doing manual payment reconciliations from the online booking system for 130 different ferry operators. This translated into reconciling between 30,000 and 120,000 lines of payments in spreadsheets each month. Large variations in both the size and type of files that required reconciling, added further complexity to an already small and overstretched Finance team. One example file had over 10,000 payment lines alone and took a team member two days to process. Due to large volumes and the time taken to process the reconciliations, problems, such as reconciliation differences, were not always acted upon promptly.

The Solution

After analysing the RPA offerings of the top three providers, AFerry decided to go with UiPath due to its ease of use and simplicity for business users to follow. *"We wanted automation that was simple to allow us to be as self-sufficient in Finance as possible"* – Sam Fletcher, CFO, AFerry

Lean Robotics, UiPath's recommended partners, managed the end-to-end implementation, and in 7 weeks captured business requirements, installed software, designed, built and deployed the bot on the Amazon Web Services (AWS) platform within the cloud, and are now providing after-care support for the team. *"Everyone has been impressed with the speed with which we've gotten to this stage, the bot was ready for us to start this new process at the beginning of the new financial year, which was fantastic"* – Melissa Head, Finance Team Leader, AFerry. Designed with speed and flexibility in mind, the bot can incorporate and adapt to multiple kinds of reconciliation, so there is scope to take on freight reconciliations in the future.

The Benefits

Aside from the bot taking large chunks of monotonous 'copy-paste' work away from the Finance team, they can now respond to operators faster and have freed up between 40-50% of their time to focus on higher value-add cognitive tasks. The payback period for this automation is estimated at 6-12 months, with the potential for further FTE savings when other processes are added. The average processing time for large files has decreased from two days to two hours.

HIGHLIGHTS

≥50%

Reduction in processing time

2 FTE

Capacity creation

40 - 50%

Of time freed up to focus on value-add activities

7 weeks

From requirements capture to bot implementation

6 - 12m

To payback costs

