Mphasis
The Next Applied

RPA Delivery Model for Digital Transformation (DX) Program

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1.
Abstract

The applicability of RPA projects has evolved considerably over the last few years. From being the preferred technology to automate business processes, RPA has manifested as a key tech component in Digital Transformation (DX) Programs.

The delivery model of traditional RPA projects will have to evolve to keep up with the requirements of DX programs to achieve overall success.

In this whitepaper, we explore the challenges in the delivery of RPA as part of DX programs and propose a scalable delivery model that Mphasis has perfected over the years across multiple programs.

2.
Background

RPA helps organizations reduce operational costs by automating large volumes of back-office activities. Furthermore, the reporting data provided by RPA helps organizations gain knowledge about their business operations and workforce intelligence. Companies can then leverage this information to implement digital strategies, which improves process efficiencies. RPA also enables quick savings to be ploughed back into larger digital transformation initiatives.

While an organization can certainly implement RPA without a full-blown digital transformation program, most DX programs would not really be possible without the inclusion of some intelligent automation capabilities.

In Jan 2022, Mphasis conducted a survey of in-flight RPA engagements and found three major categories of RPA projects (refer figure 1):

Digital Transformation

These are projects where RPA is a part of a larger DX program. They constitute ~30 percent of overall projects, and a few examples of this category include (a) UW and claims transformation for a large European insurer, (b) transformation of lending operations for a leading UK Merchant Bank, etc.

RPA is a key technology in the overall technology stack of these programs. Typically, the technology stack consists of technologies such as BPM, document processing and management, analytics, etc. Such projects are becoming mainstream since FY2021.

Process Automation

These are projects where RPA is leveraged for business process automation, usually in conjunction with a workflow or BPM tool. They constitute ~60 percent of the overall projects and have been cash-cows since FY2015. Service providers have achieved the highest maturity in terms of delivery in these projects.

Others

These consist of projects where RPA is used for integrating legacy applications owing to a lack of APIs, test automation, compliance testing, etc. These typically constitute ~10% of the overall projects.

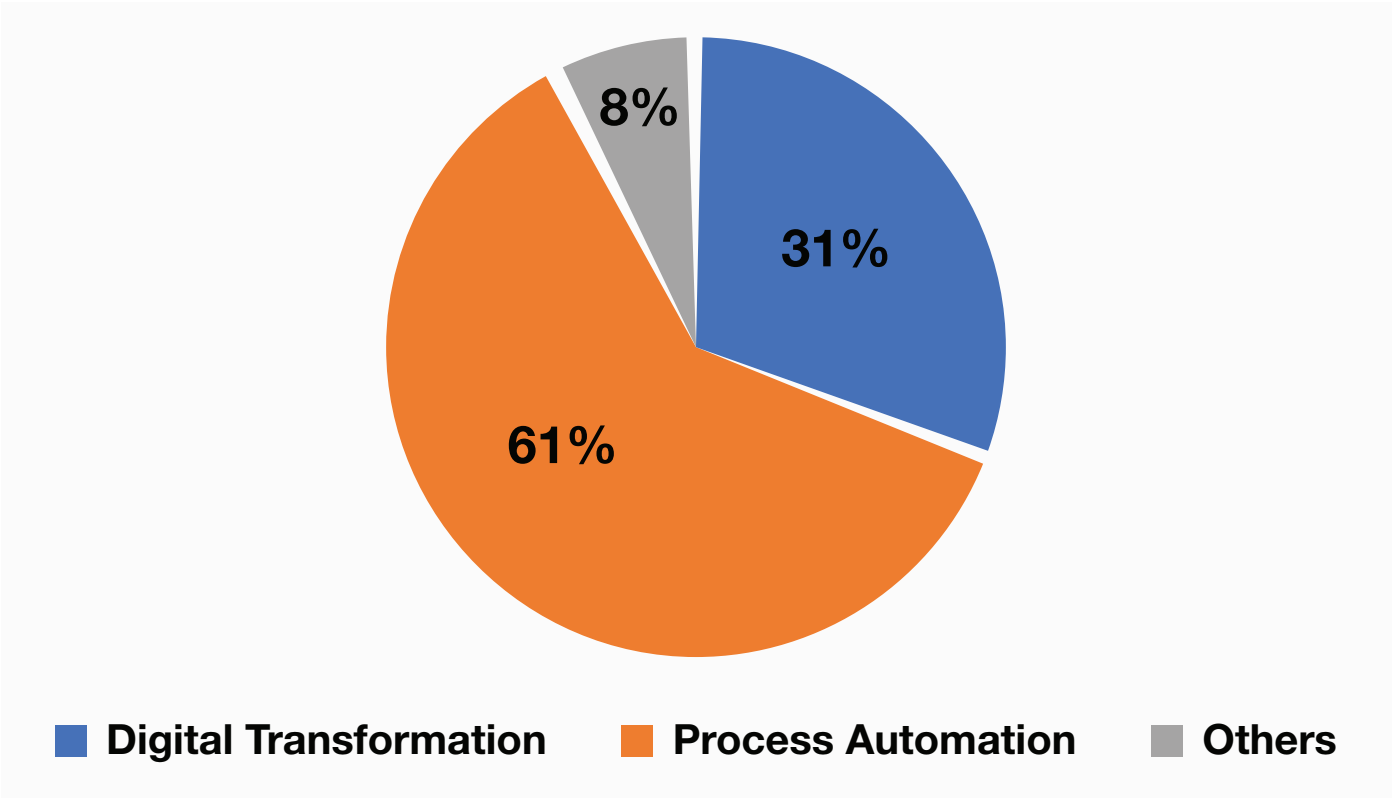

Figure 1: Nature of RPA Projects, N=40

3.

Challenges in Delivering RPA in DX Programs

The key challenges encountered in transformation programs are given below.

Challenge	Lack of common goal	Lack of coordination	Requirements capture
Description	• Individual Agile teams operate in silos • Computing value delivered at a program level is challenging	• Lack of coordination between Agile teams for prioritization of requirements • No synchronization between Agile teams during delivery of features	• Requirements are not captured as part of the program backlog. Instead, they are captured as part of the team's backlog. • Multiple sources of requirements

The above challenges impact the RPA delivery lifecycle as well. Figure 2 captures the activities across automation strategy, program execution and governance that are impacted in such large programs.

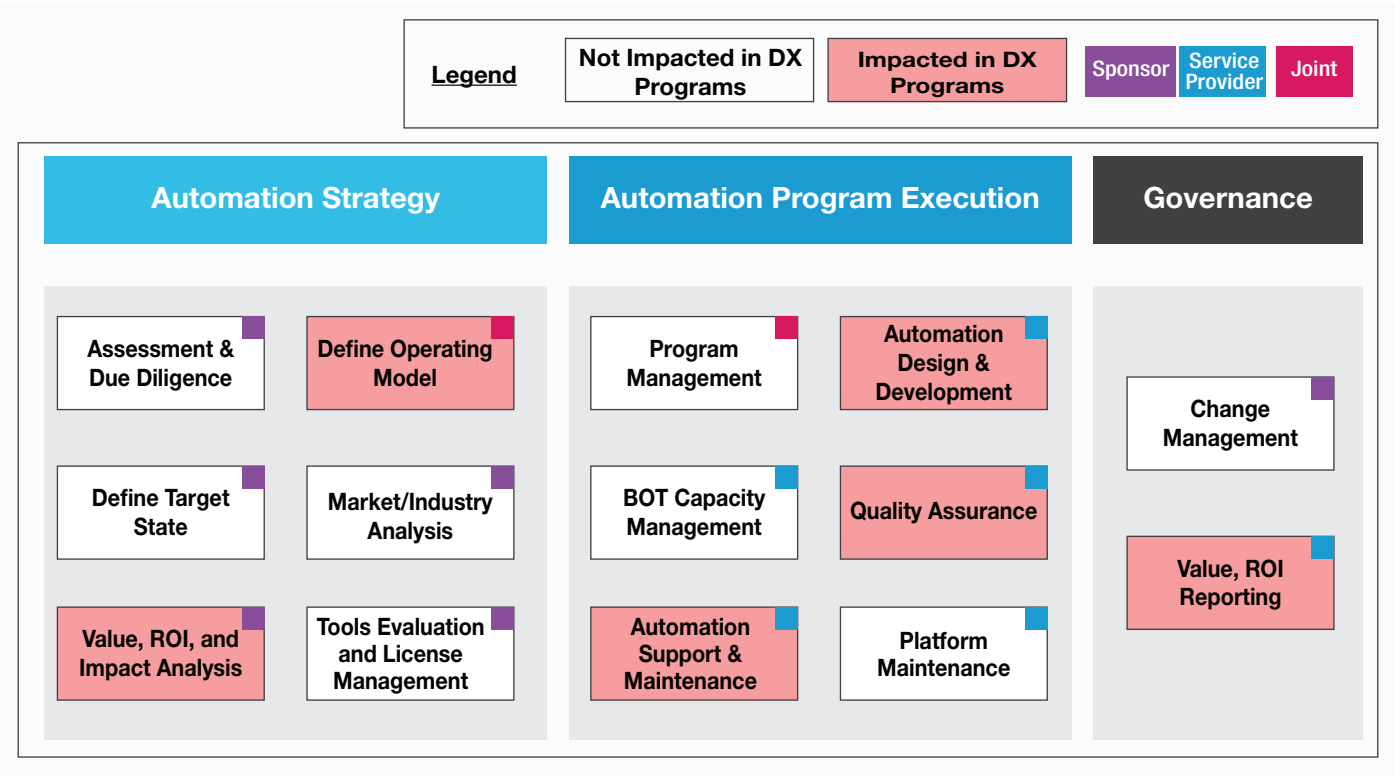

Figure 2: Areas Impacted in RPA Delivery (in DX Programs)

A case in point is a DX program for a UK-based leading merchant bank where RPA delivery cost shot up by ~30% as the impact of integrating with other technologies such as BPM and Cloud-based AI Services was not factored in initially.

4.

Migrating from a Siloed Delivery to an Integrated Delivery

SAFe Agile for DX Delivery

It is advised to adopt an integrated delivery framework such as SAFe 5.1 for DX delivery (refer figure 3 for Essential SAFe 5 framework).

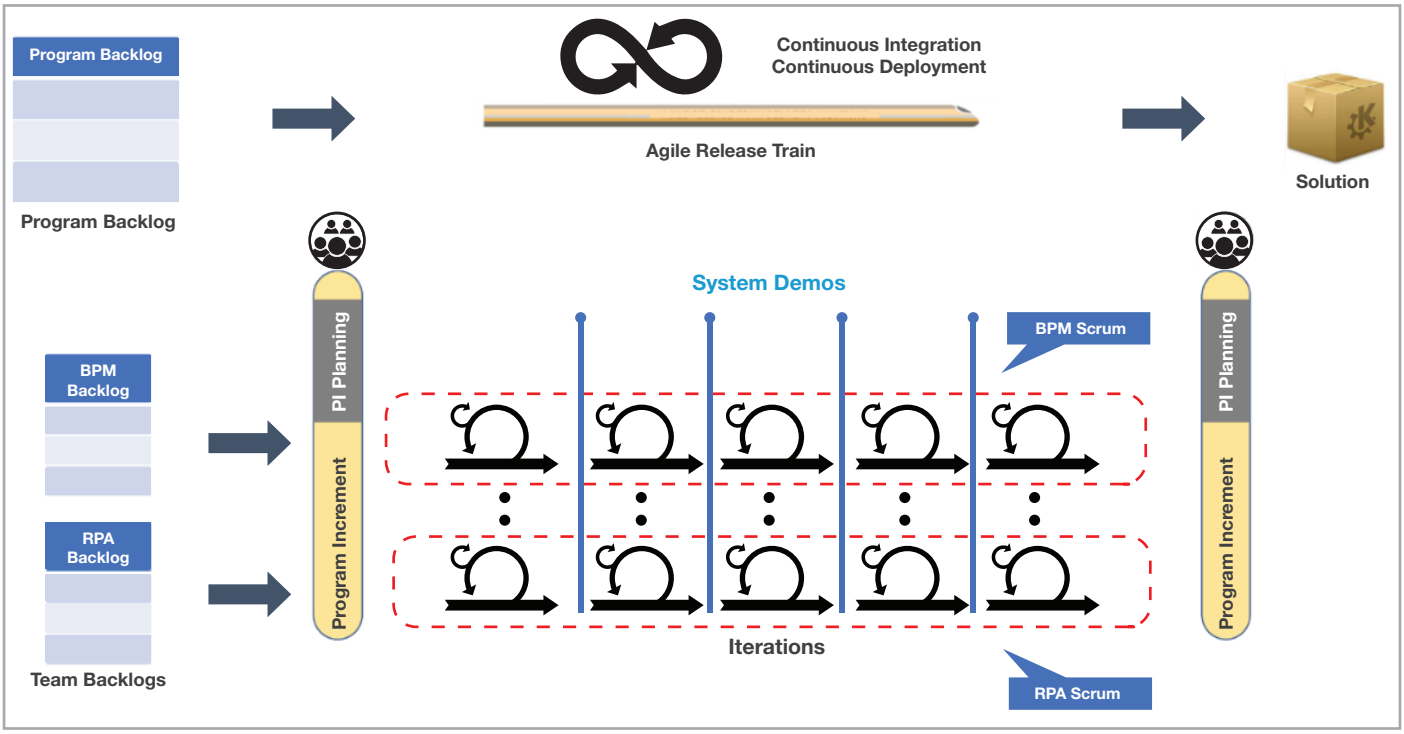

Figure 3: Digital Transformation Delivery using SAFe Agile Framework

Agile Release Train (ART)

ART is a long-lived Agile team specializing in various technologies such as RPA, BPM, document processing, OCR, Machine Learning, etc. ART, along with other stakeholders, incrementally develops, delivers and, where applicable, operates the DX Solution. ARTs are cross-functional and have all the capabilities needed to define, implement, test, deploy and release the DX Solution.

Program Backlog

The program backlog is the repository for all upcoming work that affects the behavior of the solution. Product management and solution teams develop, maintain and prioritize the program backlog. This backlog is a short-term holding area for features and capabilities that have been approved for implementation.

Team Backlogs

This contains user and enabler stories that originate from the program backlog, as well as stories that arise locally from the team's local context. It may include user stories for integration with other systems in the DX program viz., BPM and document processing.

5.
RPA Scrum Team Structure

Conventional RPA Team

The RPA Scrum team typically consists of the following roles:

- ***Scrum Master:*** The Scrum Master is the servant leader for the Scrum. Their responsibility is to facilitate the Scrum events and processes, and assist teams in delivering value.
- ***Product Owner/BA:*** They capture business requirements and create product backlogs, and ensure that the solution meets the business' objectives.
- ***Developers:*** Build, test, deploy and operate (if need be) the automation solution.

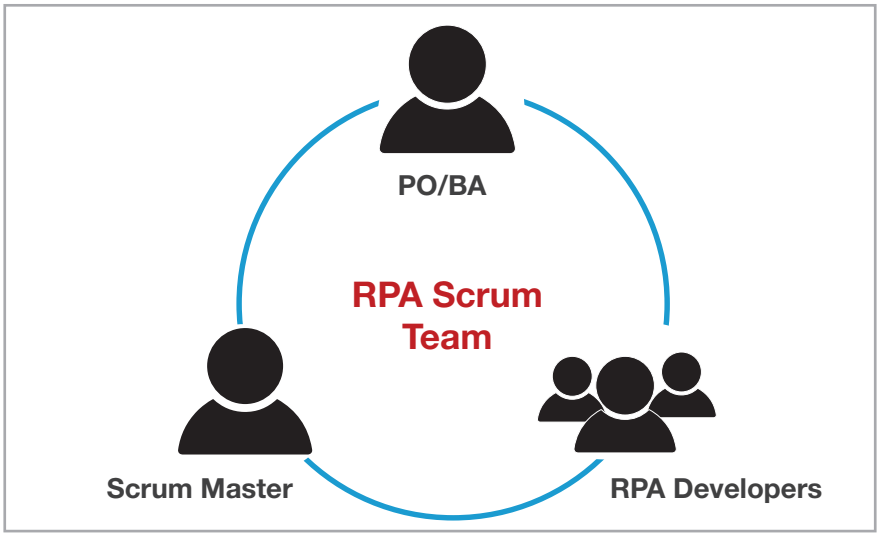

Figure 4: Conventional RPA Scrum Team

RPA Team for DX Programs

- ***System Architect:*** They are responsible for system/architecture engineering prescribed by the SAFe Agile framework. The system architect possesses relevant automation experience in working with diverse automation technologies such as BPM, RPA, OCR, document processing, chatbots, etc.
- ***Scrum Master:*** The RPA Scrum Master closely works with the Release Train Engineer, who in turn is responsible for the ART.
- ***Product Owner/BA:*** They closely work with product management, who in turn is responsible for defining and supporting overall solutions that meet customer needs.
- ***Developers:*** Developers build, test, deploy and operate (if need be) the automation solution. These developers also possess cross-functional skills required to integrate with solutions developed by other Agile teams.

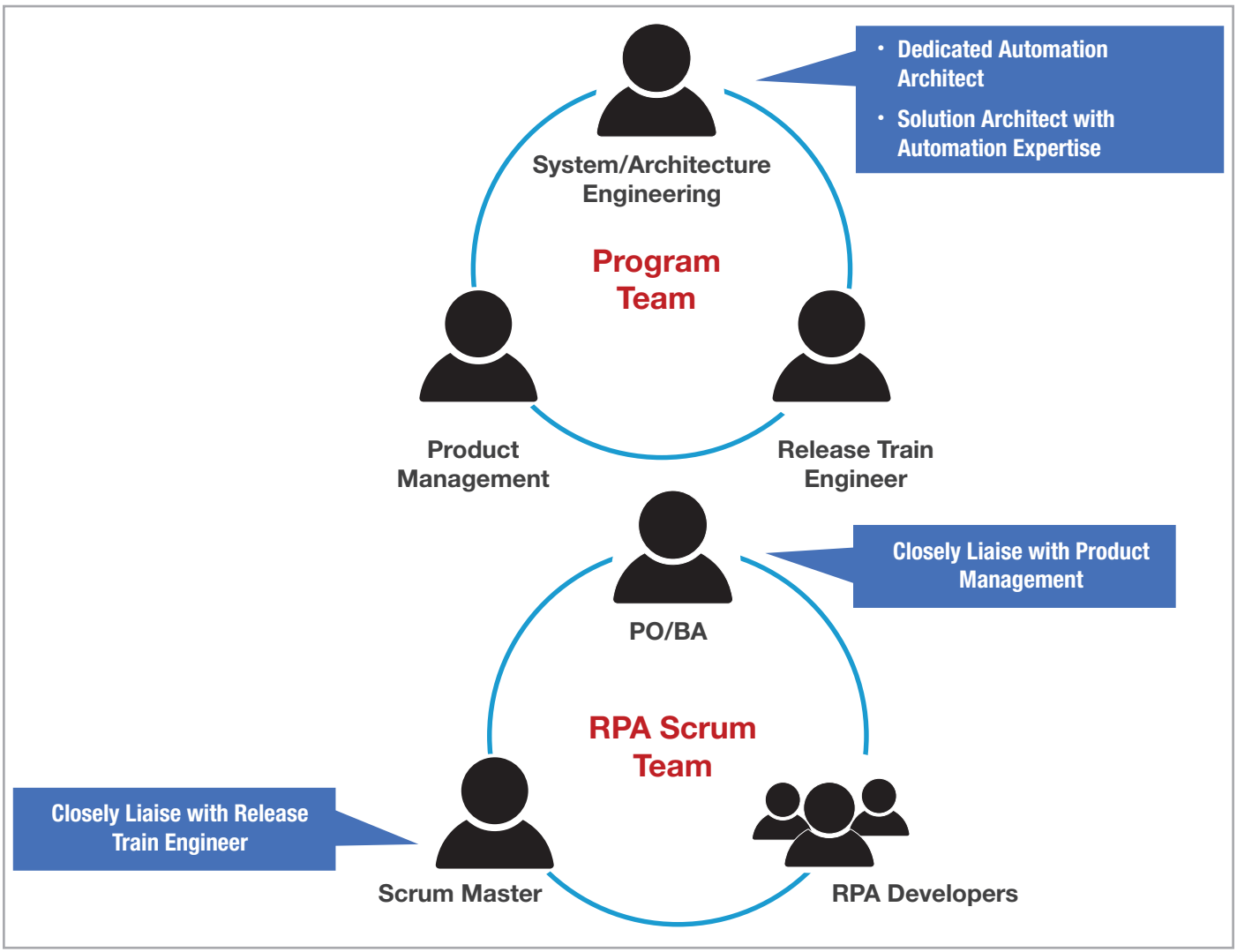

Figure 5: RPA Scrum Team for DX Programs

6.

Focus on the 3Cs

Collaboration

Team members are expected to collaborate with other's technology tracks on a regular basis for requirements understanding and design. Requirements will have to be captured as part of the program backlog and further pushed into the team's backlog. Some of the integration requirements will have to be captured in the solution design phase.

A one size fits all solution approach may not work in such programs. For example, a certain integration between RPA and AWS Image Recognition will need to be worked for one client. Similar solutions may not work between the same RPA tool and Microsoft Cloud Vision for a different client, as they may expect encryption or a gateway owing to their compliance policies.

Agile teams will have to collaborate with product owners and solution architects in deriving program benefits. A case in point is when one might report RPA benefits as 30 percent and workflow/BPM benefits as 40 percent, but the overall benefits will have to be a weighted average of the two.

Coordination

Greater coordination is required between Agile teams for prioritization of requirements and during delivery of features to production as part of the ART.

Cross-functional Skills

Team members need to be conversant with multiple integration approaches and solution designs. For example, an RPA developer is expected to be conversant with integrating AI services on Cloud, requiring him or her to be trained or certified in Cloud technologies.

The above 3 points are summarized in Figure 5.

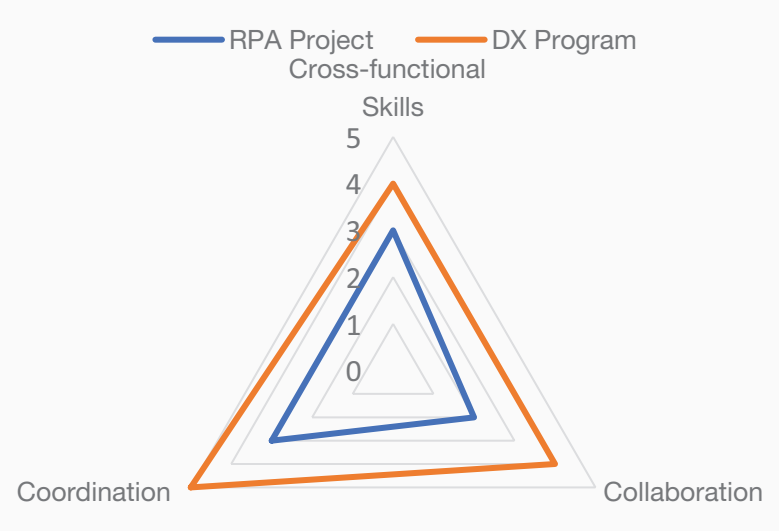

Figure 6: 3Cs for the Success of DX Program

7.

Conclusion

DX programs are becoming mainstream since FY2021 and most of them would not really be possible without the inclusion of some intelligent automation capabilities.

The delivery model of traditional RPA projects will have to evolve and align to the scaled Agile frameworks such as SAFe 5.1.

RPA Agile teams will also have to adapt to new team structures and focus on 3Cs (Collaboration, Coordination and Cross-functional Skills) for the overall success of the DX programs.

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About Mphasis

Mphasis' purpose is to be the *"Driver in the Driverless Car"* for Global Enterprises by applying next-generation design, architecture and engineering services, to deliver scalable and sustainable software and technology solutions. Customer centricity is foundational to Mphasis, and is reflected in the Mphasis' Front2Back™ Transformation approach. Front2Back™ uses the exponential power of cloud and cognitive to provide hyper-personalized ($C = X2C^{2}_{TM} = 1$) digital experience to clients and their end customers. Mphasis' Service Transformation approach helps 'shrink the core' through the application of digital technologies across legacy environments within an enterprise, enabling businesses to stay ahead in a changing world. Mphasis' core reference architectures and tools, speed and innovation with domain expertise and specialization, combined with an integrated sustainability and purpose-led approach across its operations and solutions are key to building strong relationships with marquee clients. Click here to know more. (BSE: 526299; NSE: MPHASIS)

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