How low-code technology accelerates digital transformation

Key findings:

- How low-code technology can fill the IT delivery gap
- Why the rise of Citizen Development will disrupt the core principles of the business technology landscape
- How today’s low-code platforms enable transparency and boost efficiency across all major business units
- What are the core strengths of low-code technology that have a direct impact on the Digital Transformation process
Many digital transformation leaders find themselves in a painful and challenging situation. On one hand, ever-growing customer expectations and market pace force companies to move faster and respond to the changes more readily.

On the other, organizations’ ability to get things done quickly in order to support the ongoing Digital Transformation is slowed by the complexity of the technology environment and inability to swiftly implement necessary changes. Digital environment requires rapid change and deep integration into diverse ecosystems. For companies seeking to become more agile and accelerate their strategy execution, a low-code platform tends to be an effective way to speed up application delivery. This improves IT’s ability to respond to business demands, shortens time-to-value and accelerates digital transformation.

As the title denotes, low-code platforms have little in the way of hand coding, but accomplish building apps through declarative and visual tools that describe what the app should do. In traditional app development, the code for business applications is written manually (hand-coding), while designing apps with low-code platform requires little manual coding, if any. Instead, developers use an intuitive visual interfaces with drag-and-drop capabilities to design visual models of an app’s business logic. With low-code technology generation, compilation and deployment of the code are also automatic.

By 2020, at least 50 percent of all new business applications will be created with high-productivity toolsets, such as low-code and no-code application development platforms. (Gartner)

Through 2021, market demand for app development will grow at least five times faster than IT capacity to deliver it. (Gartner)

Forrester calls the Low Code market a “high growth” area, and predicts it will grow to over $10 Billion in 2019.
Digitalization requires agility, flexibility and quick change implementation.

What are the challenges your organization faces in building custom applications using traditional coding with programming languages, frameworks, and middleware?

- Difficult to meet business requirements on time: 31
- Lack of flexibility: 21
- Takes too long to update apps: 20
- High costs: 17
- Difficult to meet business requirements on budget: 16
- Lack of qualified staff: 14
- Poor customer experience: 6
- Poor quality: 6

Have low-code development platforms addressed these issues?

- Significant improvement: 21
- Notable improvement: 19
- Marginal improvement: 1

Forrester Research
The inherent value of a low-code development platform is that it brings IT and business together, enabling more rapid, iterative, and collaborative development and change implementation. Today, the market offers various types of low-code platforms that feature numerous high-efficient tools:

- **Visual modeling tools** — these drastically simplify the application development and reduce the amount of coding needed to build apps.
- **BPM capabilities** — tools that enable users effectively design, execute and optimize business processes and build business logics.
- **Out-of-the-box components** — customizable software, templates, widgets and plugins are offered to help accelerate development.
- **Full application lifecycle management** — with low-code platforms businesses can not only facilitate app development but also streamline the deployment and enable easy updates and maintenance to align IT with changing business needs.
- **Scalability capabilities** — rapid provision from prototype to production with the ability to easily scale the development capacities with minimum expenses.
- **IT approved** — the support of enterprise-grade security and governance features.

There are **four common use cases for low-code development**

- Innovation
- Customer experience
- Operational efficiency
- Legacy migration
The idea behind low code technology is to turn more business users into ‘citizen developers’. Introduced by Gartner, the term ‘citizen developers’ stands for users who create new business applications for consumption by others using development and runtime environments sanctioned by corporate IT. Empowered by low-code technology, citizen developers can make their work smoother and more efficient building their own customized solutions with low-code or even no-code approach.

Using low-code platforms, citizen developers can make a tremendous contribution to a more successful outcomes of organization’s digital transformation initiatives:

- Solve various types of business challenges they would previously have ‘put up’ with
- Save the time for IT department so they can work on more complex strategic projects
- Boost efficiency
- Enable transparency across various types of business operations
- Cut operational costs
- Shrink the IT-skill gap
- Design and optimize business processes
- Shorten time-to-value

2021 Year

Through 2021, market demand for app development will grow at least five times faster than IT capacity to deliver it. (Gartner)

68%

Only 8% of respondents had traditional coding skills (Java, .NET, C++, Ruby on Rails and so on), yet, 68% considered developing apps part of their day job. (Intuit)

96%

of respondents identified themselves as app builders, but only 21% identified themselves as working in traditional IT. (Intuit)
On an operational level low code tools are effective and applicable to larger scale of tasks. On a tactical and strategic level it is easier to find a performer since it does not demand profound coding skills and it is easier to form the teams who would perform the tasks and track their efficiency thanks to powerful visualization capabilities.

With the low-code tools, you, as a business user, can more easily and better understand the process and tasks. A business user has a better and clearer overview of the development process including, who is doing what, and what has been done or what needs to be done. In addition, a business user can quicker provide developers with the feedback on the development process, identify bottlenecks and inefficiencies. Transparent development process leads to receiving better results.

Low-code tools decompose complex technical tasks and terms, making it much easier to understand and work with for average business user.

86% of businesses said they have a difficult time finding the technical talent they need to fill job roles. Because of this, 83% of those polled said they are struggling to innovate, creating revenue losses and similar business challenges because there isn’t enough staff available to create the solutions today’s enterprise users need. (Indeed)
Low-code concepts have been used extensively for app development as a more productive approach because they allow analysts without specific code knowledge to quickly get an understanding of the project workflows and, with the help of visualization tools design business processes more intuitively. Even the logic of the application, not just its visual part, can be created with this type of low-code platform.

In case of low-code BPM, there’s already a previous history of visual tools, but things have reached a more progressive level now, precisely because months of training are no longer required, which reduces execution of tasks that were previously performed over months in traditional BPM platforms or development environments to a few days. This helps organizations enable better levels of agility and innovation to support the Continuous Improvement concept, which is a core pillar of almost any ongoing Digital Transformation process.

Low-code BPM platforms do away with these limitations by leveraging modern HTML5 based UI with complex scenario and rule management capabilities. Low-code BPM also features powerful capabilities for business rules management, sophisticated Case Management for orchestrating unstructured processes, easy to use integration protocols such as Rest API, Web Services, and DB Connectors and powerful analytical capabilities.

Companies plan to spend $1.2 trillion on digital transformation in 2017, less than half (44%) of IT decision makers are extremely confident in their organization’s ability to achieve the vision (PointSource).

CIOs spend 18% of their budgets in support of digitalization, and analysts expect budgets for digital transformation to increase to 28% in the next two years. (Gartner)

68% of companies identify agility as one of their most important initiatives. (Forbes)
While low-code technology creates a tremendous value in terms of enabling better transparency across various business units, it also provides numerous additional benefits that together build a solid foundation for successful outcomes of Digital Transformation initiatives:

- **More resources to distribute the load** — by sharing the responsibility for business application development across more resources at the organization, low-code and no-code platforms help reduce the strain on understaffed IT departments. This enables them to dedicate more time to business-critical apps and projects. Low-code and no-code technology empower those closest to the business to create solutions that help employees increase productivity by getting more work done more easily.

- **The freedom to experiment and innovate** — the ability to swiftly test the viability of multiple solutions across business processes, data sources, operational workflows and end-users, and derive feedback on performance, features and ease-of-use allows for a more responsive analysis and optimization of processes leading to more successful outcomes and faster user adoption. For organizations actively undergoing digital transformation, this becomes a critical factor towards organizational success in the immediate future.

**45%**

An amazing 45% of companies use 100 or more applications on a weekly basis, and about a third of those use 1,000 or more. (Forrester)

**2020 Year**

By 2020 at least half of all new IT line-of-business applications will be created through low-code platforms. (Gartner)
Benefits of employing low-code platforms

More targeted outcomes — developers and/or citizen developers have the power to quickly design their own solutions in accordance with their exact specifications and requirements, and update them on-the-fly, for a more competitive and agile business.

Rapid, cost-efficient delivery — low-code and no-code platforms can be used by both business and IT to deliver solutions faster for immediate impact. This is especially true of those that feature built-in integration functionality, out-of-the-box capabilities, and capabilities for business process management.

Helps to fight shadow IT — when IT doesn’t provide business users with the solutions they need, they start seeking their own solutions. With the rise of a tremendous SaaS availability, these solutions aren’t hard to find. Low code platforms help businesses eliminate this problem as they give users the ability to design their own solutions for their specific business needs, while enabling IT to control the data and user accesses.

A consistent experience across platforms and devices — adaptive development and design inherent in many low-code platforms allow organizations to more effectively track the effectiveness of built solutions across different devices.

What is the primary driver for using low-code platforms within your organization?

- 51% — Increase responsiveness to the business
- 20% — Reduce current IT backlog
- 13% — Avoid the challenges of finding the skilled resources
- 12% — Reduce maintenance of existing platforms
- 4% — Other
To be armed to meet the challenges posed by digital transformation era and remain competitive, organizations have to create an environment that enables agility and flexibility of the internal workflows and customer-facing operations. Powered by intelligent low-code technology, organizations can gain the needed tools to transform and innovate faster which generates new growth opportunities and provides a significant competitive advantage.
INTELLIGENT LOW-CODE PLATFORM FOR BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT

Bpm’online provides unique synergy of BPM technologies and CRM for sales, marketing, service to empower organizations to accelerate time-to-strategy execution. The beauty and the core value of bpm’online products is the agility to change processes faster than ever and develop their own solutions with powerful low-code capabilities. Users love bpm’online’s engaging interface with a social look and feel, free from redundant information to keep them focused on what’s relevant. Today, the company serves thousands of customers worldwide.

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