



Creative Automation Workflow Canvas

Map the process before you automate any of it

FORMAT	LENGTH
Canvas	5 sections
GATE	COST
None	Nothing

FOR: Content and marketing teams working out what to automate first, and what to leave alone.

TALECRAFTERS · SYNTHETIC MEDIA STUDIO · LONDON · EST. 2023
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A one-page canvas for mapping a creative process before automating any of it. Every step gets an owner and a verdict: a person decides it, a model drafts it, or a script handles it alone at four in the morning.

The value is not the canvas. It is that filling it in forces you to notice that roughly half the week is coordination, and that the coordination half is the automatable half.

HOW TO USE IT

01

Do this with the people who actually do the work, not with their managers. Half a day, once.

02

Map the process as it is, including the parts that embarrass you. A canvas of the intended process automates nothing.

03

Then build the top two candidates. Two, shipped and adopted, beats a roadmap of eight.

1. The process, step by step

One row per step. Add rows.

#	STEP	WHO DOES IT NOW	TIME PER WEEK	DECIDES / DRAFTS / HANDLES	BLOCKED BY
01					
02					
03					
04					
05					
06					
07					
08					

Decides means judgement a person owns. Drafts means a model produces a first version a person edits. Handles means a script does it alone and nobody looks unless it fails.

2. The variance test

Which mechanism each step needs

HOW MANY SHAPES DOES THE INPUT ARRIVE IN?	BUILD	NOT
One, always	A script	An agent, which is a costlier script that occasionally invents a step
A handful you can list	Branches	An agent. You already know the paths, so encode them.
Too many to enumerate, and new ones keep appearing	An agentic workflow	A rules engine, which will be permanently three cases behind
Unbounded, and a wrong answer is expensive	A person, model-assisted	A workflow

If you can draw the flowchart, build the flowchart. An agent is what you use when the flowchart would need a new branch every week.

3. The four no-go areas

CONFIRM NONE OF YOUR AUTOMATION CANDIDATES FALL HERE

- ☐ Anything that moves money: billing, refunds, budget allocation, bid changes above a threshold
- ☐ Anything that grants access: permissions, credentials, sharing, publication rights
- ☐ Anything ending in a regulatory filing
- ☐ Final approval on anything the public will see

4. The scaffolding, without which none of it survives

- ☐ A naming convention, so August's output is findable in November
- ☐ Automatic versioning, so nobody spends time finding the final version
- ☐ Connectors into software the team already runs, so adoption is not a change-management project
- ☐ Skills as loadable directories rather than one instruction nobody can edit safely
- ☐ A run log with cost attached
- ☐ A stated stopping condition and a credit ceiling, so a confused run halts rather than spends
- ☐ A named human gate at each point where a wrong decision is expensive

5. Decide what to build

Candidate 1: which step, and what it costs today

What has to be true for a script or model to own it

Candidate 2: which step, and what it costs today

What has to be true for a script or model to own it

How we will know it worked · A number, logged automatically

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