How Metinvest Is Transforming Its Business with AI: Automation, Drones and Robots in Finance

At the 13th Annual Ukrainian CFO Forum in Kyiv, Yuliya Dankova, Metinvest Group's Chief Financial Officer, and Anton Ishchenko, Head of R&D Products at Metinvest Digital, explained how the Group is raising the efficiency of its operations using artificial intelligence (AI) tools.

The Ukrainian CFO Forum is the country's flagship event for financial-management professionals. During its Brave CFO Gathering conference, 26 speakers – including finance leaders from Rozetka-EVO, Biosphere and Nova Poshta – discussed how AI, automation and other digital tools are reshaping the CFO's role by boosting efficiency, managing risk and driving business transformation.

Paperless finance

Dankova outlined Metinvest's large-scale rollout of computer vision (CV) and intelligent document processing (IDP) across both finance and production.

She stated that modern CV-based systems instantly read, analyse and classify documents from scanners, e-mail and other sources, without any pre-training.

Since 2023, the Group has used myOCR, its in-house IDP platform. Now deployed at seven large sites, it processes up to 40,000 pages a month – including confidential documents – saving roughly 20,000 staff hours a year. It is integrated with a universal translator that converts documents from foreign languages into Ukrainian. It also features modules for stamp and signature recognition, contextual analysis, document classification, data validation and extraction. At its core are advanced AI models.

Dankova added: "For example, when an enterprise imports from an Italian plant, the automated workflow receives the document pack in Italian and English, reconciles it with accounting data, generates an authenticated Ukrainian translation and then files everything in the electronic archive. For finance teams, this has been a real breakthrough in both speed and convenience."

Safe production

The CFO also said that Metinvest has introduced SPAIS, a unified CV solution that spots safety breaches on site, such as workers entering hazardous zones or neglecting personal protective equipment. When a breach occurs, the system immediately raises an alert and records the footage for later analysis and investigation. Metinvest is already using the solution at several of its operations in Ukraine.

She added: "Computer vision saves lives, especially in the current situation, when people often pay less attention to safety both at home and at work."

SPAIS also helps the Group to detect damage at its production sites, working with drones that capture images and video of hard-to-reach areas with minimal human involvement. CV algorithms then flag cracks, broken windows, deformation, corrosion and other defects, generating reports for analysis and repair planning.

Other CV applications now moving from pilot to production at Metinvest include automatic slab-quality control, which outlines each slab, detects defects, measures trimming and instantly passes the results to staff.

Additionally, proof-of-concept projects have shown that SPAIS can automatically count steel coils on carriers and track their location, promising significant improvements in inventory accuracy and logistics efficiency at the Group's facilities.

When discussing risk management in implementing CV and robotics, Dankova stressed that Metinvest's assets rely exclusively on proven, uncompromised licensed systems.

Microsoft solutions, along with in-house developments based on the Microsoft technology stack, have been identified as priority technologies. Although the Group mainly uses trusted third-party solutions, all developments undergo mandatory information security checks, both during implementation and ongoing use.

Robotic systems are also trained and tested on large data sets before being deployed in live environments.

Commenting on robotic process management, Dankova noted: "Robots are like employees in that they go through a full HR cycle: they are selected, trained and deployed. And when they become obsolete, they also have to be dismissed. Even though we do not pay them salaries, the Group still incurs costs for licences, maintenance and infrastructure. So, the efficiency of each robot must be monitored continuously."

Intelligent automation

Anton Ishchenko, Head of R&D Products at Metinvest Digital – Metinvest Group's IT partner – spoke about machine vision, large language models and intelligent automation.

He stated: "In 2020, we could automate around 70% of processes, with 30% remaining out of reach due to technological constraints. Today, we have raised that figure to 95%. This opens up completely new possibilities, and we are actively advancing in this direction."

Ishchenko noted that over five years of developing intelligent process automation, Metinvest has implemented more than 500 technology-based solutions. This has enabled the automation of around 200,000 working hours, equivalent to nearly 100 full-time employees. The foundation of this success lies in a strategy of comprehensive technology adoption and ongoing development. The Group believes that only a combination of diverse technological components can deliver maximum results.

Modern intelligent automation at Metinvest is built on a synergy of robotic process automation (RPA, which is

used for routine operations), low-code platforms (rapid solution development without complex coding), process and task mining (analysing processes to identify inefficiencies) and AI (to automate complex tasks and enable real-time data processing).

Employees as developers

One of the key innovations is the active involvement of employees in the automation process. At Metinvest, staff document their own business processes and work activities using tools such as Task Mining, Power Automate and SAP Scripts. This first-hand input leads to high-quality, structured automation requirements, reduces the burden on business analysts and accelerates the journey from concept to solution.

The collected data and processes are automatically analysed using AI, then swiftly transformed into operational automated scenarios. This reduces the time and resources required for development and implementation by double-digit percentages. In an environment of constrained business budgets, this approach has proven extremely valuable.

This practice has led to the creation of the Application Warehouse, a centralised corporate platform hosting universal applications for automating standard business processes across departments. It significantly enhances access to digital tools: new solutions are deployed quickly, shared among employees and do not need to be built from scratch each time. Currently, around 1,000 employees use the platform.

Digital education and Copilot

The Group places strong emphasis on digital education. Regular lectures, workshops, competitions and incentive programmes help employees to gain a deeper understanding of technology and take an active role in digital transformation.

For instance, with tools like Power Automate and Microsoft Copilot (the corporate version of ChatGPT), employees can automate routine tasks independently, even without programming expertise. This unlocks new opportunities for workflow optimisation and enhances organisational efficiency.

Ishchenko concluded: "We continue to invest in research and development to generate business value and stay at the forefront of digital transformation."