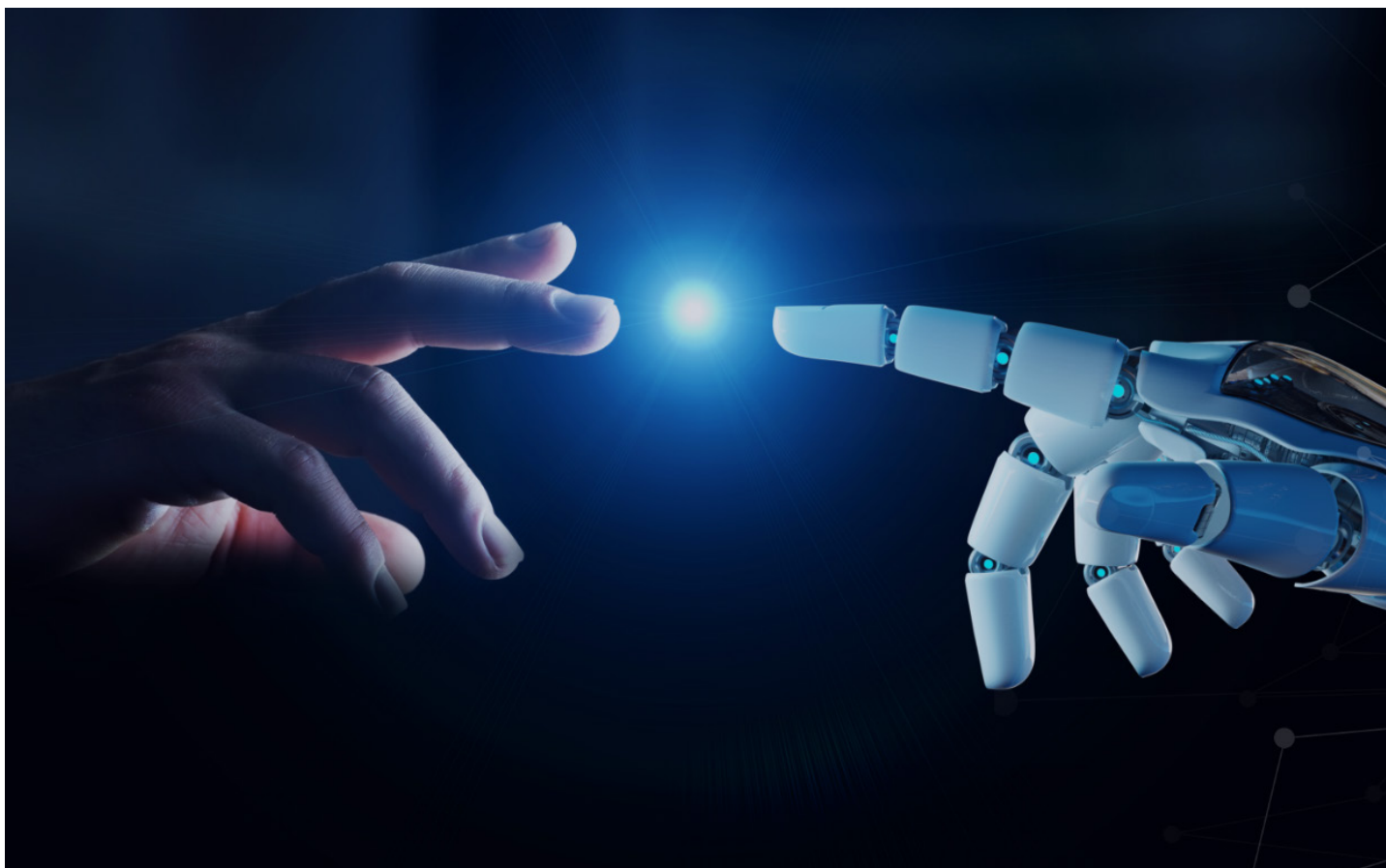


# Timber Barron:

Harnessing Robert the robot for staff retention





*When Timber Barron employed a robot, it wasn't a cost cutting exercise. Instead, it was an opportunity focused squarely on improving life for existing – human – employees.*

### Summary/Results

- Timber Barron has harnessed a digital worker robot, named Robert, as a staff retention and employee experience tool, removing manual, repetitive data entry and freeing staff up for more enjoyable, higher value work.
- Using Q-Bots Lean Agile Robotic Implementation (LARI®) methodology we were able to build and demonstrate the robot in less than five days.
- Timber Barron says *"Our team have embraced Robert as part of the team and he's enabling them to do the more enjoyable, value-add, decision making part of their jobs and everyone is constantly looking towards what else they can off-load and automate as part of our continuous improvement philosophy."*
- Due to the immediate success and return recognised, Timber Barron identified further processes for automation and Robert was enhanced to take on more work.
- Timber Barron plans to extend the use of bots beyond its own business to its wider business group.



## About Timber Barron

Timber Barron is an Auckland-based global bulk building material exporting company providing New Zealand timber and building products into the Pacific Islands. Specialising in materials such as timber, cement, steel and plywood, for construction, the company has nine staff, with a focus on providing value-add wherever possible.

## Background

When Robert joined Timber Barron in 2022, it took some staff several weeks to work out he was a robot. They'd been told he was working remotely and that they should just email him.

Robert had 'joined' Timber Barron not as a cost cutting exercise but as a way to assist in removing tedious, repetitive manual data entry from staff, freeing the small team up to focus on more value add opportunities like converting sales.

The company had developed a custom production system to process invoices – from receiving invoices in PDF format via email, extracting data and validating against packing sheets to data capture. But the system required a lot of manual data entry of all sales and orders and had no integration capabilities.

Daniel Ludlam, Timber Barron Managing Director, explains:

*"We have a great team of staff who have been with us for quite a long time. They have built up skill sets and knowledge specific to our business, but what we found was that we had a lot of staff doing menial data entry tasks instead of actually making decisions based on the data they were imputing."*

*"They were spending more of their time imputing data than actually looking at it, analysing it and decision making"* Ludlam says.



Daniel Ludlam

## Agile robots, Agile methodology

Initially we was engaged to automate one sales order process, starting with building a minimum viable product using their Lean Agile Robotic Implementation (LARIÂ®) methodology.

Ludlam says the LARIÂ® Agile approach of setting small goals and sprints enabled the company to prove first of all that the technology could work and that the team would be comfortable with it, before working through other ways to utilise and extend the technology.

***"It was a case of we have a bot 24/7, we're running it four hours a day, so what else can we be giving this bot to do to take pressure off the team?"***

Three sprints of two weeks each were used to deploy Robert. Timber Barron saw immediate benefits from using the bot and the pilot was signed off into being a fully integrated part of how the business operates.

*"Basically, anything that someone can do on a computer that is a repeatable task is what Robert is doing,"* Ludlam says.

*"So all our data entry, putting stock into the system, dispatching stock, invoicing customers – all of that is done by Robert."*

*"We have our bot trained to handle any touchpoint with our computer software."*





[sales@dataline.com.au](mailto:sales@dataline.com.au)

*powered by*



## General Disclaimer

The information in this document is intended for information purposes only. While we make every effort to ensure that the material in this document is accurate and up to date (as at the date of publication), we do not guarantee, and accept no liability or responsibility of any kind (to the extent permitted by law) arising from or in connection with, the accuracy, reliability, currency or completeness of any material in this document.

The material in this document may be changed, improved, or updated without notice.

This document includes references to registered and unregistered trademarks that are the property of third parties, and that are used with the consent of the trademark owner or as expressly permitted by applicable law.

Date of publication October 2022.

© Dataline Group 2022

Except as expressly permitted by applicable law, no part of this document may be reproduced (or distributed) in any manner without prior consent.

All rights reserved