September 30, 2020

New version (ver.7.1.1) of WinActor^{\mathbb{R}} RPA tool to be marketed overseas

- With functions added to enhance scenario creation productivity, the new version supports "new work styles" in the COVID-19 era

NTT Advanced Technology Corporation

NTT Advanced Technology Corporation ("NTT-AT"; headquarters Kawasaki-shi, Kanagawa, Japan; President and CEO George Kimura) will launch the latest version (Ver.7.1.1) of its RPA tool, WinActor[®], overseas on October 1, 2020.

WinActor[®] Ver.7 series maintains the brand's primary feature – "People-Centered." It is intended to be a "next-generation RPA which is so easy to use that users will not trip or fall in the event of a misstep." The software architecture has been reconstructed from scratch. This has increased the processing speed, which in turn has made it possible to renovate the user interface into one that even beginners can use easily. A tutorial that enables beginners to enjoy learning how to use this tool has been added.

A scenario editor and an online scenario management function for use by advanced programmers have been added to help enhance productivity in large-scale scenario creation or joint scenario creation in enterprises.

An OCR-based image matching function and a table scraping function have been added to the latest version to assist scenario creation.

Also added are a function for switching displayed languages and a function that enables to make scenario files independently of languages. These will help multi-lingual or multinational enterprises to create scenarios efficiently.

The new WinActor[®] is fit for all levels of RPA users, from novice to advanced, and serves as an optimal automation tool for customers' sophisticated and diversified business environments. NTT-AT will incorporate AI and other advanced technologies, and will help customers to pursue digital transformation, adopt a new work style appropriate for the COVID-19 era, and enhance their business efficiency.

Background

The global outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has prompted many enterprises to seek new approaches to work. Robotic process automation (RPA) is attracting growing attention as an effective tool for this endeavor. Enterprises, and central and local governments, are seeking to reduce costs in order to limit the impact of the outbreak on their operations but are experiencing workforce shortfalls due to sudden increases in demand and/or workload. These organizations regard RPA as an important form of "added workforce" (i.e., Digital Co-workers), and use it to improve their operational efficiency and productivity.

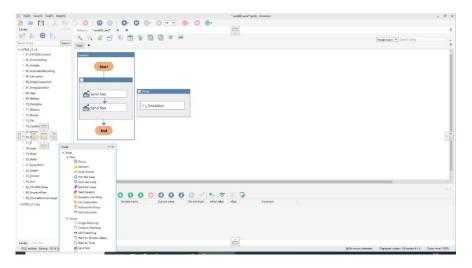
NTT-AT's WinActor[®] is one of the RPAs that are in the spotlight in Japan as a tool for assisting with reforming work styles and improving operational efficiency. It has been introduced by more than 5,300 companies across a wide range of industries, from finance to logistics and retail, and continues to see the number of its users grow, including not only large enterprises but also small businesses and local governments across the country. In other countries, the number of users of the English and Chinese versions is growing.

Features of WinActor® Ver.7 series

People-Centered functions

•By taking advantage of the increased processing speed, the user interface has been revamped making it more refined and easy to use.

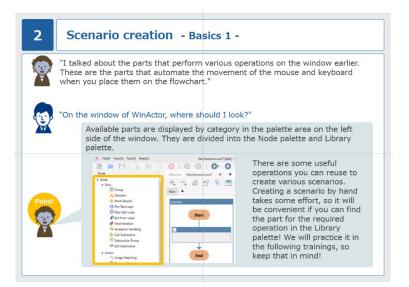
The software architecture has been reconstructed from scratch. This has dramatically increased the processing speed, which has made it possible to renovate the user interface from that for Ver.6 to one that emphasizes high readability and operability to provide a better user experience. The "docking window," which enables users to customize the window layout, allows them to work with a layout of their choice that is appropriate for the display resolution used in the office or at home.



[WinActor[®] scenario editing window (main mode)]

•Tutorial enables users to enjoy a successful experience

A tutorial is provided to enable users to learn all the key processes, from the basics for scenario creation to practical and application-oriented operations, with two characters who appear in the tutorial plot, Mr. William Lee and Ms. Maria Rodriguez. During teleworking in the COVID-19 era, users can use the tutorial to teach themselves at home to improve their scenario creation skills.



[Tutorial screen example]

■ Functions effective for enterprise use

• Enhancing scenario productivity and debugging efficiency

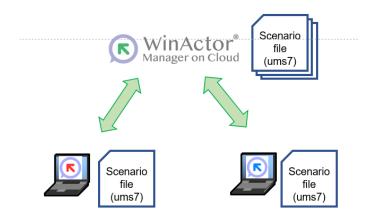
It is now possible to edit multiple scenarios simultaneously. Users can copy and paste parts of a scenario from one to the other while simultaneously viewing several scenarios. Previously, users were not able to identify the location of an error in a scenario before executing the scenario. Now, they can visually identify the locations of errors while creating a scenario, which dramatically improves their scenario creation productivity.

-Scenario editor for advanced programmers

The new version comes with WinActor[®] Scenario Script, a function for use by advanced programmers. It enables them to develop a scenario using a programming language dedicated to WinActor[®]. Advanced programmers will now be able to develop scenarios using an ordinary text editor, with which they are sure to be familiar. Even when they are developing large-scale scenarios in an enterprise, they can easily compare scenarios for differences, and search for or batch-replace words, improving scenario development productivity dramatically.

•Online scenario management

Under the management of WinActor[®] Manager on Cloud^{*}, users can upload a scenario from WinActor[®] in addition to downloading a scenario from the cloud. This increases the degree of freedom with which scenarios can be shared across multiple locations (for example, users scattered around different locations, including those at home, can share scenarios and work on them as a team). This leads to an improvement in productivity and operational quality when people adopt a new work style and work as a team, irrespective of where they may be located.



[Online scenario management]

•Audit log that enables follow-up checking

When combined with WinActor[®] Manager on Cloud^{*}, WinActor[®] can securely store a scenario execution log on the cloud. By examining this audit log, auditors can check back as to when and what WinActor did in a series of automated operations, making it possible to satisfy stringent requirements for enterprise use.

* WinActor® Manager on Cloud is available only in Japan as at October 2020.

Functions to assist scenario creation

•OCR-based image matching

In addition to the previously offered image recognition function, the new version provides a screen OCR function. This makes it easy to record or execute operations starting at a certain character string on the screen, which has been difficult to accomplish with the previous form of image matching. This capability can more efficiently enhance scenario execution accuracy.

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[OCR matching node]

•Table scraping

The table scraping function extracts table information from a Web page. If a table spans a number of pages, WinActor[®] accesses them one by one and outputs the obtained table information in a single CSV file. Thus, information on websites can be easily converted to data that is usable for WinActor[®].

Automatic recording of Firefox operations

In addition to operations on IE and Google Chrome, operations on Mozilla Firefox can be automatically recorded.

• Functions to support for global use

•Dual-language capability

From WinActor[®] Ver.7.1.1, users can switch languages to suit particular execution environments. In addition, scenarios developed in Japanese can be used in English without modification and vice versa.

Annual license fee (list price)

WinActor® Ver.7.1.1 (Node-locked (NL) version: conventional license)

FULL Edition: 908,000 yen; RUN Edition: 248,000 yen.

Note: The above prices are list price in Japan for the above product and do not cover any associated services. In other countries, these prices may differ depending on currency rate etc.

About sales

For details about sales (quotation, product demonstration, provision of an evaluation system, etc.), please contact our distributors directly via the NTT-AT website shown below.

Future prospects

NTT-AT will continue to focus on "People-Centered," a feature of this brand, in order to respond to automation needs, which are increasingly becoming more sophisticated, diversified, and global in scale. Furthermore, it will not simply seek automation of routine operations but will provide a product line with an expanded scope of automation to overseas markets by combining the tool with various SaaS services and AI technologies.

About WinActor®

WinActor[®] is an RPA product developed by NTT-AT based on technologies originated at NTT Access Network Service Systems Laboratories. User operations created in Windows[®] or Web applications are recorded as a "scenario," which is then used to automate those operations. It is possible to accurately reproduce repeated routine operations or operations for handling large volumes of data. Furthermore, without any need to modify existing systems, WinActor[®] can automate complex operations that conventionally are performed by workers, or perform data entry across multiple systems. This leads to a dramatic improvement in the efficiency, quality, and cost-effectiveness of hitherto manually performed operations.

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