

The Business Case for Low Code: Faster Build, Smarter Delivery, Better Service

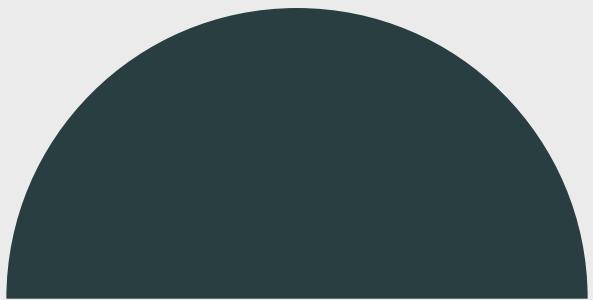


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Introduction

In the age of digital transformation, businesses must move faster to meet changing market conditions, create new business models and processes, and improve existing ones.

While in the past the IT department could be counted on to serve all of an enterprise's application development needs, today that's no longer the case. There is a shortage of qualified developers which creates a strain on IT departments. In turn, IT is struggling to meet business requirements in time using traditional coding with programming languages, frameworks, and middleware to build applications. And the accelerated pace of today's hyper-competitive marketplace creates frustration among business departments who have to wait in line for the new apps and features they need now.

More than ever, getting to market first with innovative products and services is a matter of survival for businesses, which is why so many are taking an all-hands-on-deck approach to app dev.

Fortunately, a new generation of low code development solutions is fast emerging, enabling everyday employees to serve as citizen developers, creating the apps their business units need on demand, at scale and in collaboration with IT teams – using simple intuitive tooling with drag-and-drop functionality.

Use cases for the technology are virtually boundless – from inventory tracking, auditing and report generation to site configuration, compliance management, resource planning and customer enrollments, to name a few. With the right low code platform, departments can quickly and easily bring new products to market or ramp up production on a dime – and they can serve more customers, faster, for significant bottom-line results.

Consider Forrester commentary published by [Forbes](#) which shows that low code solutions "have the potential to make software development as much as 10 times faster than traditional methods." According to [McKinsey & Company](#), businesses that employ citizen developers "score 33 percent higher on innovation compared with bottom-quartile companies."

Consider also that if your organization has yet to invest in a low code solution, very quickly you can assume that your competition has. As Gartner reports, "41% of [survey] respondents have active citizen development initiatives and 20% of those that don't are either evaluating or plan to start citizen development initiatives." By 2024, Gartner projects, 65% of all app dev activity will take place on low code platforms.

While the benefits of low code platforms are far-reaching, leveraging the technology to its fullest requires a holistic approach to application development – and a solution built to scale.

Here's what today's most advanced low code platforms have to offer – and how their essential features translate into broad business gains.

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Create Apps Faster, Accelerate Service Delivery

To grow and thrive in today's digital-first economy, businesses need to respond technologically to both immediate customer needs and evolving market dynamics. Yet, a shortage of qualified developers – a trend that is expected to continue – has created a strain on IT departments and frustration among lines of business.

In order to succeed, individual business units must be able to tap their employees to create the apps they need now. By empowering citizen developers with prefab components and easy-to-use development tools, low code solutions allow business units to quickly develop the apps and workflows that allow them to capture more opportunities faster.

The most advanced platforms on the market go beyond simple tooling to offer a host of additional features natively, from automated reporting, notifications, and routing to AI, chatbots, and analytics. Look for a solution that structures and populates tables automatically as well – and that offers predesigned form templates to support a breadth of business use cases.

With this expanded functionality in place, the business creators behind your apps are, in fact, starting the development process with most of the coding they need already professionally built. As a result, they can accelerate the development process exponentially – going, for example, from months to hours to create even the most complex apps – and they can confidently release new applications into the environment knowing they are built to the organization's IT standards.

An advanced low code solution should enable collaboration between departments as well. The ability to reuse code means that features and functionality created by one department can be incorporated into apps for other departments, often in entirely new ways. This type of shared low code environment unleashes individual creativity and transforms business processes into fast, automated workflows that effectively address both the immediate and long-term needs of the business.

Ultimately, delivering applications faster is a business' competitive edge as it fuels employee productivity, fosters innovation, and allows organizations to get to market first with the new products and services they need to drive growth and revenues.

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Create Cross-Enterprise Experiences Users Love

Consumers today have high digital expectations of the brands they support. Keeping them engaged over the long term requires your business to deliver end-to-end experiences that transcend systems, departmental functions, interaction channels and data.

However, disparate systems and a siloed infrastructure can create disjointed digital experiences for users, limit data access and visibility – and ultimately hamper a business' growth by preventing applications from performing as needed to handle all the use cases at hand. Lack of integration can prevent a business from automating workflows and can lead to significant quality issues for users.

To deliver on the digital expectations of modern consumers requires a holistic approach to application development and a low code solution built on a single cloud platform.

Ultimately, the solution you choose should serve as an engagement layer that delivers experience consistency – whereby all applications share a common, familiar look and feel, regardless of their department of origin or the business processes they facilitate. When friction is removed from the workflow experience, users get critical tasks done faster – without having to stop and think about how the application works.

When reviewing your options, be sure to assess a solution's completeness. You must have the built-in analytics, intelligence, and out-of-the-box integration needed to automate processes, leverage AI/ML and data, and support the full spectrum of digital assets users touch, from mobile devices to the cloud, on-site servers and the ever-expanding IoT.

The apps you develop also need to delight users with modern, consumer-grade, multichannel experiences that provide quick access to the data they need as soon as they need it. When that is the case, users don't have to wait for others to deliver the resolution or response they need, thanks to out-of-the-box self-service options like virtual agents.

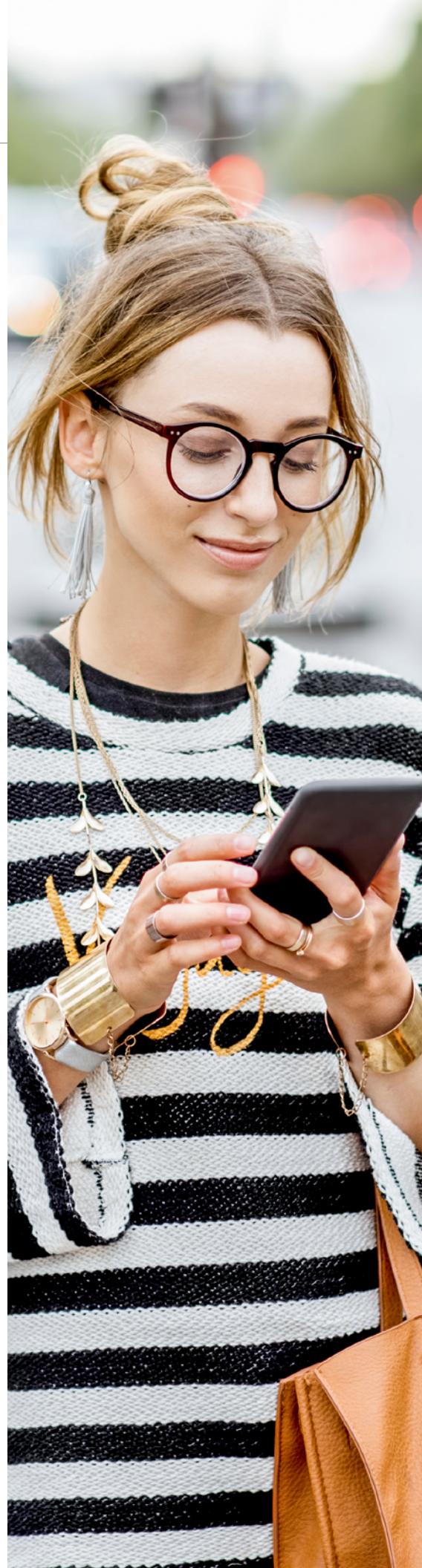
And your knowledge workers no longer have to scramble around to find piecemeal answers because they have access to single unified views of applications, in full context and supported by AI-assisted analytics.

Consider that Millennials and Gen Z'ers are rapidly maturing, and their presence in the workplace and purchasing power are fast expanding. Addressing their needs requires businesses to leverage a highly flexible, extensible low code platform designed to support new technologies as they emerge and place the exact data and digital tools these important stakeholders need immediately at their fingertips.

Consider also how our economy changed overnight when the COVID-19 pandemic first hit. Instead of methodically moving forward with digital initiatives on their own timetable, companies everywhere were forced into an immediate, seismic shift of their business processes and workflows.

Those that have adapted well to an increasingly distributed workforce and virtual customer base have thrived. And those that have not are lagging behind.

To that end, the low code platform you select should enable fast application advances and customizations that allow your business to adapt to rapidly changing market conditions. Today's digitally transformed economy is moving at a record speed. Your ability to create the applications you need must follow suit.



Create Apps that Scale – Without Sprawl

As businesses advance their digital initiatives, they often face a nearly insurmountable hurdle: the sheer complexity of their hybrid cloud environments.

To ensure enterprise-class confidence among users, the solution you choose should serve as the platform of platforms for your infrastructure, and the foundation for all your workflows, offering the built-in security, high availability and compliance required to optimize uptime and reliability.

One of the most important considerations when selecting a low code platform is its ability to scale across the environment from end to end, which will deliver the enterprise-wide integration your organization needs to grow and advance.

While departmental and personal low code solutions may address a single business use case well, they create yet another technological silo to navigate, adding to the complexity of your environment. Ultimately, low code point solutions limit your visibility into workflows and data, obstructing your ability to assess application performance. Adopting point low code solutions as an overall strategy eventually leads to shadow IT, application sprawl, and security risks, wasting valuable time and resources.

The business creators within your department need to be able to confidently introduce apps into the environment at speed. This requires an end-to-end low code solution designed for enterprise-grade scale, performance, resilience, privacy and security, all on a single cloud platform that minimizes data leakage and ensures compliance.

Scale also enables automation – and that fuels productivity. A low code platform engineered to scale across the ecosystem will support the large universal workflows you need to accelerate growth and nimbly respond to market shifts.

Platform stability is an important consideration as well. Your low code platform should ultimately safeguard app quality and integrity at scale, allowing every application you introduce into the environment to perform as well across all your business units as it does for a single department – and as well for thousands of users as it does for a few.

With expansive automated digital workflows that connect systems, apps, data and users across the environment, business processes can operate at velocity, digital assets are optimized, and users can enjoy the complete, 360-degree visibility into data and processes needed to get their work done faster and move on to the next project.

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Create Value for the C-Suite

As an IT leader, you are responsible for ensuring that your department's digital assets perform optimally, that processes are well supported, applications are created and advanced quickly, and that IT budgets are held in check. You are also responsible for getting C-Suite buy-in on the digital investments your department makes.

A feature-rich low code platform built to scale can deliver the return on investment CEOs value by, for example, allowing your department to double production without additional hires – or service twice as many customers in half the time without increasing bottom-line costs to achieve those gains.

A robust solution speaks directly to your value proposition for customers and other stakeholders. New, intelligent applications that are delivered on-demand and in a consistent, standardized manner allow users to enjoy easy, intuitive, AI-driven experiences that are in step with their expectations.

The ability to build apps faster, at scale, can also translate into significant productivity gains, accelerating service delivery with a sophisticated, modular approach to creating apps that automatically offer up advanced functionality. And when apps can be created by builders of all skill levels, your business is well-positioned to expand quickly into new markets, regions, and industries.

Ultimately, low code is the future of application development. By empowering business creators with the ability to produce their own enterprise-wide apps – complete with built-in automation, analytics and intelligence on a single, cloud-based platform – organizations are transforming how they operate for real bottom-line results.

Not only are they able to achieve the velocity they need to outperform the competition and better serve customers, but they can also shift strategies and business processes rapidly to align with new, emerging market opportunities – all while driving down costs.



Creator Workflows

– Right for Tomorrow's Economy

Powered by the Now Platform®, ServiceNow's Creator Workflows combine the power of App Engine and IntegrationHub to empower enterprise-class low-code app delivery with intuitive and intelligent experiences, at speed and scale.

Creator Workflows' simplified processes leverage built-in automation, integration, analytics and intelligence to enable fast and frictionless development experiences for business creators of all levels. With Creator Workflows, employees, customers and other stakeholders get the reliable apps and features they need now to speed productivity, be first to market, and drive innovation, including quick access to data at the exact moment it's needed.

An end-to-end solution built on a single cloud platform, Creator Workflows turns even the most complex business processes into streamlined digital workflows whereby all systems, apps, and data are seamlessly connected, always available and working in concert. Complete visibility into processes enterprise-wide means you can put data to work faster for better, more personalized user experiences and easy resolution to any issues as they arise.

Ultimately, Creator Workflows accelerates business growth by empowering your teams and optimizing your digital assets, enabling unmatched levels of scale and automation, with full confidence – and without sprawl.

Best of all, creating applications has never been easier. With Creator Workflows, you'll go from an abstract idea to an implemented app in about a day – for a competitive edge that is essential to advancing, disrupting, and leading in a digitally transformed world.

To learn more, please visit www.servicenow.com/workflows/creator-workflows.html.

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