



LOW-CODE

GUIDE

Everything you need to succeed in your low-code development journey.

You know the drill. Organizations like yours face growing pressure to operate at digital speed. Continually evolving expectations are forcing you to accelerate operations, improve the customer experience, and be nimble enough to change on a dime.

The question is, are you ready to harness the speed and power of low-code to distinguish your company from the rest of the pack?

In this Low-Code Guide, learn more about low-code development, when you should consider it, and examples of low-code powered, digital transformation success.

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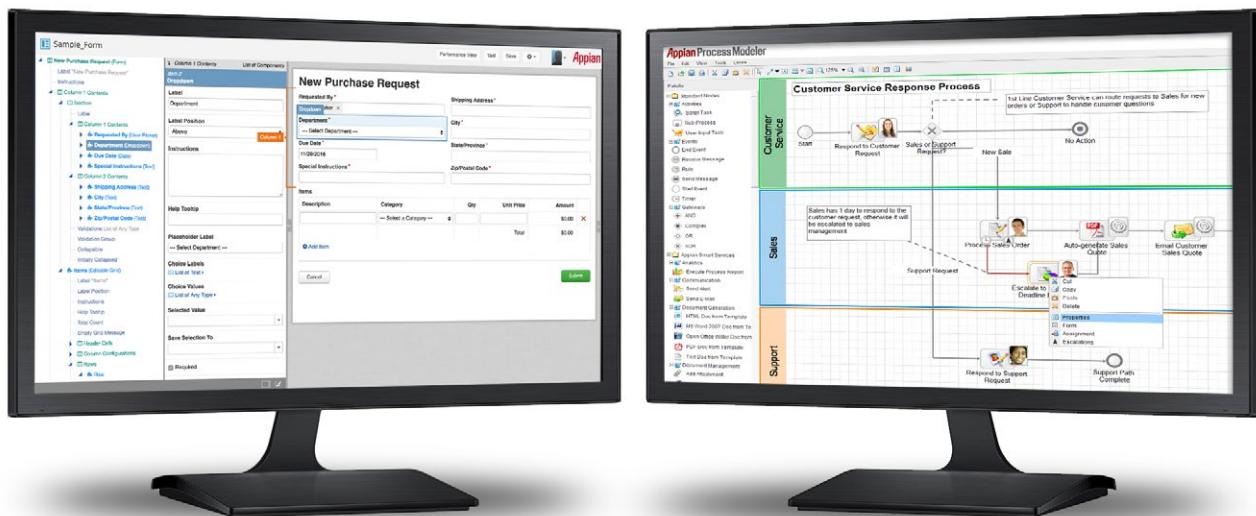
GETTING STARTED WITH THE BASICS

Low-code development is a way to build apps more quickly by reducing the need to code.

And, low-code development platforms make it possible. According to Forrester Research, low-code development platforms:

“..enable rapid application delivery with minimal hand-coding, and quick setup and deployment.”

Low-code development has evolved to take advantage of visual design tools—like drag-and-drop modelers and point-and-click interface creation—to enable the rapid creation, launch, use and change of powerful business apps.



But why did low-code come about?

In a word, mobile... The explosion of mobile, and the resulting change in consumer and (even) employee expectations. The sheer demand for digital services is growing faster than ever, and it does not appear to be slowing anytime soon.

And considering the hundreds, if not thousands of disjointed processes, systems, apps, solutions, etc. at any given organization, it's not surprising that even brands considered to be leaders struggle to keep pace.

Sound familiar?

So, how do you get ahead of the new digital expectations?

And how can you possibly stay there, with the incredible pace of change?

In a word, **SPEED**.

Think about it.

What if your IT organization could deliver solutions **FASTER** with **FEWER RESOURCES**?

With a low-code development platform it's possible. Low-code development platforms offer speedy, iterative delivery of new business applications. So you can build great apps. Innovate faster. And run smarter.

WHAT IS LOW-CODE DEVELOPMENT?

In 2014, Forrester started tracking a rapidly growing software category they labeled low-code development platforms. [Forrester defines low-code development platforms](#) as:

Platforms that enable rapid delivery of business applications with a minimum of hand-coding and minimal upfront investment in setup, training, and deployment.

To compete and win, the most innovative businesses are embracing low-code development to drive superior value for customers and employees. The best of these modern platforms enable you to innovate faster and work smarter. They also allow you to enhance customer experience, improve operational efficiency, and stay on top of ever-changing risks and regulations.

Low-code development fundamentally focuses on being hyper-responsive: it's about fast, iterative delivery of business applications. The ability to move faster than the competition. Which separates digital leaders from the rest of the pack.

In fact, the extraordinary speed of low-code fuels disruptive products. It allows organizations to build and deploy cutting-edge business apps faster than ever before.

It allows brands to rapidly adapt service delivery to consumer expectations.

Bottom line? Low-code development drives digital transformation.

THE LOW-CODE APPEAL

If your IT organization is like most, you have a backlog of projects and initiatives that never ends. The business has needs, and your team has trouble keeping up, what with everything else you must do to keep operations humming.

Yes, you can buy off-the-shelf solutions to meet business needs. But, then integration becomes an issue. Silos of data and process start to build up, and before you know it, you've created a bigger problem than you had before purchasing them.

So instead, you can choose to build your own. This has equal challenges with developers unable to keep pace with demand. You could try to add more developers, but talent is scarce and expensive.

ENTER LOW-CODE DEVELOPMENT

Low-code development addresses these challenges. With the right low-code platform, both citizen developers and IT developers alike can create enterprise-class apps, fast.

...today's low-code is about building, using, and changing enterprise-grade applications that help the largest organizations run smoothly.

And, while in its early stages, low-code development was focused on smaller, departmental apps with limited functionality, today's low-code is about building, using, and changing enterprise-grade applications that help the largest organizations run smoothly.

These modern low-code platforms represent the best opportunity to get ahead of the expectation curve. And stay there.

THE SECRET TO LOW-CODE SUCCESS

Low-code platforms accelerate digital transformation, enabling you to quickly build and deploy powerful business applications that work with your existing systems. Here's the secret formula for low-code's success:



EASE: Minimal coding, as in user-friendly, visual, drag-and-drop functionality

- Minimal coding required
- Minimal necessary upfront investment in setup, training, and deployment
- Removal of barriers between Business and IT to support continual collaboration and improvements
- Reduced Shadow IT, with tools so easy even citizen developers can create apps that play nicely in the IT environment
- Instant, native mobility with no extra time, effort, or resources required
- Visual, drag-and-drop development tools to make creating and changing enterprise apps easy and fast
- Seamless integration unifying all data, processes, apps, and existing systems
- Apps are simple and intuitive to use, providing a streamlined experience and working as expected on any device

SPEED: Hyper-responsiveness, the ability to go from idea to app immediately

- Ability to rapidly deliver applications in collaboration with business users increases IT's strategic impact
- Speed at the core: Ideas can become fully functional; Launch apps in minutes, not months
- Adapt quickly to evolving market conditions, customer expectations, new technologies, and more
- Stay ahead of the evolving expectations of prospects, customers, employees, and constituents
- In the cloud, low-code helps shed the IT maintenance burden
- Visual, drag-and-drop development tools make creating and changing enterprise apps easy and fast

POWER: Enterprise-grade, secure, scalable functionality

Though the opposite of what most think when they hear low-code, enterprise-grade low-code is what empowers your IT organization to fully meet the needs of the business and turbocharge innovation.

- Ability to build and launch unique apps that meet enterprise-level needs, not just departmental ones
- Ability to expand departmental apps to address enterprise-wide challenges, no matter how large
- Ability to roll out enterprise-apps across the organization, no matter how many people or how geographically diverse
- Security certifications, like PCI, HIPAA, SOC 2 and 3, and many more
- Evolve ideas and apps into sophisticated, powerful solutions tailored to customers, employees, and constituents
- Transform your organization, achieve competitive advantage, and become a digital leader
- Scale instantly for any project, program, or line-of-business, no matter how large

LOW-CODE: TRANSFORM IDEAS TO INNOVATION

Low-Code Development Platforms are the fastest way to transform ideas into innovation.

These platforms break down the traditional barriers between business and IT, allowing the rapid build, launch, and modification of powerful apps.

This model-driven development approach:

- Speeds app creation
- Unites legacy systems
- Gets ahead of Shadow IT
- Fosters the agile Business/IT collaboration needed to realize digital transformation's massive potential

The ability to quickly build, deploy, and evolve business applications is what separates digital leaders from those left-behind. This is low-code development...jet fuel for your digital transformation efforts.

DO I NEED LOW-CODE?

With digital expectations growing continually, your organization must evolve as well.

Embracing digitization is important. But, the more you embrace digitization, the more complex your IT architecture can become.

And, with expectations of immediacy from your business and customers alike, how can your IT organization possibly come out on top?

These are just two signs you may be able to take advantage of low-code development.

Here are some more signs you could benefit from using a low-code development platform:

- **Keeping up with demands from the business is difficult**

Your IT organization is constantly slammed with demands from the larger organization. The IT backlog is large...and perpetually growing. IT is falling behind.

- **Reliance on legacy apps**

Legacy applications drain efficiency...and your IT resources. They keep talented IT resources in a continual state of updates and fixes. Which leads to...

- **More time spent on maintenance than innovation**

With the need to keep legacy systems and applications operating properly, most IT teams spend nearly 80% of their time on maintenance, and only 20% on new innovation. Too little time focused on innovative solutions leads to...

- **Shadow IT**

Employees don't wait for IT. They're creating their own solutions—that are not a part of your architecture—in a world of Shadow IT that adds even more complexity to your business.

- **Scarce development resources**

You urgently need top-notch software developers. But it's getting increasingly harder to find and retain them.

- **Inability to keep pace**

You're on the hook to capitalize on new business opportunities. But you can't build apps fast enough to take advantage of them. This is a real headache. And not the kind you want to deal with when your company's growth is at stake.

- **Evolving digital expectations**

All those systems you installed five, ten, twenty years ago? They simply can't keep up with fast-changing digital expectations, making it harder to win new customers, as well as keep the ones you already have.

Does any of this sound familiar?

If so, a low-code development platform could be right for your organization.

...allowing the rapid build, launch, and change of powerful apps.

Low-Code Development Platforms transform ideas into innovation by removing the traditional barriers between business and IT and allowing the rapid build, launch, and change of powerful apps. The result? You reap the massive potential benefits of digital transformation.

FAST-TRACK YOUR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY, THE NAME OF THE GAME IS SPEED.

You know the deal. Short delivery times force your developers to find creative ways to meet your business priorities. But what if your business apps were easy-to-build and quick-to-deploy? Sounds simple enough, right?

With low-code development it is.

Yes, speedy app construction helps developers meet cutthroat deadlines without sacrificing quality. But don't be fooled. You can take advantage of the speed of low-code app construction and scale these apps across the largest organizations as well.

This may not have been true years ago, when low-code was just entering the market. But those days are long gone.

Today, the best [low-code development platforms](#) construct applications for complex processes expected to manage thousands of data points. In fact, it is the scalability of low-code platforms that has fueled its rapid rise in the digital marketplace.



LOW-CODE SECRET SAUCE: SPEED + POWER

There's no doubt that construction of low-code apps is made easier for the app creator. But low-code development platforms are also designed to support any app throughout its life-cycle.

This makes low-code development platforms extremely useful for CIOs looking to inject Agile development processes into their IT organizations.

Sure, low-code allows you to harness the power of expert developers, enabling them to create more apps in less time. But, it is also a viable tool for citizen or novice developers as well. Low-code development can turn a marketing manager into a marketing app creator. What's more, the apps that citizen developers build? They can be expanded and scaled across the organization. They are governed by IT. And they instantly become a standard piece of the enterprise architecture.

If you need a project management application for your [insert any department in your organization here](#) organization, low-code platforms can do it. Simply construct the applications you need.

Seamlessly integrate additional coding. And iterate as needed.

Flexible enough to meet your functional needs, and powerful enough for enterprise-class projects too, you don't give up control with low-code development. You can put your app administrators in the driver's seat. And allow them to set permissions.

That way, information is only shared with those who need it.

So, whether it's a simple app... or a complex app, with thousands of data points. Whether you're a novice or expert developer, it really doesn't matter. Low-code development has the speed and power to fit your needs.

FAST-TRACK YOUR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, WITH A PLATFORM DESIGNED FOR SPEED

With low-code digital transformation platforms, you can build and deploy apps faster than you thought possible. From construction to deployment, low-code development environments dramatically reduce the amount of time required to build, deploy, and change cutting-edge, powerful enterprise apps.

Low-code digital transformation platforms include features that make building, launching and changing enterprise apps, easy and fast. Here are a few key features of low-code:



Visual Modeling

Application development is expedited with visual representations of processes. These visual models are easier to understand than traditional displays. Which allows citizen developers to grasp application design easily.



Drag-and-drop interfaces

Typing out long strands of code to produce is not only difficult, but also extremely time consuming. Low-code allows simple drag-and-drop so developers can create applications visually, resulting in faster time-to-launch.



No-code options

No-code means just that...zero code required. Empower citizen developers to quickly transform ideas into business apps...with no-code app-building functionality.



Agile development

Accelerate time to value by rapidly creating and launching applications...then enhance and expand them over time. Low-code development means you can iterate apps, and release them as soon as functionality is built. Since change is so fast with low-code development, agile transformation is made easier.



Instant mobility

Build once, deploy everywhere. With the explosion of mobile devices like smart phones and tablets, applications must have cross-platform functionality standard in their design. With true low-code development, it should all happen behind the scenes automatically, with no extra effort, coding, or resources.



Declarative Tools

With low-code software, declarative tools are implemented through visual models and business rules. Removing the need to write custom-coding for these mitigates the difficulty of future changes or additions. And speeds development times.



Security and Scalability

Low-code development has had its knocks...mainly when it comes to security and scalability. While initially, low-code development was focused on smaller, departmental, and less critical capabilities, today's low-code should be enterprise-grade. The right platform has all the necessary security certifications in place, and proven experience with large-scale initiatives as well.

WHY CHOOSE APPIAN?

PACKAGED APPLICATIONS	Appian LOW-CODE PLATFORM	CUSTOM DEVELOPMENT
Quick to Deploy <i>-but-</i> Rigid & Constrained	THE RIGHT BALANCE OF	Completely Flexible <i>-but-</i> Slow to Build & Change
	SPEED <i>-and-</i> FLEXIBILITY	

LOW-CODE SUCCESS IN ACTION

When a [major wireless carrier](#) wanted to put 5,000 vehicles on the road across 30 major cities, and bring the retail experience directly to customers, they used a low-code platform. There was a real sense of urgency driving this implementation. Company officials wanted to introduce and scale the program before competitors got wind of it.

With low-code, these officials created a consolidated view of customers, service requests, contract terms and closest stores where technicians could pick up inventory.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing is that the new program went from concept to implementation in just three weeks. One week later, it was expanded to two cities. Then, to 30 cities shortly after that.

In an unrelated case, this same carrier decided to increase coverage in its mobile network, by deploying approximately 70,000 mini, cell-towers. But the legal and regulatory challenges were complex and enormous.

...with a low-code powered BPM solution, the company accelerated data collection, analysis and reporting times from 30 days to 7 days. Which enabled them to deploy a solution in just 3 weeks.

There were 8,000 business processes involved in provisioning each new cell site. And provisioning each site could take up to 30 days. But with a low-code powered BPM solution, the company accelerated data collection, analysis and reporting times from 30 days to 7 days. Which enabled them to deploy a solution in just 3 weeks.

Another case in point. A [major brand in the pharmaceutical industry](#) wanted to accelerate the speed of its clinical trial start-ups, a key competitive advantage for getting new drugs to market. Digital transformation leaders at the company decided to approach this challenge by automating the numerous steps involved in starting clinical trials.

Armed with a low-code solution, officials reduced clinical trial startup times from six months to just two months. The company was also able to reduce its exposure to risk, by ensuring the streamlined new process complied with the strict filing deadlines of regional governing bodies.

When you add it all up, low-code digital transformation is about automating process, and improving customer experience. But it's also about creating business value by innovating faster, getting to market faster, out-thinking, and outmaneuvering your competitors. Like these organizations, you come out on top when you step up to low-code.

Scan the web, and you'll see lots of hype about "best-in-class" app development platforms, and "market leadership" in low-code. Yes, it can be challenging to cut through all the hype.

But it's worth noting what [Gartner had to say about Appian](#):

"Appian customer references indicated a higher degree of satisfaction with the Appian platform, compared with other vendors surveyed... Appian customer references reported a median-time to-production implementation of less than three months, the lowest of any vendor surveyed..."

Gartner

And, in the [Forrester Wave: Low-Code Development Platforms, Q2 2016 Report](#),

Appian cracks the Leaders category as the only vendor to offer enterprise-grade process management, data management, and collaboration tools.

Something else to consider: How Appian stacked up against other low-code platforms, in a recent [PC Magazine review](#):

“...Appian was the most mature, easiest to use low-code platform we tested...”

What it all comes down to is this. If you want an industry-leading low-code platform that will help you fast-track your digital transformation. If you want to innovate faster and work smarter. If you want to compete and win, Appian is the perfect solution.

Appian

Appian delivers an enterprise platform for digital transformation that enables organizations to revolutionize their customer experience, optimize their business operations, and master global risk and compliance. Powered by industry leading Business Process Management (BPM) and Case Management capabilities, Appian's low-code approach radically accelerates the time it takes to build and deploy powerful, modern applications, on-premises or in the cloud.

For more information, visit www.appian.com

