

SWEET TECH: HOW MICROSOFT AUTOMATE HAS SAVED EVERYONE TIME

TIM'S THOUGHTS



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In days passed, when we thought of automation, we may have thought of Skynet from James Cameron's Terminator threatening an apocalyptic war of man versus machine looming in the future. We made it to the future working hand-in-robot-hand with machines and automation. In most cases, we can't escape it. And while we fight with technology from time to time, it's far from the fictional War of the Machines we were introduced to in the 80s.

Over the last year, I have introduced automation into the background of NHG. Some of you may have heard the word "Data" thrown around not referring to the noun, but used as a pronoun for the report depository we brought on board late in 2022. For those that don't know, Data is set up to receive data files and reports, which it places into a filing system on our behalf. It knows how to distinguish between properties and when to send information to our partners at Aptech for our daily uploads. Specifically, our IHG properties know how to rename the daily data files to the format Aptech accepts before handing those files off.

Of course, the other side is that we have set up systems to feed this information to Data. Whether it's automatic reports, files from your Property Management Systems, or your Night Auditors including Data on distributions emails, either way, this will continue to save both the properties and the corporate office time on having to track down information, because Data has filed it for us on a cloud drive that the Accounting Team has access to. Truly a win-win.

So, how is this done? How do you build a "robot" or automation that handles all this? The truth is anyone with Microsoft Power Automate can do this, at the very least, on a basic level. Automate has several templates built to get most people started, and most of them link up to some other service that simply requires a sign-in. For further information, some YouTube videos can walk you through the basics of automating a task. Getting it perfect may require a little intellectual curiosity, but I've found that the result is often worth the time invested. What could possibly be **sweeter** than getting back more time in your day?

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