



CASE STUDY

# Melin Collectors increases efficiency and reduces manual effort through automation

Blue Prism solution helps employees keep up with increasing workloads while preserving jobs

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### **Business situation** Rapid growth necessitates intelligent automation

Melin Collectors is growing. The Norway-based company provides its clients with a full range of billing and debt collection services. Specializing primarily in the health services industry, Melin Collectors' end-to-end solutions are highly in demand, and the company owns over 90% market share within this niche.

Prior to partnering with Avanade, the collections process often included paper-based work, with physical documents that needed to be scanned or keyed into the company's computer system by employees. Additionally, daily reporting was done manually each morning, which took time and resources away from closing open files and collecting fees. As the company took on more client cases, it needed to hire additional staff to handle the resulting workload. "We were experiencing double-digit growth for several years," explains Simen Hønsi, COO of Melin Collectors. "The backlog just continued to grow as a result."

Within 12 months, Melin Collectors jumped from eight employees handling documents and running daily reports to 24. And still, more work was coming in than could be physically completed on time. "Eventually you can't just continue hiring more people to handle the work," says Hønsi. "That's when we started looking at automation."

To allow for continued business growth without having to add more headcount, the company wanted to automate several of its manual processes using intelligent robotic process automation (RPA). This innovative approach would not only increase efficiency, but also improve the experience of Melin Collectors's employees. "Everyone wanted to see a light at the end of the tunnel when it came to the backlog of work that had piled up," Hønsi says. "This project was essentially about automating manual processes, but also to prevent further increase to our backlog."

As they developed this strategy, Melin Collectors's leadership ensured that its people were fully engaged and understood that RPA was about augmenting their capabilities rather than reducing the company's workforce. Intelligent automation would be a win-win for everyone.

### **Solution** Blue Prism on Azure offers speed and flexibility

The company partnered with Avanade to help automate 20 daily priority processes — including document input, management and data reporting — using Blue Prism, a market-leading RPA software hosted on the Microsoft Azure cloud platform. Avanade's Azure and Blue Prism expertise was a key factor in the partnership, as Melin Collectors is pursuing an overall strategy to move multiple systems into the Azure cloud. "Avanade really stood out based on its experience and the way it worked to understand our specific needs," explains Hønsi.

The Blue Prism solution ensures consistency and flexibility for the future. Additionally, the software will allow the company to remain agile, with the ability to activate or deactivate automation for time-critical processes, ensuring resources are allocated wherever and whenever they are needed.

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The solution was developed and implemented very quickly. After an 8-week pilot program, our team began rolling out RPA for active cases and chipping away at the company's case backlog. One key to the success of this project was the close relationship between Melin Collectors and Avanade. "Consultants from Avanade came in and worked right next to our employees as part of the same team," explains Hønsi. "While some consultants show up in suits and ties, Avanade blended in like they'd always been there. That made a huge difference."

## Results Automation boosts efficiency and clears the backlog

Since the beginning of the project, RPA has been implemented on more than 80% of the identified processes. For these processes, Melin Collectors was able to reduce its backlog from tens of thousands of cases to zero, only a month after deployment of the solution. This solution has also helped the company recover outstanding revenue. To quantify the value-added efficiency of the Blue Prism software, the project has reduced manual effort for these processes by an estimated 53%, and 89% of the outstanding cases were completed with no human involvement at all.

Numbers aside, it's a particular point of pride at Melin Collectors that the RPA solution operates alongside employees while preserving jobs. This isn't a story about robots replacing the human workforce; rather, it's a great example of how automating paper-based processes can enhance the employee experience and help workers complete tasks more efficiently so that they can fully support the needs of the business.

### About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud services, business solutions and design-led experiences on the Microsoft ecosystem. Our professionals bring bold, fresh thinking combined with technology, business and industry expertise to help make a human impact on our clients, their customers and their employees. We are the power behind the Accenture Microsoft Business Group, helping companies to engage customers, empower employees, optimize operations and transform products, leveraging the Microsoft platform. Avanade has 36,000 professionals in 24 countries, bringing clients our best thinking through a collaborative culture that honors diversity and reflects the communities in which we operate. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at [www.avanade.com](http://www.avanade.com)

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