



DATA SHEET

IA-Connect

REMOTE SESSION AUTOMATION



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With the use of remote desktop technologies such as Citrix and Microsoft RDS being prevalent within organisations, and the rise of Robotic Process Automation, or RPA, across all industry sectors, automation of some processes is likely to involve leveraging what we term Surface Automation which introduces a set of challenges.

Surface Automation relies on visuals such as screenshots and image recognition and is required when the RPA technology is unable to interact natively with Windows such as through a virtual session via Citrix or Microsoft RDS. The impact of this is increased complexity in the development phase and processes which are significantly less robust than those created through standard automation. This results in organisations typically either spending more time and effort developing and maintaining these automated processes or avoiding the automation of them altogether.

Solving the Problem

At Ultima, we're committed to enabling our clients to adopt technologies such as RPA and AI, and to help scale the usage of these technologies internally. Therefore, removing barriers to entry, reducing cost and effort during the development process and providing an end-to-end service is important to us. As one of only a handful of Citrix Platinum Partners worldwide, Ultima has developed a deep understanding of Citrix and Microsoft RDS and as such has launched IA-Connect. Leveraging our pedigree, IA-Connect has been developed in-house and provides us, and our clients, the ability to automate processes in practically the same manner as any other RPA development, by tunnelling through existing Citrix or RDS connections.

How this helps

Development – Processes automated through a remote session using Surface Automation can take two to three times as long to develop when compared with standard automation, increasing cost and time to Production. Ultima's IA-Connect removes this complexity and therefore development time is close to parity when compared with standard automation.

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Management – As Surface Automation relies heavily on images and screenshots, automated processes are not as robust as standard automations and changes to screen resolution, colour depth or placement of windows on the screen can cause processes to fail. This can be mitigated to a degree but the failure rate is still significantly higher and therefore cost to the business due to higher maintenance and risk of process downtime is increased. Processes developed through IA-Connect are as robust as standard automated processes and are managed in the same manner.

Security – Cloud-based RPA solutions typically require a VPN to access applications and systems which are located within your perimeter. This invariably results in opening a number of additional firewall ports and giving externally hosted software robots native access to your internal systems. Our IA-Connect solution works over a standard Citrix or RDS session and therefore removes the need for additional firewall rules or software robots being joined to the domain.

What's Involved?

IA-Connect works with mainstream RPA solutions (UiPath, Blue Prism, Thoughtonomy) as an additional component to open up the remote session tunnels. Software robots are given standard remote session access via Citrix or Microsoft RDS as with any other employee and rights and permissions are controlled so that the robot only has access to the applications it needs to interact with.

A standalone executable is deployed on-premises, either on the Citrix / RDS server or on a file share which can be accessed by the Citrix / RDS server. This executable is standalone and therefore does not have an installation routine, and runs in the Standard User context so no elevation of privilege is required. Once deployed, automations can be developed and executed almost as if automating processes natively.

If you're new to RPA, or already have it deployed and want to explore better ways of automating over remote sessions, [contact us to arrange a demo or for further information](#) on our IA-Connect solution.

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