



Process Mining: Are You Leaving Money on the Table?

What if you knew you that you were wasting millions of euro's by not analyzing your organization's processes most effectively?

Most business leaders would immediately address that issue. According to Protiviti's Global Finance Trends Survey 2022, over 70% of Finance VPs and CFOs answered that their organization needed to improve their capabilities in process mining in the next year. The survey from 2021 showed a similar figure. If this is the case, how come we do not yet see a massive implementation of process mining across most industries? How come more organizations aren't able to embrace the technology needed to optimize their business process performance?

We will see that the challenges presented to organizations is very real and surmountable. If done correctly, organizations can see improvements in labor productivity, working capital, and customer satisfaction. All of which will have significant influence on an organization's bottom line. This is why so many leading organizations have adopted this process mining technology.

So what is process mining?

It is a method and technology enabling end-to-end transparency and analytical insights to discover, monitor and improve business processes. It uses data from your information systems to enable users to fully understand how their core business processes

run and find the inefficiencies causing lower process performance — before taking intelligent, automated action to resolve those inefficiencies.

While many supply chain, procurement and transformation office executives are usually aware of this technology and are intending to use it in their day-to-day operations, what keeps them from giving the green light and starting the process mining journey tomorrow?

What we see in the market are the following challenges (or a combination thereof) that often cause inaction:

1. Lack of resource capacity

We know everybody is extremely busy, and taking on extra initiatives outside of our regular work is quite hard. Freeing up resources is simply not easy unless it is made a strategic priority. On top of that, it is extremely difficult to find the right in-house talent with the expertise to implement this technology. This is not just a technical topic; it also requires the business knowledge to implement process mining successfully and realize the value it promises.

2. Money out vs. money in

The upfront investment related to licenses and implementation costs are certain and

immediate but the benefits and value that come from improvements are harder to predict with precision. They are at least not fully quantifiable from the start.

3. Stakeholder landscape

Additional approval from other decisionmakers may be needed. The more people involved, the longer it takes to get everybody with different priorities onboard. This is especially the case when it concerns cross-functional (e.g. supply-chain) processes. Not all decision-makers involved appreciate the importance. They have a million other things on the top of their minds and someone needs to bring it to their attention with the right business case.

4. Questions around feasibility

There are a lot of questions around the feasibility and value to implement process mining to their specific organization. While something may work for other industries and other organizations, leaders can be hesitant because “what if it doesn’t work for our specific set-up?” There can be a general fear around the unique situations a specific organization may be in.

5. Concerns about data privacy

Process mining uses company transactional data from information systems. Information that can be sensitive in some cases. While market leaders in process mining technology are moving towards the cloud, companies are often — justly — very careful with what happens with that data if it leaves their own environment.

1,2,3 Action!

While all objections are valid considerations, one must think of the bigger picture.

As it often occurs, we need to experience pain and discomfort to be moved to action. In this case, there often needs to be a pressing issue like unacceptably low process performance to trigger the need for process optimization and action to implement process

mining. But consider this: is it logical that without detailed analysis any organization has perfect process performance? If not, an organization is most likely leaving money on the table by not acting today.

Companies should be moved to action by visualizing what they can truly do with the money generated, their manpower and the insights they have underlying their operation. The opportunity to grow becomes bigger and better, and they can face their supply chain concerns with a higher degree of confidence.

So what can you do if you recognize some of the challenges described above but don’t know how to tackle them?

First, realize that you are not alone. We have helped companies overcome these obstacles by getting them the right answers they need to feel confident enough to take the next step and successfully implement process mining. By collaborating with a technology consulting services partner to help you throughout the journey with the technical, analytical and process knowledge, your path to success and time to value is significantly accelerated and the obstacles mentioned in this article are overcome.

In any case, if you find yourself struggling, keep in mind that there are risks and costs involved with action, but they are far less than the long-range risks of comfortable inaction.

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