

4 STEPS TO CREATING A LOW-CODE COMPANY

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INTRO

For many generations, 2020 has been a life-changing year. Along with great challenges, it brought great opportunities. The pandemic put some organizations years ahead of where they would have been expected to be right now. According to KMPG, “80 % of leaders have seen the digital transformation of their businesses accelerating during the pandemic. The biggest advancements have been in the digital transformation of operations, where 30% say that progress has put them years ahead of where they would have expected to be right now.” The recent McKinsey research reveals that digital adoption has taken a quantum leap (up to 10 years for some regions and industries) at both the organizational and industry levels.

Do you know what it takes to be among those that overcome challenges and strengthen resilience? It takes creating a low-code company and leveraging low-code technology capable of accelerating both customer-facing and operational processes.

We all know that human nature provides us with the ability to adapt quickly. But how can organizations adapt quickly enough to keep up in this new reality? The foundation of any successful enterprise has not changed; it requires people, processes and technology. A successful leader is able to master the discipline of managing all three pillars.

For processes and technology to work harmoniously and efficiently, you should empower people with appropriate skills, experience and knowledge to create, optimize and automate operations that are key to reaching business goals.

Of all three, owning technology is more often than not, the sore point. Leaders have always known they are to pick people for their team and build processes, but tech has been an IT staff's responsibility.

In this eBook, we'll take a look at how business leaders can take ownership of technologies used in their companies to automate operational processes and how that will contribute to the creation of a low-code company. Most importantly, we will review why now is just the right time for the transformation.



STEP 1

REVISE YOUR TECH STRATEGY



Step 1. Revise your tech strategy

For a long time, the threat of digital disruption and subsequent need for digital transformation has been driving IT strategy in organizations across various verticals all over the world. As the role of technology in both professional and personal lives increases, businesses need to innovate faster and deliver top-notch experiences to both employees and customers to stay ahead of their competition.

Both mobile and web development are escalating, challenging IT departments to keep up despite limited resources. Application complexity and IT backlogs are growing. Unbalanced budget, shortage of skilled developers, and misalignment between business and IT units are among other top challenges IT departments are facing today. These force digital and tech leaders to constantly search for a solution.

Revising tech strategy should be the initial step towards implementing change in any organization. It will become a framework for decisions and actions to execute over the short-, medium- and long-term.

Three main aspects to consider while revising your tech strategy are:

- Assess if your approach to IT resource planning fits your company needs
- Find out if your employees are empowered with the right tools and freedom to using technology to the company's benefit
- Ensure technologies your company is equipped with today will still prove effective in 2-5 years

The revision might show off there is a room for improvement not only in your tech stack, but also, security or the process management approach. You might find out that your company specialists lack initiative and are not invested in change or not competent enough to be high-performing.

Now you should assess whether any of the gaps you spotted can be fixed by equipping employees with technology that embraces every employee to be a developer and automate business ideas quickly and easily. This is where a low-code platform comes in handy.



STEP 1

REVISE YOUR TECH STRATEGY



A low-code platform can address the following challenges:

Growing application complexity

Enterprise applications are highly complex—custom development is often necessary to achieve sufficient depth and breadth of functionality.

Growing IT backlogs

IT backlogs are growing as enterprises' internal business and external market expectations are changing, and IT departments with already limited capacities are having difficulty keeping up.

Imbalanced IT budgets

The majority of an enterprise's IT budget is spent on ongoing maintenance of legacy systems, which leaves little leftover for innovation and new application / process development.

Shortage of skilled developers

As development backlogs increase and budgets dry up, IT departments are constrained, facing a shortage of skilled developers to address the growing number of projects.

Misalignment between business and IT

Inability to keep up with changing market and business expectations could be detrimental to an enterprise's competitive position, particularly in terms of critical customer-facing operations.

Thousands of companies around the world are already benefiting from low-code development approach. It contributes to the simplification of the software building process, thus allowing businesses to reap direct benefits from their data and processes with less effort.

The application of low-code development is not limited to a single industry or company type. In fact, businesses from various fields and of various sizes can use it. It allows them to innovate and move towards digitization in an affordable and the most efficient way.

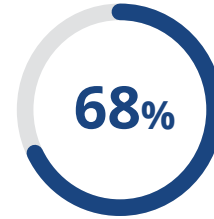
Revising IT strategy is the first step to creating a low-code company. When you define and sign off any changes in approach to IT resource planning needed, you may proceed to the next stage.





STEP 1

REVISE YOUR TECH STRATEGY



Average number of apps deployed by large firms increased by 68% over the last 4 years.

(Wall Street Journal)



It took companies an average of 55 days to fill a tech role in 2016, but that jumped to 66 days in 2019.

(CNBC)



Just 10% of IT is allocated to generating new business value.

(McKinsey)



STEP 2

EMPOWER EVERY EMPLOYEE TO BE A DEVELOPER



Step 2. Empower every employee to be a developer

The next step to building a low-code company is **empowering business users to automate processes** quickly and easily. First and foremost, you should foster the culture for any employee in any division of your company to willingly demonstrate the initiative and be able to suggest ways to optimize their job or processes in their unit. In a low-code company every single employee is capable of creating apps that meet their unique business needs.

Almost every company is rich in proactive people. Nevertheless, some workers are hesitant to show eagerness for action for fear of overstepping boundaries. Rather than discouraging this, **take steps to improve employee initiative by changing employee mindsets.**

The most common problem is fear or uncertainty of how they'll be received by management, which prevents some employees from presenting their ideas to leaders. Managers and employers are not always open to suggestions from their teams. Furthermore, when an idea is accepted but added to a long backlog and postponed by months, it frustrates and discourages your staff.

You should develop policies and frameworks that will explain the process everyone could follow should they decide to optimize their work and automate a business idea. The key point here is not to limit, but provide freedom for anyone, who knows business processes well and is willing to build apps without coding inside a drag-n-drop visual interface.

In order for employees to take initiative, they need guidance on what they are encouraged to do to improve their performance. **Ensure that all employees have proper tools, policies, reference materials and training.** So that when they take initiative to automate a process for their department, they ensure it aligns with operations in other departments and units. Your employees should know who governs all apps that are created by business users and what frameworks they could use.

While empowering everyone to become a developer, you'll need to **ensure IT staff plays a key role in the process of operations automation and takes ownership of security and system administration, complex integrations and overall consistency of the IT landscape.**



STEP 2 EMPOWER EVERY EMPLOYEE TO BE A DEVELOPER



How citizen development is changing business

Even without deep technical knowledge, a marketer or accountant can use a low-code platform to quickly create an app that addresses their specific needs—transforming them into what are commonly called citizen developers.

Consider a marketer who needs a dashboard to pull together results from the numerous campaigns they monitor. Instead of repeatedly checking multiple sources and collating that information into a spreadsheet or other tool, their efforts could be streamlined with a customized solution.

Business users, including marketing managers, sales reps, service professionals, and human resource personnel can create, configure, and deploy customized apps without software development skills. Not only does this save time for business users, but it also reduces the burden on IT and ensures all users can better contribute to the organization's success.

Low-code platforms reduce the amount of needed development operations tasks. Such software facilitates a quicker deployment and implementation process that enables developers to deliver faster. As a result, generated bug-free code drastically reduces maintenance requirements and reduces the time spent for operational activities to speed up the application development and deployment.

The following capabilities of a low-code platform will enable non-tech employees quickly and easily build applications they need:



Visual modeling tools

Creating apps using visual methods and models is faster than developing using code. Powered with visual modeling capabilities, low-code platforms use built-in components to represent any information in a form that is readable to anyone—from regular business users with no tech skills to professional developers.



Out-of-the-box functionality

Leading low-code systems provide OOTB (out-of-the-box) functionality, which eliminates the need to build core modules for apps from scratch. For example, some low-code platforms include modules for data management or modules for customer-facing apps, such as service management or sales processes management.



STEP 2 EMPOWER EVERY EMPLOYEE TO BE A DEVELOPER



Reusability

One major aspect of low-code development's OOTB functionality is the usage of pre-configured modules and functionality for apps. These modules have common core functions needed for several apps, and they can be reused to develop different solutions more quickly. It's essential that a low-code platform allows users to reuse prebuilt or newly-developed modules, plug-ins, and entire applications to develop necessary apps faster.



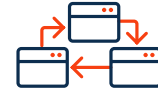
Security

No matter how functional and user-friendly a low-code tool is, if it's not secure, it is not a sufficient solution. Make sure that a low-code development platform offers proper security to protect apps you build and the platform as a whole before you start using it.



Reporting and monitoring

Apps developed using low-code can monitor workflows and processes to keep track of their effectiveness. They can also track the performance of other apps, and are useful for analysis purposes.



Application lifecycle management

Low-code tools simplify and streamline several stages in the software development lifecycle, such as debugging, testing, and deployment. They give users access to information about the apps created and their development and give them the ability to revert to previous versions if needed for better application lifecycle management.



Scalability

Low-code system should be scalable. It should be able to handle an increase in users as your business grows, whether that be twenty employees or two thousands.



Multi-device compatibility

In addition to the ability to use the low-code platform on any device running major operational systems, its cross-platform compatibility allows users to build apps that can run on all core platforms and devices.



STEP 2 EMPOWER EVERY EMPLOYEE TO BE A DEVELOPER



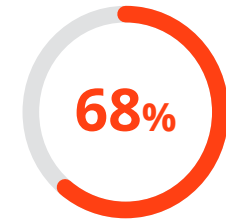
One of the biggest accelerators of apps and processes development can be achieved when, in addition to a flexible low-code platform, organizations can leverage ready to use components, connectors, and templates. These components can be effortlessly added to further simplify and speed development. This supports organizations to significantly decrease time to market and with solutions, which are tailored to their particular business needs.

Being open to suggestions and providing the right tools is key to embracing employee initiative. If you establish an open-door policy and provide professional tools for your team, they'll feel comfortable with driving change and presenting new ideas.



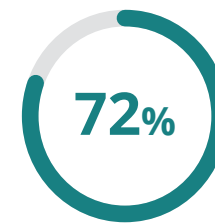
Nearly 60% of all custom apps are now built outside the IT department, companies report.

(ImpactMyBiz)



68% of IT developers agree that low-code is viable for the development of mission-critical applications.

(ImpactMyBiz)



72% of low-code developers create applications in three months or less, compared with six months or even years to develop applications using traditional development.

(ImpactMyBiz)



STEP 3

SELECT A LOW-CODE PLATFORM



Step 3. Select a low-code platform that fits your company needs and unique processes

Determining your requirements and researching the market are integral parts of choosing a low-code platform. It's a good idea to assemble a selection team that accurately represents key areas and functions of your organization. You might want to get input from multiple stakeholders to ensure your selected platform considers a broad assortment of needs. As a team, put together a list of requirements for the platform, keeping in mind your strategic objectives. Determine the types of features the platform will need to have. To help prioritize, group your requirements into categories, such as mandatory, important, and nice to have.

Researching the market using analyst reports is highly recommended when selecting a low-code platform for an organization. Leading analyst firms like Gartner and Forrester will be great guides for identifying and summarizing standout offerings. These firms are well-known and respected for their thoroughness and unbiased analyses of enterprise technology. With their reports as a backdrop, research the low-code platform market and start collecting comparison information. Work with your selection team to come up with a rubric for accurately assessing and comparing your options.

When evaluating a solution for your organization, pay attention to the following aspects:

1. Cloud deployment

Cloud became the primary option for most organizations in recent months. Ensuring security for your corporate and client's data might be challenging for CIOs and IT directors. Be picky—check with your vendor what data centers they own or rent. On top of security, cloud deployment speeds things up a lot. There are no settings to configure—simply click a button and off you go. You also get instant access to the latest updates, features and technologies.

2. Data centrality

It's crucial for successful businesses to quickly access large amounts of data. Low-code platforms that put a heavy focus on data make it easier for developers to deliver more connected applications in the shortest time possible. Make sure that the platform is capable of integrating with any data—this will allow you to create data-centric applications. Designing data-centric apps provides a whole new level of connected experience to users, giving them the relevant information in real time.





STEP 3

SELECT A LOW-CODE PLATFORM



3. Cross-platform support

Using a single all-purpose development framework is essential for businesses that want to stay competitive across all available channels. A cross-platform solution can be used to build web, desktop, and mobile apps, for any type of the device and application architecture—web or native.

5. Flexibility

Flexible, open, and scalable frameworks enable businesses to develop apps that perfectly fit the specific needs of a business or its clients. When choosing a low-code software, look for the one that is flexible, allowing scaling up and down based on the transaction volume coming from the users. Also, it would be great if the platform includes built-in services for testing, analytics, and deploying the applications.

7. Process management capabilities

It's highly recommended to choose a software that provides a complete set of tools to effectively manage business processes, including process modelling, execution, monitoring and analysis. Focus your efforts on finding a platform that ensures the maximum efficiency of business process management in your organization.

4. Pre-built components, apps & templates

Ready-made components, templates and apps dramatically accelerate delivery of bespoke apps. Check if your vendor provides pre-built solutions that can be used right away and dramatically save time on process automation.

6. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

AI and ML tools allow users to perform multiple operations automatically and help them take the best possible decisions at each step. Search for a platform that offers easy-to-use yet comprehensive mechanisms that help configure new predictive models, re-train them to keep the models up-to-date and view the prediction results to analyze the most influential factors.

Once you've identified potential platforms, use your rubric to assess and shortlist them. Recall your requirements. You want a platform that's robust and scalable, but not one that has a lot of unnecessary bells and whistles. You don't want to pay for features you don't need.

In general, the more requirements a platform meets—and how well it meets them—the better choice it is. Though you'll also consider other aspects, such as overall cost, timeline to implement, and how well it integrates with other enterprise systems.





STEP 3 SELECT A LOW-CODE PLATFORM



Low-code will make it to the mainstream in 2021 with 75% of development shops adopting this platform, according to Forrester's 2021 predictions for software development.

(TechRepublic)



By 2024, low-code application development will be responsible for more than 65% of application development activity.

(Gartner)



The Global Low-Code Development Platform Market size is expected to reach \$46.4 billion by 2026, rising at a market growth of 25% CAGR during the forecast period.

(KBV Research)



STEP 4

ENSURE CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL ALIGNMENT AND TRANSPARENCY



Step 4. Ensure cross-departmental alignment and transparency

Cross-departmental collaboration is a reflection of a healthy internal culture. When employees communicate effectively and understand each other's roles and functions, your customers feel the difference. Learning what other departments do and working with them on collaborative projects helps employees reduce chaos in the workplace and avoid losing sight of the organization's other moving parts.

Focusing on **facilitating alignment as a top-down initiative** should be one of your central priorities in a low-code company. Ensure your departments work without silos and everyone understands what's the end goal of all operations. Make sure objectives of various business units do not compete, team members are open to communications with cross-functional departments, information flows are available to every employee, and tools that are in use in your organization transition every piece of data between divisions smoothly.

Not only does software have to pass leads from marketing managers to sales representatives and include the information about touchpoints with support managers, it also has to be a single source of truth regarding all actions your employees make.

The unique capabilities of low-code software allow for "citizen developers," i.e. any skilled or unskilled person developing apps, to create the features, apps and processes they need to automate and optimize their work in a fraction of the time traditional coding and software development takes to do so. Low-code can erase the communication gap between professional developers and users, as they are both developing on the same platform. The boundaries between IT and non-IT are erased when using a single platform, meaning that miscommunications related to the development of needed apps are diminished significantly as everyone begins to speak the same language.

Furthermore, with low-code software, the tools and features necessary for the entire company no longer need to be disjointed or stand-alone. In fact, low-code platforms allow for the development of these features to exist on a single platform, **aligning departments and simplifying workflows**. The sales team may have a completely different workflow than the service team, but with low-code, they do not need two different platforms to help automate their operations. The unifying aspect of low-code platforms helps align various business units, leading to better collaboration and communication between them.

Enabling low-code development also helps **eliminate shadow IT and improve IT governance** within your organization. Adopting a powerful low-code platform allows you to take control over the quality of app development in your organization. You can rest assured all the apps that are being developed by various departments meet standards set and are compatible with the company tech ecosystem.



STEP 4 ENSURE CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL ALIGNMENT AND TRANSPARENCY



Thanks to encouraging collaboration between business units and developers, a low-code development approach has a long-term impact on a business. It provides visibility and transparency, thus understanding how workflows might be further optimized and enhanced across an organization.



80% of businesses use social collaboration tools to ensure long-term collaboration among the team.

(McKinsey)



94% of companies report that "agility and collaboration" are critical to their organization's success.

(Deloitte)



82% of business respondents indicated that harmonizing business processes is of high importance.

(Capgemini)



REAL-LIFE SUCCESS STORY OF ISRAEL NATIONAL ROADS



Real-life success story of Israel National Roads

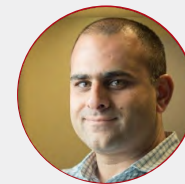
Following its strategic objective to improve the quality of life for commuters and the overall efficiency of mass transit, the Government of Israel entrusted the Ministry of Transportation (MOT) with the mission to connect the country with a modern network for faster and more efficient interurban roads and railroad tracks. To achieve this goal, the Ministry required a digital platform that would ensure coordination between the infrastructure companies.

Modernizing the interurban road network has been one of the key strategic projects for the Israeli government. Supported by the government, Israel National Roads took over the mission to upgrade the country's road infrastructure and build a wider transportation network. To lead such a complex project successfully, the company required a sophisticated software solution to serve as a consolidated project-related data environment and a collaborative tool for multiple stakeholders to manage long-term, multi-stage operations.

Israel National Roads Company aimed at achieving operational transparency and streamlining processes and thus opted for Creatio's low-code platform for process management and CRM. The combination of the system's ready-to-go tools and low-code capabilities allowing users to create custom solutions in a matter of minutes, made Creatio the perfect fit for the company.

Utilizing a single platform for managing infrastructure projects simplified the process immensely and brought visibility to all the development stages. Thanks to the seamless integration with Israel's mapping services, the system gives the ability to check the interests of other companies in the chosen area and automatically creates a list of necessary documents for each and every company that influences the process. Once the documents are filled out, the system sends the request to these engaged entities in order to receive the required approvals.

"The decision of the Israeli government to choose Creatio to establish a national system for coordinating infrastructure works is a very right decision. Undoubtedly, it will contribute a lot to all of us—employees and ultimately also to the citizens who will benefit from the project results."



**Nir Ron, Product Manager
at Israel National Roads Company**

CONCLUSION

For those organizations that thrive to stay competitive in times of constant change, creating a low-code company should be a top-priority. By turning your business into a low-code company, you increase agility and strengthen resilience of your business, which is especially important today.

Being a low-code company implies decision-making freedom. This includes decisions on how multiple departments can do their job best, what tools do they need to get that job done as well as defining when exactly to expect the result. The best part is that all of the above can be done fast by both professional developers and business users without any IT skills. Ability to automate processes in minutes without heavy involvement of the IT department is a distinctive feature of a low-code company.

Considering the numerous advantages of low-code, it is no wonder why businesses around the globe are shifting their focus from traditional software development to encouraging the rise of citizen developers in multiple departments instead.

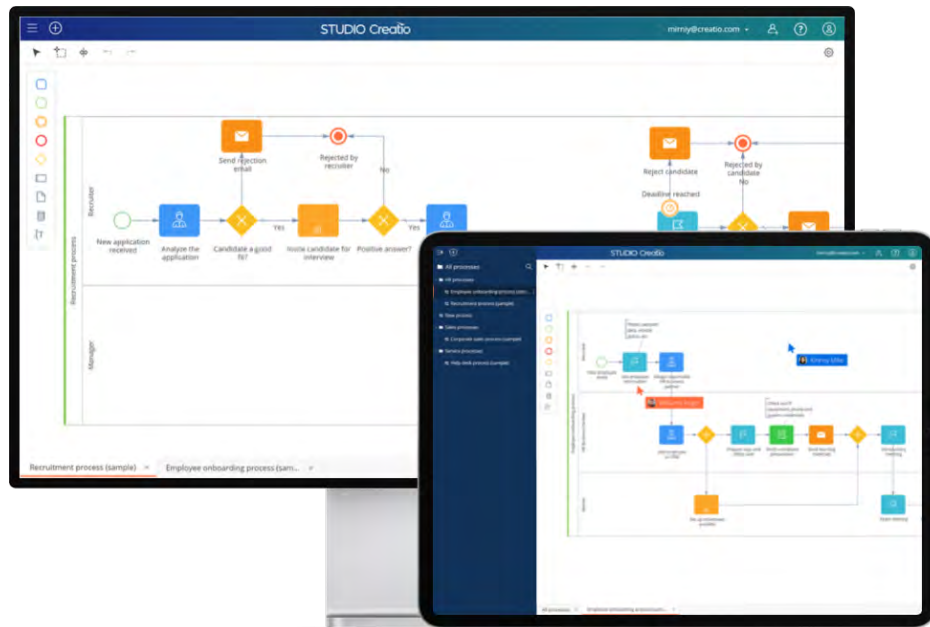
The future is low-code, where everyone can be a developer using platforms such as Creatio without deep coding skills. The world of business doesn't require the expansion of IT departments, but rather the encouragement of citizen developers via the implementation of low-code platforms. An advanced low-code platform saves time, resources, and enables employees to automate their daily tasks so they can tackle bigger and more creative assignments. In the modern era, anyone can be a developer—a citizen developer—and the companies they work for will reap the benefits.

Being a leading global software company, Creatio provides a unique low-code platform for process management and CRM that merges two technologies into one: a low-code platform with a business process management engine and world-class out-of-the-box apps for sales, marketing and service on top of the platform. This helps our customers create a low-code company.



ABOUT CREATIO

Creatio is a global software company providing a leading low-code platform for process management and CRM. Its intelligent products accelerate sales, marketing, service and operations for mid-size and large enterprises.



STUDIO

Intelligent low-code and process management platform with out-of-the-box solutions and templates

[Try it free](#)