

Licensing for Robots

Introduction

As part of building a robotic workforce consideration must be given to the licensing implications for each of the tasks that the robot (or resource pc) performs. This document seeks to provide guidance and examples of the types of implications that may be relevant.

Typically Blue Prism robots interact with a range of third party systems and therefore organisations should ensure that robots are appropriately licensed for each of the applications that they use.

Robot Licensing

The Robot

Each robot (or resource pc) typically requires a minimum level of licensing because is essentially a virtual user which many software vendors treat, from a licensing perspective, in the same way as a physical user.

Whilst each robot/resource pc will need to be covered by an appropriate Blue Prism license, it is also common to expect each robot to require a software license for the common applications that are installed and used on the resource pc:

- Operating System (Windows)
- Microsoft Office (if relevant)
- Exchange (if relevant)

The robot will also need to be licensed for the purposes of having access (albeit often indirect) to the Blue Prism Microsoft SQL Server databases. The detail of how this licensing may take shape is explored later in the document.

Third Party Applications

It is important that the robots and resource pcs are appropriately licensed for each of the applications that they interact with. A non-exhaustive list of some example applications include:

- Microsoft Office
- Microsoft Exchange
- SAP
- Siebel
- Mainframe

- Microsoft CRM

The licensing options for each of the vendors must be understood in the context of how they apply to virtual users and devices to ensure that the robots are suitably covered.

As virtual PCs and virtual users are becoming common place many vendors now recognise virtual users and machines as if they were physical however it is recommend that clear recommendations for licensing from the respective vendors is sought.

Automated Use of Systems

Some vendors have been known to include clauses within their licensing agreements which prevent their applications from being used as part of automated processes. Such clauses may need to be addressed to ensure that the vendor accepts that the robots use of the system is more akin to a user manually interacting with the system rather than an automated process. Many of these clauses derive from the vendors seeking to reduce the risk of high usage resulting in a Denial of Service (DoS) however the facility within Blue Prism to limit the speed of processing should help to mitigate this particular concern.

Database Licensing

In some cases multiple licenses are required to fully allow a user/device to work with an application. An example of this is below:

Consider a typical third party system such as Microsoft Dynamics CRM which is licensed on a Server and Client Access License (CAL) model. If an organisation has 450 users, then they require a minimum of one Server License and a minimum of 450 CALs. What is not clear from this example is that the 450 users also require licenses for the underlying database provider: Microsoft SQL Server

The above example indicates that whilst the client user/device does not interact directly with SQL Server they still require a license for the underlying database solution.

A Blue Prism robot will require licenses to allow them to do the following:

- Interact indirectly with the Blue Prism database
- Interact with any database for which the database licensing is not included as part of the licensing framework for any relevant third party application.

For more information see the licensing information provided by the database provider(s) who form part of the solution. For Microsoft SQL Server 2012 there is a document published by Microsoft: *Microsoft SQL Server 2012 Licensing Guide*