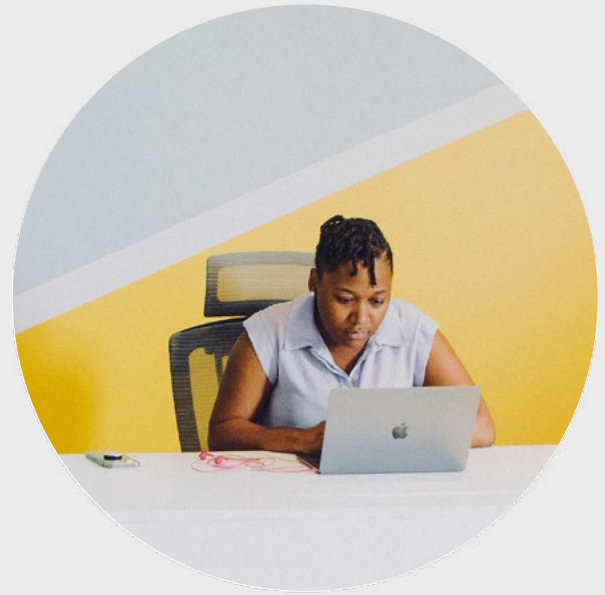# Today's Process Automation is Built on Low Code and Integration
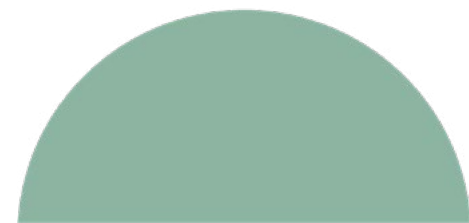
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Innovation and digital transformation are a matter of growth and survival for today's businesses. Companies must adapt faster than ever to rapid change in market conditions by creating new digital business models and associated processes. They must also transform existing manual, inefficient, unstructured processes into automated digital workflows to unlock productivity and deliver great experiences to customers and employees. This is the essence of process automation.

Because of the accelerated pace of change, businesses must automate processes orders of magnitude faster and at greater scale than possible with previous approaches. This is true for both customer-facing business processes that drive top-level growth, and employee-facing work processes that increase productivity and efficiency and improve the bottom line.

Today, successful process automation initiatives need to meet the needs of a number of business stakeholders, including:

• **Process owners and functional leaders throughout the business.** Professionals in these roles are looking to increase their process visibility, improve operational performance within their business unit, and better manage risk and compliance. They are focused on the transformation or innovation possibilities within their function. They believe that process optimization with IT governance and without bypassing enterprise systems of record such as ERP and CRM, is crucial to meeting their goals.

• **Cross-functional transformation team leaders.** These leaders take a broader view. They are looking for ways to use process transformation as part of larger digital transformation and modernization initiatives. Their primary goal is to develop innovation capability and improve the organization's agility. They need to break through the functional silos that will otherwise undermine their efforts.

• **Cross-functional operational excellence team leaders.** Often in support of the vision and initiatives established by the transformational team leaders, these leaders understand how to improve quality, increase efficiency, reduce risk, and improve and simplify compliance. Their goal is to help the business run like a well-oiled machine, and optimizing processes is one way to do that. They must bridge the gap between functional units and organizations.

• **Process designers and business process analysts.** As the process automation creators, they are concerned primarily with speed while safeguarding app quality and platform stability. They want technology and features that reduce the time it takes to automate a process from months to hours, without sacrificing quality or stability. Platforms that enable team collaboration and reuse, that integrate without friction, and that help them assemble and manage cross-enterprise, multi-system workflows without the need for code will help them meet their goals.

• **Knowledge/process workers**. These employees are primarily concerned with their productivity. They need visibility into the processes they work on so they can easily understand next steps, downstream dependencies, and see their progress. A single, end-to-end view of the processes and the ability to take guided, best next actions in any system that is part of the process from a single workspace will greatly improve their experience.

Many of these stakeholders have experience with different approaches to improving operational performance, increasing efficiency, and reducing costs. But these approaches don't deliver on their promise for a number of reasons.

Business process management (BPM) is a perfect example. BPM promised to deliver faster, more manageable processes for stakeholders. Cost overruns and unrealized value, however, left many BPM users disillusioned. BPM was not developed to respond to the challenges facing modern businesses, especially when it comes to speed.

Other approaches failed because they put most of the power over processes in the hands of users who weren't themselves close to or familiar with the processes. Others couldn't deliver the types of modern, simple user experiences that encourage process adoption.

Process Automation for Today's Reality

The recent pandemic has shown how quickly long-standing business models can be upended, requiring organizations to pivot faster with new processes and new business models. Success requires faster, more agile execution with more automation delivered through software applications. Businesses need a level of flexibility in their operational processes that they struggle to deliver with the platforms, tools, and methods currently at their disposal. And employees and consumers alike are demanding higher levels of digital engagement and integration across channels.

In addition, compliance and regulatory requirements are increasing the demand for visibility and auditability. Many businesses find these demands in direct conflict with their need for speed and agility.

Finally, industry consolidation and M&A activity require solutions that help integrate and optimize processes across functions and business units. M&A activity, in the short term, often ends up re-creating the types of data and application silos businesses are working hard to eliminate.

The stakeholders mentioned above are looking to improve their process and operational efficiency in the midst of these challenges. They want the ability to collaborate with IT to increase the speed of their projects. They're interested in tools with a low initial investment they can use to prove value. From there, some stakeholders will seek to test and experiment before exploring large-scale, cross-functional process optimization projects.

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The Low-Code Approach to Process Automation

Low-code development platforms can help each of these stakeholders meet their goals around process optimization, innovation, and transformation. Low-code platforms simplify and accelerate process optimization by:

- Lowering the cost of process automation via reduced CapEx or OpEx
- Expanding the types of applications organizations can create internally
- Bringing more people into the application creation process and reduce reliance on high-cost, scarce, specialized developers
- Serving broad use cases, from simple departmental processes to complex, mission-critical process-centric applications.
- Faster solution concept-to-production-to-business outcomes

Low Code is Necessary but not Sufficient

For the leaders listed among the business stakeholders, the core requirements of process automation include leveraging existing systems of record where organizations are heavily invested, and bridging the gaps between silos for cross-functional processes. Meeting these requirements requires integration and workflow together, natively, in a single low-code platform.

Without integration capabilities, process stakeholders will be unable to solve their automation and redesign challenges. Integration is what brings together the data that resides in enterprise systems of record like CRM and ERP and automates actions in whatever system is part of the process — communication, collaboration, productivity, infrastructure — into process-centric, end-to-end digital workflows.

Low-Code Process Automation with ServiceNow App Engine & IntegrationHub

ServiceNow was among the first to recognize the importance of a low-code integration platform for process automation. IntegrationHub, together with App Engine on the Now Platform, simplifies and scales cross-system process automation on a single low-code workflow application platform.

Business process owners, designers, and analysts can collaborate and assemble and manage cross-enterprise multi-system workflows without a single line of code in Process Automation Designer, a Kanban-style experience for rapid, no-code process automation. Process analysts and other low-code developers build process activities or steps that involve external systems with IntegrationHub spokes, run-ready no-code connectors built and maintained by ServiceNow for more than 150 external systems representing more than 3,000 integration and automation actions. Process owners are able to assemble and manage workflows that range from relatively simple departmental use cases, all the way up to cross-enterprise, multi-system, mission-critical workflows.

Knowledge workers get instant visibility into progress and next steps in any system, with playbooks that provide guided actions and in-line contextual data in a single workspace.

More broadly, any low-code developer can rapidly generate complete process automation apps with native mobile and Web UIs, that integrate with and automate actions in external apps with a few clicks in a guided studio experience, leveraging integration flow templates.

For process-centric stakeholders that need to act quickly and deliver rich, easy-to-use experiences, the combination of low-code workflow application development with App Engine and low-code integration and automation with IntegrationHub on a single low-code platform with IT governance and stability is crucial for success. It enables process automation and optimization at the speed and scale needed for organizations to survive and succeed in today's environment of rapid change.

To learn more visit **https://www.servicenow.com/products/process-automation-designer.html**