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Why Low-Code Is the Way To Go For Enterprise App Development

Gartner Research has presented some striking, data-backed predictions for the future of application development. The IT management organization predicts that by 2024, low code platforms will represent 65% of the field and that 75% of those companies will use at least four low-code development tools.
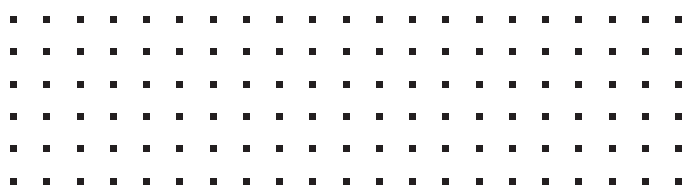
Even today, we can see the impact of low-code on the industry. 69% of IT leaders already use low-code platforms to achieve digital transformation. There's no surprise why; with the increasing costs of app development, companies are looking for more agile and easy-to-use ways to approach development.

Modern app development benefits the most from platforms that offer high agility, broad compatibility, and predictable costs. It's for these reasons why low-code has already found its way into web design and will continue toward other fields of programming.

With everything going digital, it's impossible for a business to keep up without using low-code for its internal processes. Creating software solutions for enterprises has become an easier feat to take on with this new trend in app development. Let's discuss more about low code and its relevant key terms.

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What Is Low-Code? Everything You Need To Know

Low-code is an application development platform that almost anybody can use regardless of his technical knowledge. It reduces the need for technical coding or computer language skills, opting instead for essentially a "drag and drop" interface for building enterprise apps piece-by-piece.

These "citizen developers" are becoming more commonplace in the industry for improving internal processes. 80% of companies say that they are giving IT departments more breathing room.

What exactly does low-code provide for an organization?

- A cloud environment that serves the high demands of enterprises with regards to security, performance, accessibility, and reliability.

- The flexibility to create powerful applications that support complicated business-grade integrations and process orchestrations.

- The opportunity to collect insightful measurements on the value of your business applications with software designed to provide the best ROI.

What's the Difference Between Low-Code and No Code?

No code is accessible by anybody. A no code platform requires no code to use, but this lack of coding often means less customization. A true "drag and drop" interface is a staple of no code, enabling a user to piece together a program like a puzzle.

Low-code is similar in many ways, but still allows for some complex coding when needed. It also lowers the "barrier to entry" for less experienced developers. While you still need some technical knowledge to excel in the field, it's an excellent starting point for learning developers. Almost a quarter of new users of low-code had zero coding experience.
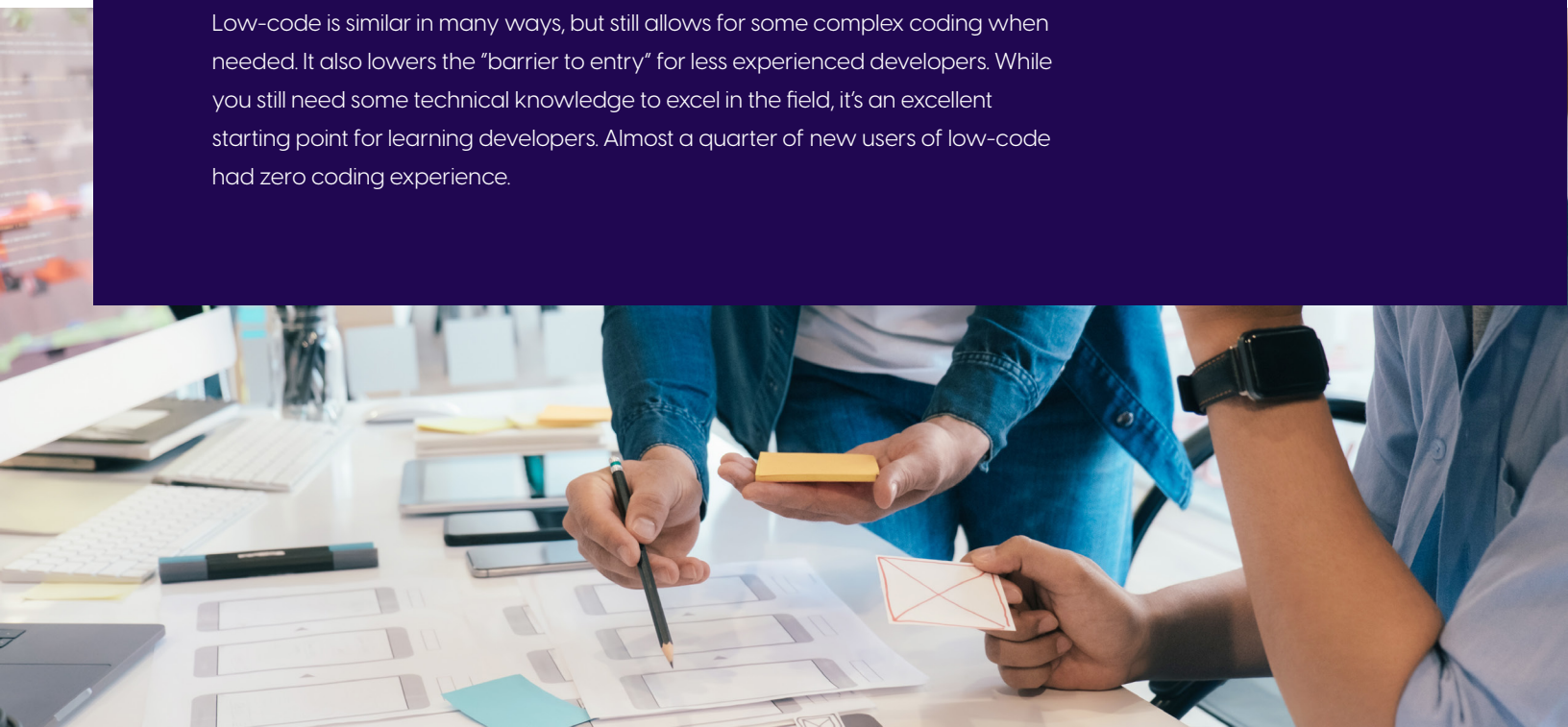
Low-Code Platform Use Cases

This type of platform is applicable to virtually any kind of software development. Low-code users can create any general purpose app, either the front-end or the back-end, for the needs of almost any business. Some specific examples of use cases include the following.

Streamlining Business Processes

A common purpose for using low-code is automating business processes that were previously done manually. These tasks included filling out forms, organizing workflows, dealing with processing requests, and handling integrations among other apps.

If you're looking to streamline approvals or just transition to a digital workflow, think of low-code as your key to business process management (BPM).

Working With Databases

Low-code can be used to pull data from internal databases. It's an ideal solution if you need to feed a large amount of data through a server without much time to implement the code.

Mobile Development

A specific instance of low-code is the Mobile Application Development Platform (MADP). As the name suggests, it assists developers to code and test mobile applications for smartphones and tablets. As mobile devices come in many sizes and screen resolutions, porting your software from one device to another is much faster and easier with low-code.

Trends Driving the Adoption of Low-Code Platforms

It's no secret that evolutions in technology have enabled new ways to handle enterprise-grade application development. These trends are what we think the future holds for low-code.

Adoption Is Inevitable

Both new and existing businesses cannot afford to ignore the strong benefits of low-code, so we can expect adoption rates to rise intensely over the next few years. Whether your stack is technically knowledgeable or not, the statistics show that it will soon start using low-code as well.

That's because 60% of custom business apps are created outside of the IT department, and 30% of the employees responsible have limited technical experience. Low-code is the perfect tool for democratizing development, allowing even teams with low coding knowledge to engage with the process.

The continued high demand for apps will accelerate adoption. 42% of IT professionals plan on creating new software solutions in the future, but a slow development time of 5 months per app is becoming a problem. Low-code has all the functions from dashboards to tablets for creating powerful apps efficiently.

In sum, the high demand for business solutions is rapidly outpacing current capabilities of development stacks. Low-code hopes to empower more teams to join in, enabling your talent to focus on more important parts of the business.

A Shift To ML-Focused Services and Applications

If you use GMail, you've probably noticed how the program auto-completes your sentences, reminds you to follow up on emails, auto-recommends guests, and asks you about potentially missing attachments.

Applications are getting "smarter" at enhancing the user experience like this. Your staff will appreciate new features that do intelligent tasks, like making vital information more visible or highlighting deals that are likely to close.

Software powered by low-code is fully capable of performing these small but significant improvements. This ML-based trend also serves cybersecurity: threat detection methods learn how your company approaches cybersecurity and ensures that you have full visibility into what's happening at all times.

Cloud Adoption Will Emphasize Connectivity

Business apps do not operate in a vacuum. There's a lot of talk regarding connecting and integrating your platforms, and low-code is how you can stick to standards and secure your path to smooth integration. Zapier is an excellent example of this strategy.

Many enterprises use low-code to adhere to standards, allowing integrations to occur easily without spending too much time coding. Databases, for instance, are standardized with SQL. Transferring data between systems will become more commonplace as well. Finally, consider development new integrations with databases and APIs for reading and writing functions.

Make Your Vital Data More Accessible

As organizations grow, it can become difficult to have full insight into what's going on with all the data being passed around from department to department. Having everything in a central location is the best way to create value and make informed business decisions from your data.

Give all your departments the tools they need by adopting a more agile development cycle with low-code. Making improvements over time in this way is superior to the traditional method of development, which can take several months to build out a functionality.

Free Up Time For Dedicated Coders

The goal of adopting low-code standards isn't to remove the need for coding entirely. Modern companies can never escape the need for programming skill. Rather, they can remove the pain points that stall innovation and progress.

Low-code enables non-coders to do the majority of the work so that dedicated programmers can focus on more important tasks. For example, a developer can use Sembl to merge functions and data and upload the resulting code to the platform, which can then be used by non-developers to hook into tables.

There's also the concept of low-code marketplaces that could make powerful functionality even more shareable and accessible.

Questions to Ask When Considering Low-Code

Do the benefits of low-code adoption sound appealing to you? They should. But before you make the plunge, it's important to ask yourself the following questions:

What do you want the low-code platform to do?

Who will use the platform?

Can the platform scale with your needs?

What data storage requirements do you have?

How does the service bill? Is it seat or usage-based?

Will you require a user account to interact with the applications?

Does it have different tiers (e.g. users vs. creators)?

Knowing what your exact needs are is the first step to finding the ideal low-code platform that will fit your needs and empower your teams.

What Benefits Does Low-Code Development Offer?

The statistics we mentioned at the beginning are not without backing. The benefits of low-code are making it a more and more attractive solution as an agile development platform, especially as enterprise becomes more competitive every year.

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O1 Mobilizing Non-Coding Teams

The lower barrier to entry of low-code allows even teams with limited technical knowledge to participate in app development, freeing up time for IT teams and programmers in your business.

Low-code also makes sure that internal applications are continuing development. You cannot afford to ignore these apps, which usually handle vital tasks.

Keep your low-level stacks engaged while opening up new opportunities for higher-level ones to pursue more exciting projects. Low-code generally works well for boosting employee morale for this reason.

O2 Enforcing a Collaborative Approach

Today's jobs are far too large to do alone. That's why collaboration is such a hot topic, and coding is no exception. Low-code platforms turn app creation into a collaborative effort, as it's easier to engage all sorts of employees in the process to offer feedback and share ideas.

O3 Boosting Employee Retention

Finding skilled programmers is a challenging and expensive endeavor. The demand is high, and enterprises are often competing for the options in the market. Hiring managers always try to retain talent for this reason, yet it can be difficult to keep someone on board if all you offer are "boring" tasks.

The low-code trend makes it easier to give higher-level employees more interesting and innovative tasks by outsourcing the smaller jobs for other staff members.

O4 O4. Simplifying Integration

Everyone's looking for integrated experiences and data nowadays, and low-code platforms are ready to take on the task. These tools are excellent for building integrations between apps. Connect the features of your business together to optimize your internal processes.

O5 Achieving Scalability and Reduced Costs

Did you know that low-code platforms reduce development time of applications by 90%? Eliminating steps of the process frees up time and resources for the rest of your organization.

The average salary of a software developer is over $100,000 today. A small business on a tight budget won't always find it reasonable to hire dedicated programmers, but the beauty of low-code applications is that almost anyone can do it.

Less code means faster development, fewer issues, less time spent on creating applications, and less money spent. In turn, you get more apps, more money, and more time for your employees to work on other projects.

O6 Empowering Innovation & Modernization

Low-code helps promote up-to-date coding practices. You get the opportunity to leverage ML and AI to drive further innovation and new features. For instance, one methodology is to embrace the cloud as a new foundation for future software projects.

O7 Simplifying Maintenance

Apps need to change to match up with current market conditions and the offerings of your business. Constant support and maintenance is much easier and less expensive to provide when you have a low-code platform thanks to the "drag and drop" nature of development.

O8 Streamlining App Development

Embracing low-code means that you have a single, central platform for app development, meaning there is no need for several different programming languages or environments in the business. Everyone can stay on the same page, which boosts employee familiarity with the work.

O8 O9. Deploying on Multiple Platforms

Do you develop for multiple platforms? Whether it's different desktop operating systems or different models of smartphones, most enterprises must rely on multiple environments. Align your programming practices with all the platforms you must support with low-code.

Low Code Challenges:
What You Need to Know

You Might Not Know What Your Employees Are Building

Or, your employees might not even know what they're building. While low-code is easy to use, you can't just let anybody use it to make applications in your company. It may be worth consulting with advisors or keeping an eye on internal activities when you're working with low-code.

Your Data May Not Be Secure

Collaboration is essential, but it comes with a new risk of reduced cybersecurity. Having more developers on board means you need to keep track of who is using what sensitive resources.

Also, look at how your data is shared on your low-code platform. Do the terms of the agreement put any restrictions on what you put out?

You Will Need a Cloud-Based Workflow

Shifting to the cloud can be a challenge, and not too many organizations have fully embraced it yet. Low-code setups usually do not run well on-premise, so embracing a cloud-native mindset is part of the job.

Keep in mind that some cloud systems have restrictions on where you can store your data. For instance, one service provider might be limited to the US and Canada only.

Tips For Getting Started With Low-Code Platforms

Now that a low-code approach is in your sights, what are some tips you can use to streamline the transition? Take some time to get acquainted with your new platform, and you'll find you'll draw more value from it.

Find Out What Quick Improvements You Can Make

What small tasks are slowing down your internal processes the most? Can low-code solutions fix them quickly? Look for these "low-hanging fruit" jobs when you first start up.

It's worth going through the list of tasks and finding the ones that can be finished in a short amount of time. Get these tasks automated first.

Find Out Who Should Be Involved

Low-code is all about getting more staff members on board with app development. That means more experts in fields like data analysis and operations will take on the task of creating useful tools for the organization.

It's more important than ever to outline the roles and responsibilities of the team members. Who are the stakeholders, and what user personas will be involved in the new low-code programs? If the users can work independently, you can start improving internal processes without limits.

Keep Your Eye On the Ball

We've mentioned before that low-code cannot replace traditional software development entirely. The idea is to dedicate your main coders toward more important projects and leave the internal process work for non-coding stacks. Keep this mindset to ensure you receive the most benefit from low-code platforms.

Continue to Make Cybersecurity a Priority

The non-coders who use the low-code system likely don't know secure coding practices, so it's up to you to build awareness in your organization. Keep DevSecOps teams active during the change and ensure that low-code creators are aware of your high standards of security.

Also take time to understand the limitations and weaknesses of each software component you use. Because low-code development mainly consists of picking and combining parts of software, you have to rely on the security of the tools you choose.

Some platforms do have their own set of security and logging tools for this purpose. Ask about the options you have when you pick a service provider.

Start Small and Work Your Way Up

Don't try to get everything done on the first day after adopting low-code. Aim for a focused problem in your office that does not deal with highly sensitive data or outcomes. Once you've gotten into the swing of things, add larger tasks to the plate.

Draw the most benefit you can from your new workflow while still mitigating risk by managing your expectations. Remember that these applications you make become more business-critical over time

Stay Agile and Always Look at Feedback

Low-code is naturally an agile platform. Continue to have feedback sessions regularly, and request mockups and prototypes to see what your new applications will do in the field.

Feedback at every step of the way is essential to creating meaningful apps from low-code. Don't just wait until all the tools are ready to go before asking these questions.

Conclusion

There's no denying that the low-code movement has arrived. Successful companies will need to embrace the shift to low-code if they want to remain competitive.

The traditional, slow development process isn't compatible with the agility required in today's digital workplace. With low-code, companies can significantly decrease the time it takes to build the internal tools they need to empower their teams. Add to that the enhanced cost-savings and overall usability of low-code development platforms, and it's clear why the low-code movement isn't going anywhere.

Are you looking to learn more about how low-code can transform your internal app development processes? Learn more about how Sembl is leveling the playing field by helping enterprise companies mobilize their non-coding teams to develop best-in-class apps that provide measurable value.