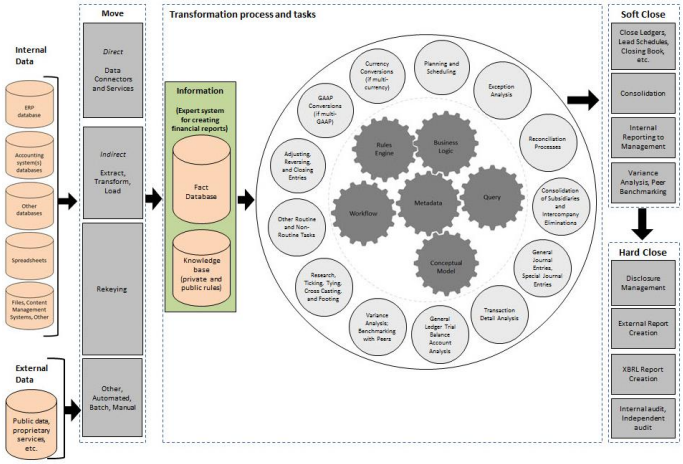
Proven, Reliable, Standards-based Best Practice Method for Automating Accounting, Reporting, Auditing, and Analysis Tasks and Processes

Automation is about removing friction, driving costs down, speeding processes up, and improving efficiency and productivity. Automation is about improving processes in order to deliver goods and services that are better for less cost.

The purpose of this method is to create ongoing repeatable processes that are reliable because the processes can be controlled thus achieving verifiable high-quality. This results in effective automation. With the implementation of self-service rules, business professionals can control their processes. Rules provide control; control leads to high-quality; high-quality enables effective, reliable automation.

Old technologies are making it increasingly difficult to keep up with today's fast paced information exchange. New technologies such as structured information, artificial intelligence, digital distributed ledgers offer significant and compelling opportunities to make accounting, reporting, auditing, and analysis tasks and processes more efficient and effective. A Forbes[1] article points out that organizations are already using artificial intelligence to create more intelligent products, create more intelligent services, and improve internal business processes.

But figuring out how to employ these new technologies and finding people with the necessary skills and experience to analyze systems and fix problems can be challenging. What if there were a standards-based proven best practices method you could use to improve your productivity?



Enter global standard technologies. XBRL International's *Extensible Business Reporting Language*[2] (**XBRL**) is a global standard syntax for representing business information in machine readable form. OMG's *Standard Business Report Model*[3] (**SBRM**) is a logical conceptualization of a business report. SBRM formally documents a logical conceptualization of a business report in both human-readable and machine-readable models. This enables a machine-readable report to be represented in literally any syntax. XBRL is one syntax; but you could also use JSON (JavaScript Object Notation), RDF (Resource Description Format), PROLOG (Programming Logic), Cypher, CSV, Excel, relational database, or literally any other technical syntax which you might prefer. Used together, XBRL and SBRM allow for the creation of a **reliable best practice method**[4] for automating accounting, reporting, auditing, and analysis tasks and processes. This method's underpinning is a *Logical Theory Describing Financial Report*[5]. What technology you use is up to you.

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[1] Bernard Marr, Forbes, *3 Important Ways Artificial Intelligence Will Transform Your Business And Turbocharge Success*, https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2020/08/03/3-important-ways-artificial-intelligence-will-transform-your-business-and-turbocharge-success/

[2] XBRL International, *Extensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL)*, https://www.xbrl.org/

[3] OMG, *Standard Business report Model* (SBRM), https://www.omg.org/intro/SBRM.pdf

[4] *Understanding Method (Abridged)*, http://xbrlsite.azurewebsites.net/2020/Library/UnderstandingMethod_Abridged.pdf

[5] *Logical Theory Describing Financial Report*, http://xbrl.squarespace.com/logical-theory-financial-rep/

Continuous accounting, continuous reporting, artificial intelligence assisted audits, algorithmic regulation, computational professional services, automated analysis all offer unprecedented opportunities. But what are your challenges?

Complex disparate systems trap information: The reality of many if not most finance processes is many dissimilar systems making information integration complex. Often, complexity is self-inflicted such as an incorrectly set up chart of accounts or a less than adequate mapping between the chart of accounts and a report writer or audit lead schedules. *The fix?* Take the time to set up your accounting systems correctly.

Missing metadata: Far too often information necessary to flow data through a system is entered into the system at the end of a process instead of at the beginning of a process. This missing metadata makes it impossible to automate processes. *The fix?* Establish standard metadata, enter that metadata as early in the process as possible, enable information to flow through the process where possible.

Missing information: Commonly, information necessary for a system to be automated is not available to the system and therefore information is supplemented by manually created spreadsheets. *The fix?* Bring more and more tasks and processes into core systems and avoid supplementing information using spreadsheets.

Overly manual process control mechanisms: Process control mechanisms today tend to be overworked accounting professionals that have to manually control process output quality within systems that push far too much work to the end of the process. This manual approach is expensive, not reliable enough letting errors slip through the systems, and cause more important work to be delayed or simply left undone. *The fix?* Augment manual processes with automated processes and let machines help overworked humans get work done. Leverage Lean Six Sigma philosophies and techniques.

Communications issues: The typical professional accountant does not really grasp the possibilities that technology offers to improve processes accurately. Computer scientists do not tend to understand important nuances of accounting, reporting, auditing, and analysis and therefore cannot build systems precisely or set priorities effectively. Most accountants focus on getting work done allocating little to no effort towards process improvement. *The fix?* It will take far less time for a professional accountant to learn what is necessary to communicate effectively with computer scientists than it would for a computer scientist to understand the important subtleties and nuances of accounting, reporting, auditing, and analysis. Take the time to improve your skills. If you don't want to make the investment, then hire a good consultant that has.

As the Harvard Business Review points out[6], the digital transformation is about talent, not technology. The coming digital transformation is primarily about people and the realization that effective digital transformation involves changes to organizational dynamics and how work gets done. The digital transformation is a paradigm shift. Don't use old, outdated mental maps to evaluate and understand the possibilities; it is important to update your mental map.

[6] Becky Frankiewicz and Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, Harvard Business Review, *Digital Transformation Is About Talent, Not Technology*, https://hbr.org/2020/05/digital-transformation-is-about-talent-not-technology