

The Do's & Don'ts of EUC Automation

Scale Your Automation Strategy
with Nexthink Flow

Introduction

For every IT professional excitement over automation, there is someone who knows to temper that excitement with some caution. Why? Because despite the reduced strain on IT and potential cost-savings, even the most highly anticipated automation projects can stall due to lack of training, planning, and governance.

Automation scenarios are practically endless, but the resources to craft and deploy automations are not. The effectiveness of automation in driving value always boils down to how and where teams use it. You need the right people, with the right plan to utilize automation in the right way if you want your automation project to achieve liftoff.

If End User Computing (EUC) teams want to be on the bleeding edge and bask in their increased efficiency and glowing green statistics, they must answer the simple questions- Who? What? Where? When? Why? And how?

Let's start with "the why."



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01.

Why Automate

Understanding your IT operations and employees will help you identify use cases that will impact the business.

Don't fall for the cool trap! Yes, you can make Amazon Alexa react to an event, but what problem does that solve?

Cool is rarely the most impactful.

Do focus on what will alleviate pain for IT and employees.

IT Operations

Budgets are tighter now more than ever. Continuing to innovate in this environment requires a perspective shift. View areas where IT spends the most money as opportunities to optimize spend. For example, a typical area for high expenditure is around software licenses. Could automating the retrieval of unused software licenses save money on the next renewal?

Talk to the IT service team leads to understand the top manual remediation or provisioning tasks their teams do. Look at how long each of these tasks takes. Identify the high volume and high time-to-fix tasks that could be streamlined by automation. For example, if someone is building the device for a new employee, instead of asking another person to double check the configuration, is there an opportunity to automate the lengthy checking process?

Employees

Question: why should you, as an IT leader, prioritize employee productivity? It's commonly cited that employee productivity drives company success, but can IT impact this? The answer is yes, EUC teams can have a measurable impact on that productivity. According to [Microsoft](#), employees are 230% more engaged and 85% more likely to stay beyond three years if they have the technology that supports them at work.

Next question: how can you leverage automation in your IT processes to improve employee productivity? To start, review the most common types of requests in the ITSM system. There are two reasons requests are an excellent source to deliver value back to the business very quickly:

1. The provisioning of a request in many cases is the same process each time. These repetitive activities are low hanging fruit for automation. Especially ones that have repeat requirements for interaction from IT personnel or require a long focus time to complete.
2. Most employees submit requests because an issue is preventing them from doing their job. The longer an employee must wait, the greater their frustration and the greater loss to their productivity. Focus on requests that have a long cycle time and identify areas where automation can speed that up.

Since [less than 50% of IT issues are reported by employees](#), you may also find opportunities to leverage automation to address the issues that employees don't report. Send surveys to capture the sentiment of the entire workforce, not just employees who request IT help. Analyzing ITSM tickets and employee sentiment will help determine quick wins to improve employee experience.

Do make a list of opportunities from IT operations, employee tickets, and feedback to prioritize based on the level of impact on the following areas:

- **Employee productivity time saved** (ie. processing their requests faster, solving without having to contact them)
- **IT time saved** (ie. reducing repetitive, manual tasks)
- **Mean-Time-To-Resolution (MTTR)** (ie. faster incident resolution by the service desk)
- **Cost savings** (ie. license reclamation, ticket reduction)

02. Who Should Automate

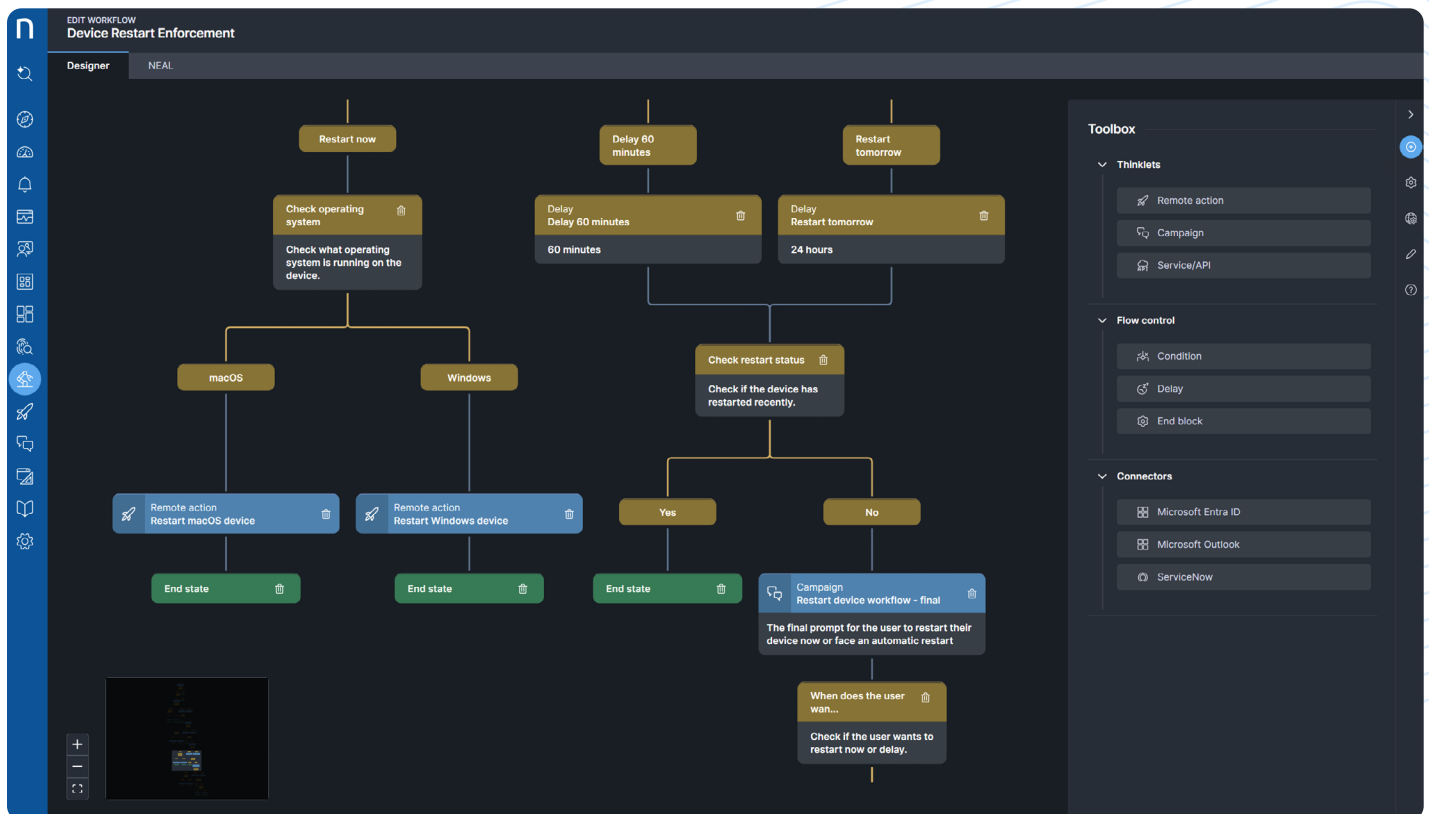
Expanding the scope of who can automate maximizes what can be achieved against shrinking budgets and teams.

Do democratize automation.

Those closest to the pain, like L1 and L2 agents, often know best how to solve it. Don't limit your automation capabilities to a small group of experts. Empower more IT players like L1 and L2 agents to implement automation. The easy-to-use interfaces and lower reliance on well-honed scripting skills that come with low code automation tools like Nexthink Flow can enable more members of your team to create workable solutions to problems. Out-of-the-box library packs that include workflows and remote actions further enable less experienced team members to create automations with greater efficiency and fewer errors.

Don't underestimate your teams.

With the right tool, **anyone can automate**. Those who are the closest to the problem and pain will have the highest drive and determination to make it go away. They are also the ones who know the problem and the process behind it better than anyone else. Keeping automation responsibilities restricted to a small set group of resources will only serve as a bottleneck to your automation strategy. Utilize granular permissions to ensure team members only access what they need to contribute to your automation strategy.



03. What to Automate

When it comes to automation, don't dive in without first knowing where you are going and what tools can get you there.

Don't reinvent the wheel.

Your business and your problems aren't as unique as you think. For example, at Nextthink we collected the most common EUC problems taking up too much time and resources and created out-of-the-box library packs for customers to easily download to get started. Each library pack contains automated workflows that include remote actions, employee engagement campaigns, third-party integrations, and customized dashboards.

Whether it is a device health, license reclamation, or compliance use case, customizable out-of-the-box workflows give you a jump start to determine what to automate.

Do think long term.

Today, you may have longer remote action scripts that have many steps to troubleshoot an issue. However, Flow is designed to use shorter remote action scripts with the logic built out in the workflow separately. While it may take some time to break up these scripts into smaller sections, the shorter remote actions can be used as workflow building blocks and make the workflow much easier to edit. Plus, they will save time because they can be reused across workflows.

The library packs reflect common issues you can fully resolve with automation.



Configuration Manager (SCCM) client continuity



Intune continuity



MS Teams compliance



OneDrive compliance



Windows update restart



Device restart enforcement



System crash troubleshooting



Slow device troubleshooting



License reclamation



Desktop application uninstallation



Microsoft 365 E5 license optimization



Battery replacement scheduling

04. Where to Automate

Expand beyond the automation tool with integrations. Use integrations to avoid over complexification of the solution or automating the solution beyond what the overall value would be of doing so.

Don't over centralize a solution.

Rather than looking to replace other applications, use your automation tool to enhance and fill gaps. Utilize the integration capabilities of your automation tool to bridge some missing elements in your existing portfolio. Sometimes working together is all that is needed. With Flow, you can start with pre-defined connectors for API integrations like ServiceNow, Microsoft Outlook, and Entra ID by adding the Connector Thinklets directly into your workflow.

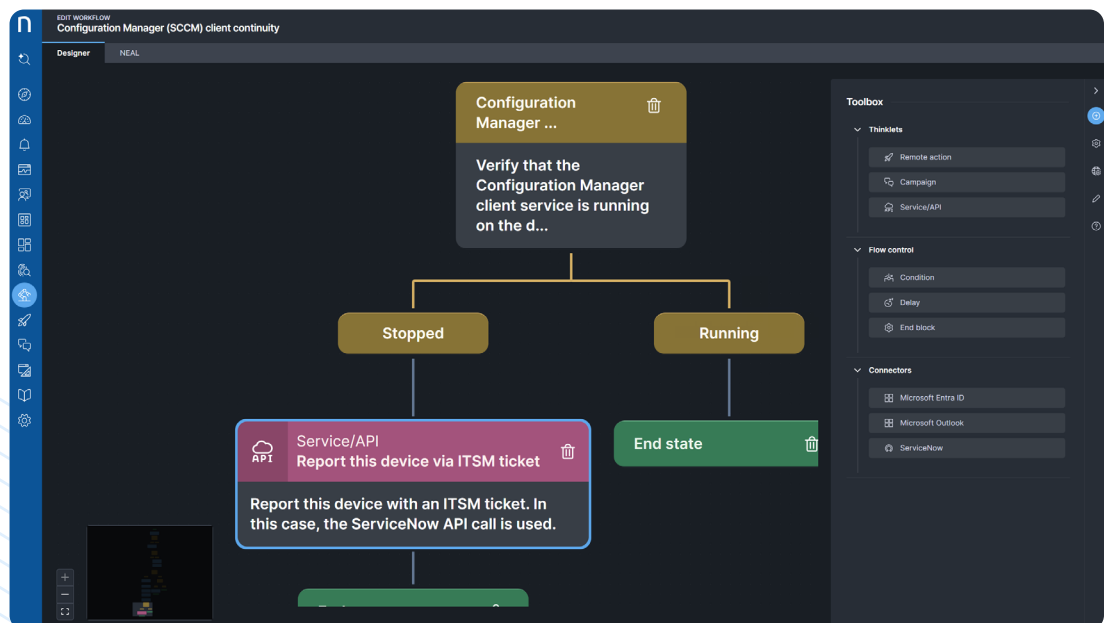
Do look for smaller opportunities.

One problem or use case can require many automations. You can't solve onboarding with one workflow. A better approach is to identify the key parts of the onboarding process where automation can make a difference and tackle those as smaller improvements.

If you currently have an onboarding process that requires IT to check that the new employee has all the necessary software with proper configurations in place, you could automatically perform those checks, correct any missing configurations, and then follow up with an automated message to collect feedback about their experience.

Don't overstep.

Some things are best left with the tools and teams that know them best. With onboarding, for example, the HR team has strict regulations and processes that should be considered in your automations. Often an integration to gather information is what is needed, not a complete overhaul. There is no need to fix what isn't broken.



05. How to Automate

Automation is only as effective as the data it relies on because that data is key for triggering the automated workflows. With tools like Flow, you can leverage real-time data across your IT services, hardware, applications, and employee actions to trigger automated remediation.

Don't run automations unnecessarily.

Just because you can automate, doesn't mean you should. Avoid executing unnecessary workflows and instead, only execute workflows as needed. By defining workflow parameters and selecting conditions, you can avoid reaching too wide of a target, creating unnecessary activity and bloating your numbers. This will give you less data to sort through and keep your reports actionable, making it easier to locate understand workflow outcomes, and identify improvements.

Do respond in real-time.

If an issue impacts employee experience or compliance, it should be reacted to in real-time. With a tool like Flow, you can trigger automated workflows off real-time events like a device, end user, or Nextthink event ensuring a proactive response to outages, security risks, and other impactful and highly visible events.

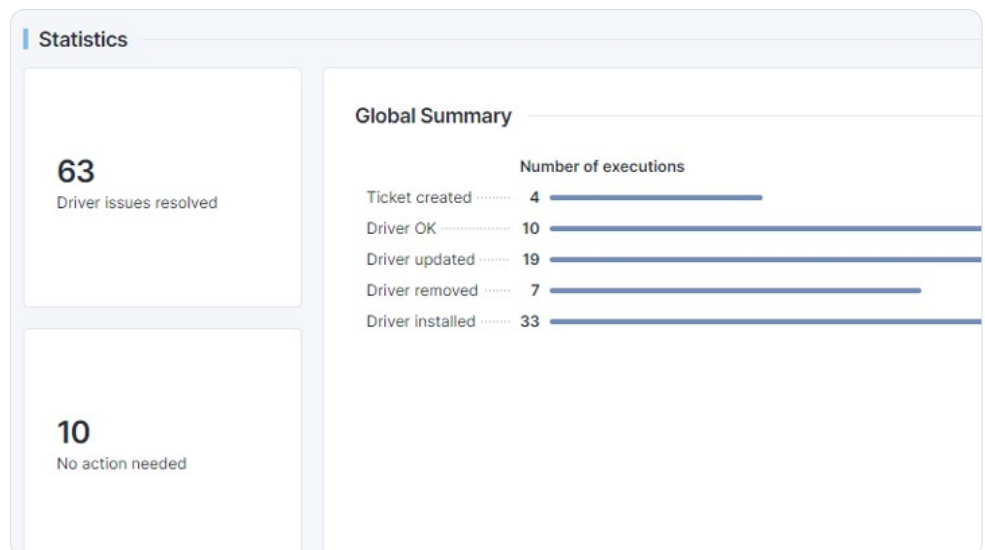
Do set the appropriate frequency.

Like the scope of a workflow execution, avoid real-time triggers when a manual or scheduled workflow trigger will do like for a license reclamation, battery replacement, or device restart enforcement use case. With the time appropriate trigger, you can avoid a massive data set that doesn't tell you anything and is hard to act on.

Don't bypass testing.

Execute your automated workflows in your test environment. Not only is this a great way to identify issues and areas of improvement, but it also gives you the data you need to prove the value and impact of a new workflow.

Less data to sort through will keep your reports actionable, making it easier to locate, understand workflow outcomes, and identify improvements.



06. When to Automate

Deciding whether you and your team should automate depends on a few key factors.

Don't automate for the sake of automating.

If your team is dealing with unstable systems that require constant script updates or unpredictable data from third-party systems that can't be trusted, it's not worth the time to build the automations for systems or data in flux. Additionally, short term projects may require more work than they are worth given the short time frame.

Do automate.

If your team is completing repetitive tasks, spending time on increasingly complex issues, and wasting money or being pushed to cut costs, automation can help push your team to achieve greater outcomes that align with business needs and improve IT and employee productivity.



07. Conclusion

Given the increasing complexity of technology and the growing interest in AI-driven solutions, your team will need to implement proactive, automated systems to increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Automation can help your team move from manual problem-solving to solving issues proactively with continuous engineering. If you do understand the who, what, where, when, why, and how of automation, it will ensure you don't run into common pitfalls like lack of training, planning, and governance. With this guide, you and your team are ready to draft and execute your automation strategy today.

About Nextthink Flow

Nextthink Flow combines AI-powered data with a real-time, low code orchestration engine to continuously optimize complex workflows, monitor progress, handle exceptions, and ensure that all tasks are completed as intended. Repurpose hours spent on recurring issues to optimize resources, save costs, and improve IT and employee productivity. Learn more at www.nextthink.com/platform/flow.



About Nextthink

Nextthink is the global leader in Digital Employee Experience management. The company's products allow enterprises to create highly productive digital workplaces for their employees by delivering optimal end-user experiences. Through a unique combination of real-time analytics, automation and employee feedback across all endpoints, Nextthink helps IT teams meet the needs of the modern digital workplace.

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Want to learn more about how Nextthink can help you improve employee experience?