

Automation ROI: A Practical Guide to Maximizing MSP Value



Automation has the power to transform MSPs, **delivering a clear return on investment (ROI)** through increased efficiency, cost reduction, and freeing your team to tackle higher-value tasks. This eBook demonstrates how automation can streamline processes such as user onboarding/offboarding, ticket resolution, and more—all while providing measurable ROI.

At Rewst, we advocate for a **“crawl, walk, run”** approach to measuring the value of automation. This method ensures you can start small, prove its value, and gradually scale automation across your operations. This guide shows you how to measure, track, and maximize the financial impact of automation in your MSP.



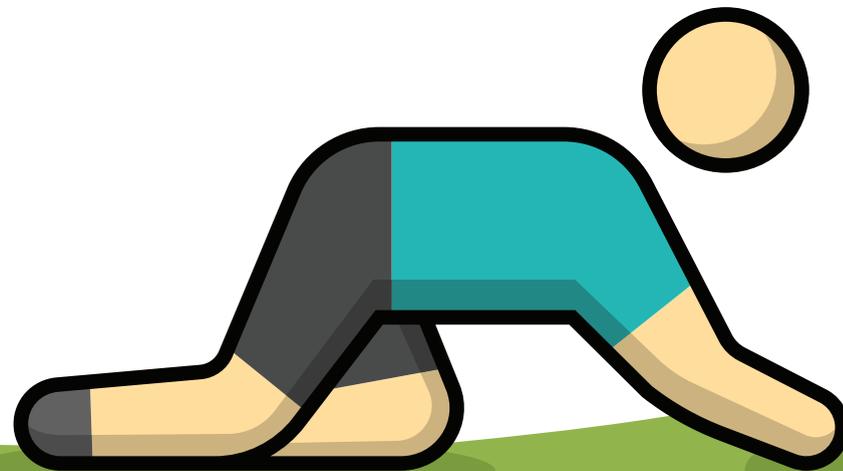
Start with a crawl

In the crawl phase of automation, the goal is to identify one specific problem that justifies the investment in an automation platform. Before selecting a platform, this approach allows you to focus on a manageable issue that can deliver early value and help you reach the breakeven point quickly. By starting small, you can prove the ROI of automation without overcomplicating the process.

For example, as part of their evaluation process, **Karpel Solutions** conducted a basic financial assessment. They realized that if Rewst saved them just five minutes per week by automating phishing ticket investigations, they would break

even on the platform cost in a short time. By tackling repetitive, time-consuming tasks like manual ticket handling and user account updates, they reduced technician hours and reached breakeven within months. This early success validated the investment and demonstrated that automating simple workflows can deliver immediate ROI.

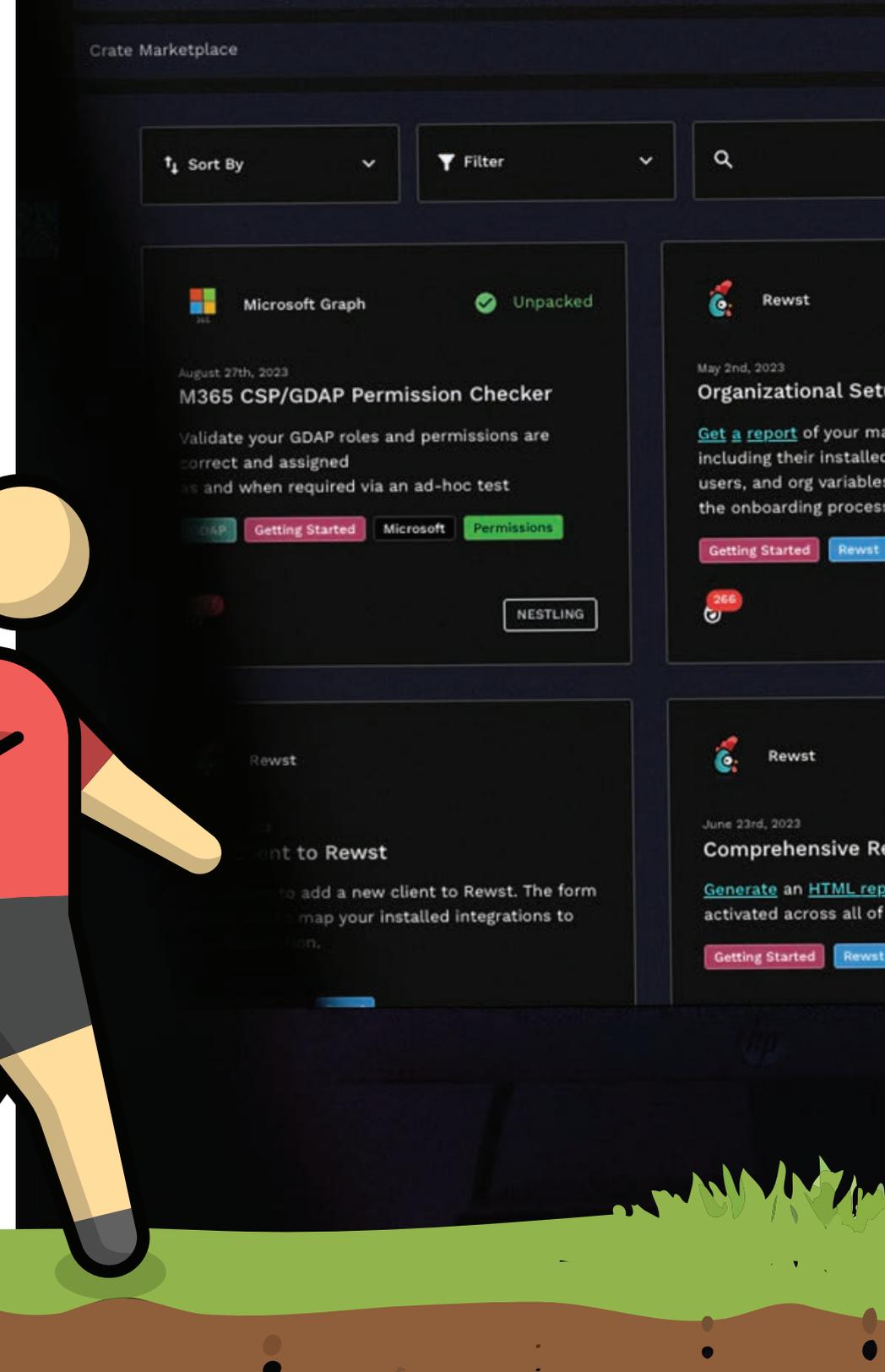
The key to crawling is narrowing in on a high-impact problem, automating it, and showing measurable results. This lays the foundation for scaling automation in the next phase.



Get momentum with a walk

Once you've determined the initial proof of value in the crawl phase, it's time to focus on realizing quick wins during platform onboarding. This allows you to show immediate value, even as your team continues training. The best way to do this is by taking advantage of your provider's pre-built automations, designed to deliver fast results.

You can hit the ground running during onboarding by automating impactful tasks such as user onboarding, billing reporting, ticket triage, M365 management, and documentation updates. By leveraging these pre-built automations, you start saving time from day one. Instead of tackling complex builds upfront, you automate repetitive tasks immediately, allowing these quick wins to compound in value over time—much like an annuity.



Five high-value automations

1. New user onboarding

Automate user onboarding by gathering necessary information through a form, which then triggers a workflow to create accounts, install software, and assign tickets. **Tech Rage IT** generated \$60,000 in annual labor savings by automating this series of repetitive tasks.

Average time savings: 60 minutes per user

2. Billing reporting

Eliminate the manual effort of gathering licensing and invoicing data across various tools. **Marcus Networking** took this further by customizing a workflow to automatically update client contracts in their PSA, saving \$120,000 annually while enhancing client trust.

Average time savings: 10 minutes per execution

3. Ticket categorization

Leverage workflows powered by OpenAI to automate ticket categorization, priority assignment, and sentiment analysis. **Air IT** embedded OpenAI in its leaver (offboarding) process to automatically assign the ticket type and subtype.

Average time savings: 80 seconds per execution

4. Add/remove group membership

Add or remove a user from Microsoft groups, regardless of their location, with ease with the Add or Remove Group Membership automation. **Karpel Solutions** saves two hours per client per quarter with the Microsoft Exchange Add or Remove Group Membership automation.

Average time savings: 5 minutes per execution

5. Document user details

Automatically record critical user details such as licenses, aliases, full access, send as access, and standard attributes like password changes and directory synced statuses.

Average time savings: 90 minutes per execution

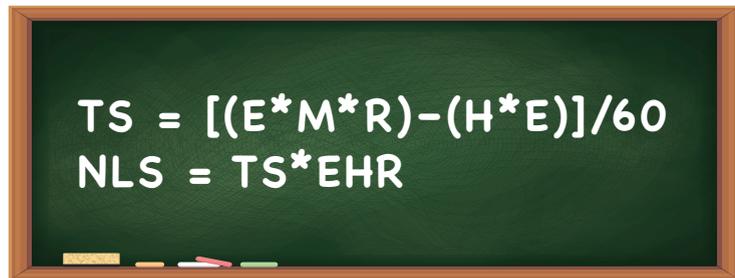
Explore More High-Value Use Cases

DOWNLOAD THE GUIDE



Calculating the ROI of prebuilt workflows

Here's how to estimate the value you'll gain from prebuilt automations using a straightforward formula:


$$TS = [(E * M * R) - (H * E)] / 60$$
$$NLS = TS * EHR$$

TS (Time Savings) = The number of hours the automation saves each month, factoring in prior rework and any human effort needed to complete the process.

- **E (Executions)** = The number of times the process is performed each month.
- **M (Manual effort)** = Minutes needed to complete each execution manually
- **R (Rework)** = How often (%) the manual process needs to be reworked.
(If 20%, use 120% in the equation above.) This helps to quantify the consistency benefit of automation.
- **H (Human effort)** = The human effort (minutes) needed to complete the process after the automation runs. If the automation is touchless, H = 0.

NLS (Net Labor Savings) = The labor cost of the Time Saved (TS).

- **EHR (Employee Hourly Rate)** = The rate of the employee/technician responsible for performing the task manually.

Use our [ROI Calculator Template](#) to estimate the net labor savings from specific automations. Plug in your numbers to understand your returns.



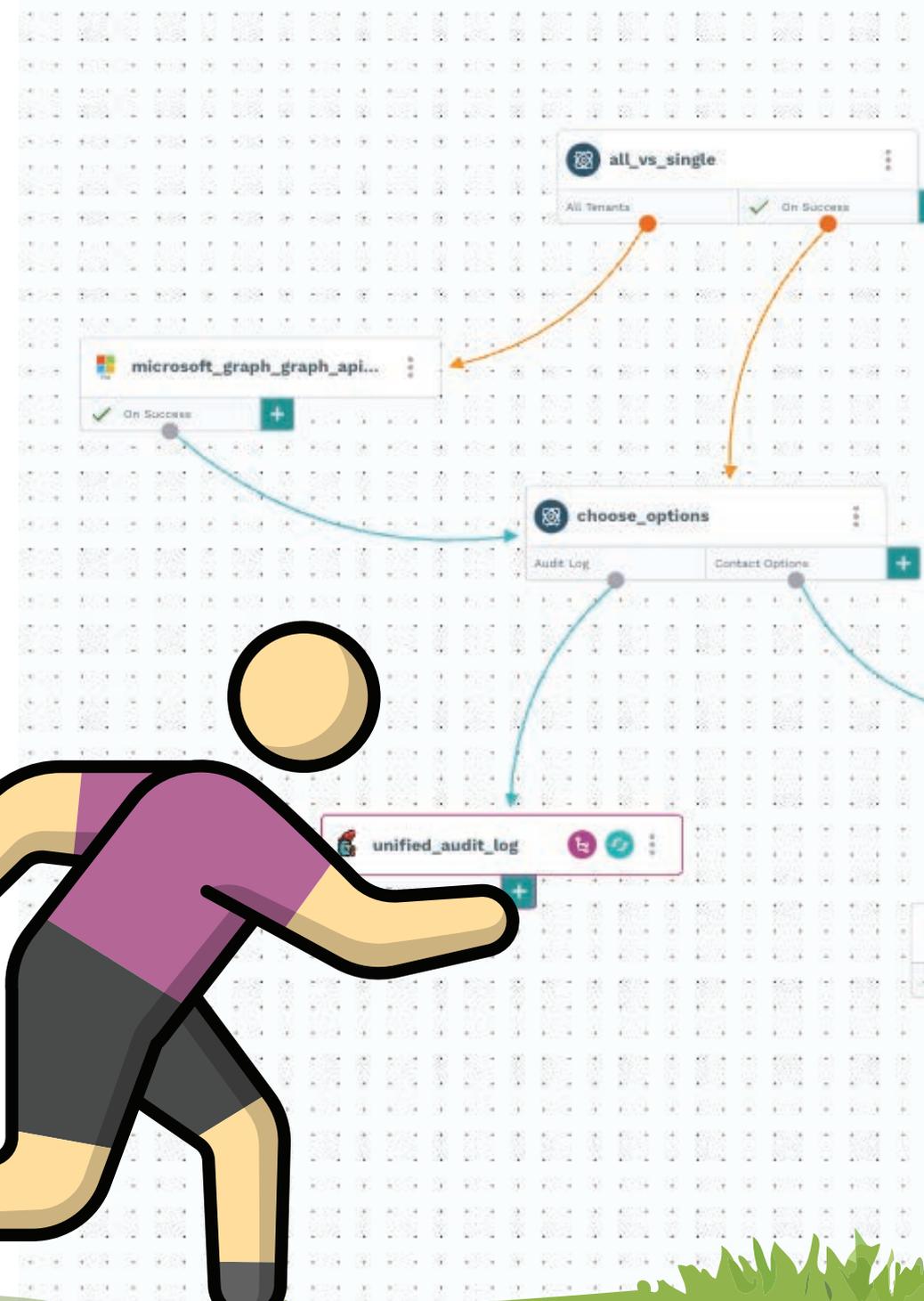
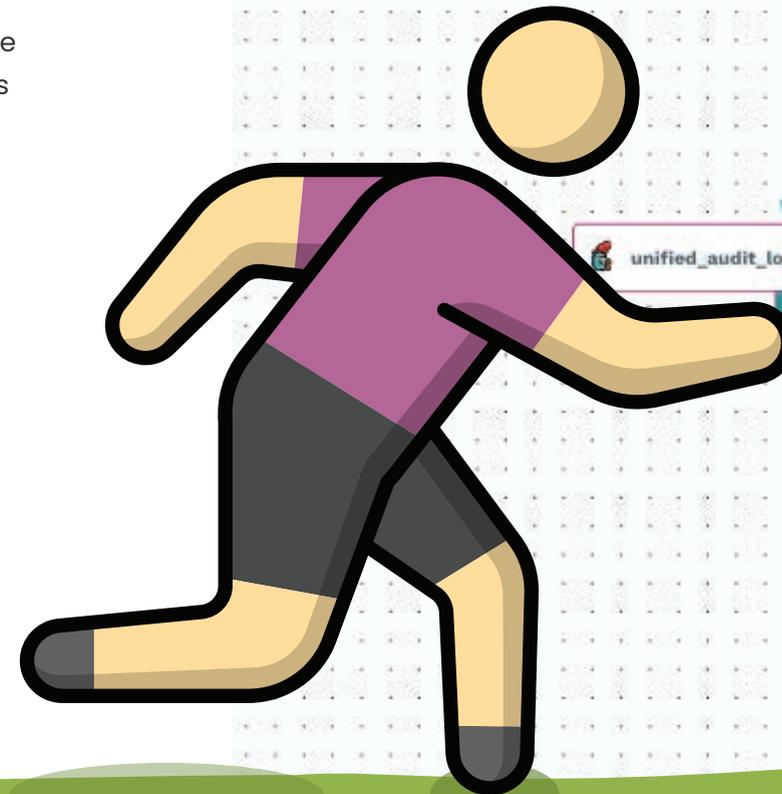
Running: Maximizing ROI with custom workflows

Once you've gained momentum with pre-built automations, it's time to run—by layering on custom workflows to unlock the full potential of automation. At this stage, you continue building on your quick wins by customizing prebuilt automations to fit the unique needs of your MSP and clients, while introducing custom workflows tailored to your unique needs.

This allows you to maximize ROI across your operations, combining the speed of pre-built automations with the flexibility of custom workflows to drive even greater efficiency and value.

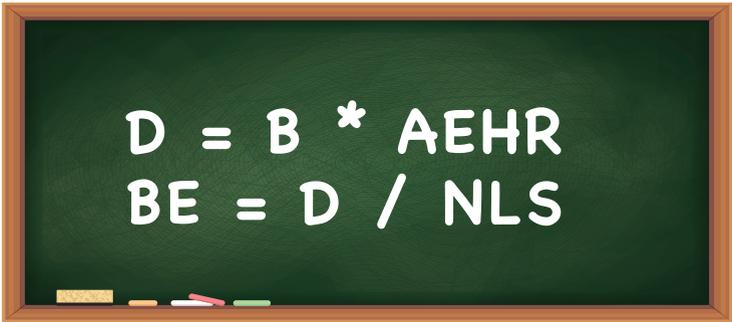
Factoring in development effort to calculate payback period

When diving into custom workflows, evaluating whether the effort required will pay off is crucial. In other words, is the juice worth the squeeze? By weighing the time and resources needed to develop an automation against the labor savings it generates, you can determine how long it will take to break even—and whether the investment makes sense.

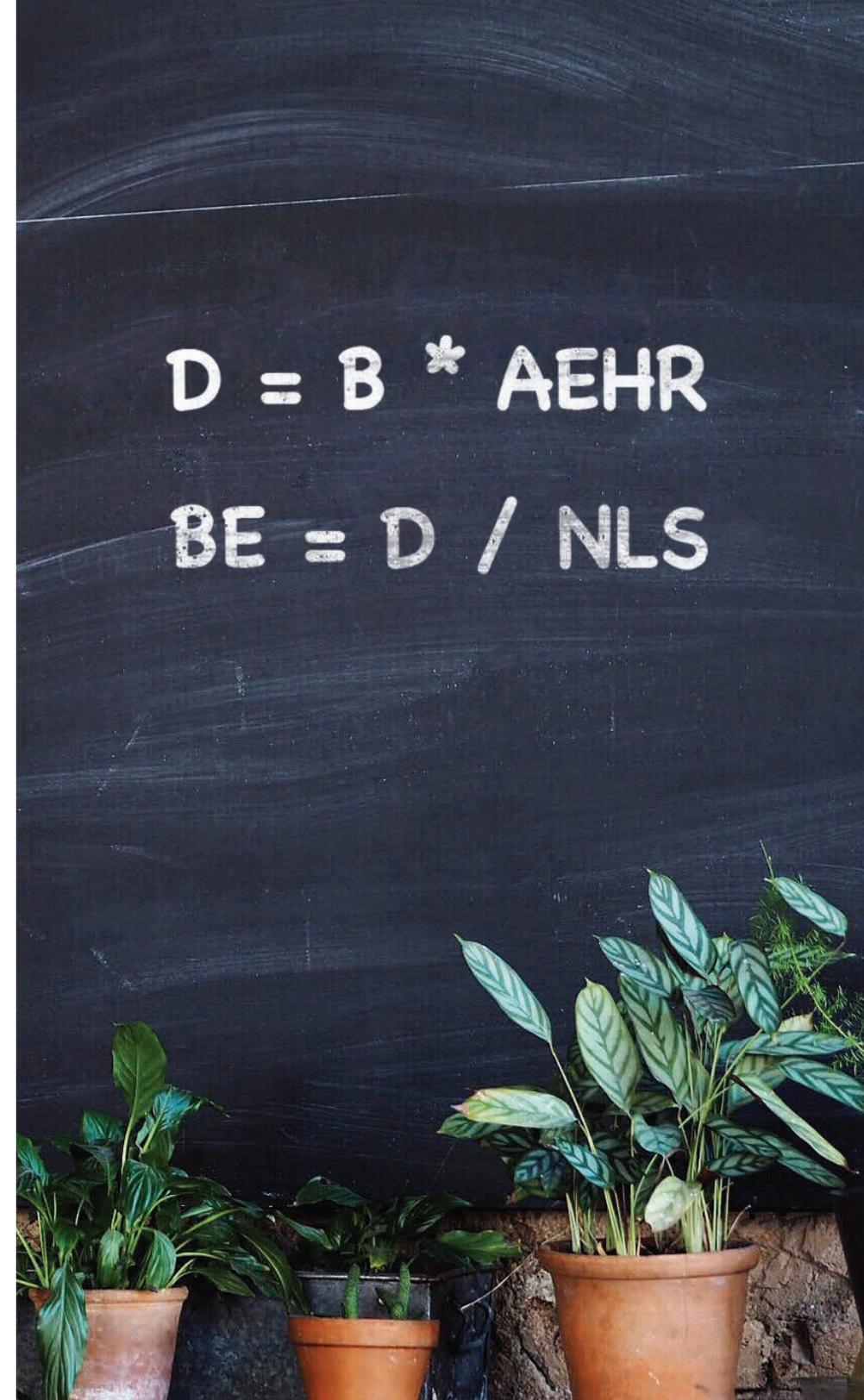


This analysis ensures you're not just automating for the sake of automating. Instead, you're focusing on high-value opportunities that deliver measurable returns. By calculating the payback period upfront, you can prioritize workflows that provide the most significant impact with the least effort, keeping your automation strategy efficient and effective.

Here's how to estimate the breakeven period for a custom automation, using the Net Labor Savings (NLS) from the calculation above on page 5:


$$D = B * AEHR$$
$$BE = D / NLS$$

- **D (Development cost)** = The cost to build or customize the automation.
- **B (Build time)** = The number of hours it took to build the automation.
If you're using a pre-built automation, factor in any time needed to customize.
- **AEHR (Automation Engineer Hourly Rate)** = The rate of the automation engineer building the automation.
- **BE (Breakeven)** = The number of months it will take to generate a positive return on investment for the automation.



Real-world examples of running with automation

You can apply similar concepts from the earlier stages to calculate savings after automations are built. The following examples compare the total labor hours required for manual tasks with the reduced hours after automation to determine overall savings.

Snap Tech IT – Dark Web Monitoring

- Problem: 964 tickets required 356.19 hours of labor.
- Development Cost: \$8,690.28.
- ROI: Reduced human time spent working tickets by **97%, saving \$19,805.57** in labor in 2023.

Snap Tech IT – Datto Screenshot Failures

- Problem: 1,528 tickets required 475.53 hours of labor.
- Development Cost: \$6,209.62.
- ROI: Reduced labor by **95%, saving \$25,884.87** in 2023.

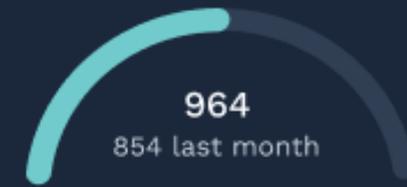
Microtime – Client Late Fee Workflow

- Problem: Manually managing late fee notifications required 48 hours of labor.
- Development: 48 hours.
- ROI: Recouped **\$22,000** in six months and avoided the need for **one headcount**.
- Breakeven: <2 months.

Microtime – BitLocker Key Documentation Automation

- Problem: Manually documenting BitLocker keys required 5 hours each month.
- Development: 10 hours.
- ROI: Saved **5 hours per month** while ensuring accurate, up-to-date documentation.
- Breakeven: <2 months.

Tasks



22 pending tasks

[View all](#)



Time saved



Achieving “running” status with Rewst

As you build custom workflows that precisely meet the needs of your MSP and clients, the ROI from automation grows stronger. MSPs often crowdsource ideas from our own [Discord community](#) or by using Rewst forms across their own MSP to identify and prioritize high-impact automations, helping justify the investment in custom workflows.

You ensure each automation delivers measurable returns by tracking time saved, calculating labor costs, and measuring development expenses. This is how you reach the “running” phase—where automation becomes a core strategy for your MSP’s growth.



Beyond labor savings: Unlocking additional value

Automation goes well beyond labor savings. It creates opportunities for revenue growth, improves customer satisfaction, and drives scalable operations. Here are a few examples:



Revenue growth

Automation transformed **Marcus Networking's** billing processes by generating real-time data that prevents manual errors and billing discrepancies. The MSP has recouped over \$100,000 in missed license revenue, significantly boosting both revenue and efficiency.



Gross margins

Automating more than 40 workflows across its operations saves **eTop technology** more than 1,400 hours monthly. Automation improved eTop's gross margins, allowing it to scale the number of managed endpoints per technician from 200 to 350.



Customer satisfaction

Karpel Solutions automated onboarding, offboarding, and license management, cutting user setup time from 20 minutes to 1-2 minutes. This increased consistency, reduced errors, and eliminated billing inaccuracies, improving customer satisfaction.



Scalable growth

Automation transformed **Microtime's** service delivery for co-managed accounts, particularly with a new \$13k MRR client. By automating data syncing between two ticketing systems, the workflow saves Microtime 6-8 hours daily. This efficiency allowed them to avoid hiring a new employee, enabling them to scale without increasing headcount.



Job satisfaction

Automating repetitive tasks like re-imaging hosts freed **MSIT** technicians to focus on more complex work. This improved work-life balance by reducing after-hours work and enhancing job satisfaction.



Competitive edge

By automating data syncing between HubSpot and ConnectWise, **Fusion IT** gained real-time visibility that has improved sales forecasting and cross-selling, giving them a strong competitive advantage and supporting long-term growth.

Automation delivers more than labor savings—it drives growth, satisfaction, and competitive strength, empowering MSPs to scale efficiently and effectively.

Identifying high-value automations

The real power of automation lies in selecting the right processes to automate. It's not about automating everything—it's about scoping effectively and conducting a payoff analysis to determine which automations will deliver the most significant impact. Let's dive into how to identify high-value automations that can maximize your return.

Scoping: Identifying the best opportunities

Focus first on repetitive tasks that follow clear standard operating procedures (SOPs). Rewst's VP of Customer Success, Jamie Moore, says, *"Any process that can be documented can be automated."* However, identifying the right tasks to automate requires more than spotting patterns—it involves having the right people make those decisions. Your Automation Center of Excellence (CoE) plays a critical role in this process.

"Any process that can be documented can be automated."



Jamie Moore, VP of Customer Success - Rewst

A well-structured CoE gathers key individuals to guide and prioritize automation efforts. You need an Executive Champion to ensure these efforts align with your business objectives, an Automation Champion who understands daily operational challenges and identifies high-impact areas, and Automation Engineers to turn those insights into practical solutions. This team ensures that your automation improves efficiency and adds real value to your MSP.

To identify the best tasks for automation, ask yourself:

- Is this task repeatable?
- Can we program it to run automatically?
- Can this task be completed without human intervention?
- Is there documentation for this process, or can we easily create it?
- Does this task rely on tools with open APIs that allow automation?
- Are the right members of our CoE involved in this decision to
- make sure it addresses a meaningful business challenge?

By asking these questions and engaging the right people in the scoping process, you pinpoint repetitive tasks that, once automated, will save your MSP time and resources. This team-driven approach ensures your automation decisions align with operational needs and broader strategic goals.

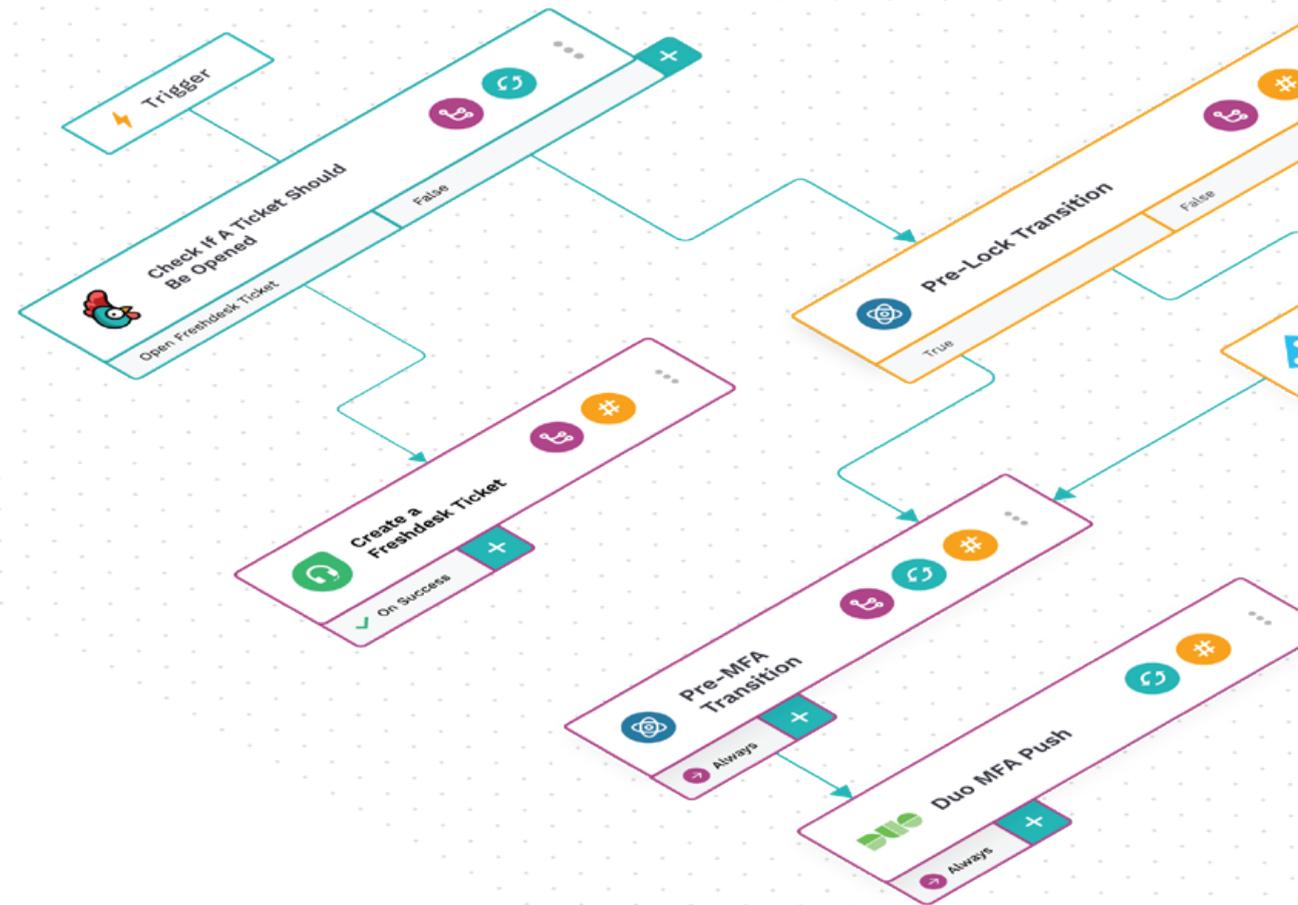


From crawling to thriving: growing your ROI with automation

By following this *“crawl, walk, run”* approach, you can unlock automation’s full potential for your MSP. Start small, build momentum, and scale as you go—each step delivers measurable value. Whether streamlining simple tasks or creating custom workflows, automation drives smarter, more efficient work, setting you up for long-term growth and success.

Ready to start? Take that first step and see firsthand how Rewst delivers rapid ROI—book your demo today and watch automation help your MSP thrive with measurable results.

[Book Your Demo](#)



**Rewst is an automation platform
that's purpose-built for MSPs.
Connect your existing tools
and orchestrate end-to-end
workflows to reduce errors, free
up time, and scale your business.**

