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Mind-Shift: Building Digital Business Applications At Speed And Scale

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FORRESTER OPPORTUNITY SNAPSHOT: A CUSTOM STUDY COMMISSIONED BY ISIS PAPYRUS | NOVEMBER 2020

Business Empowerment: Removing Roadblocks To Digital Future

Organizations are focused on digital transformation and customer experience (CX) across a wide array of industries. And while process automation is a critical enabler to meet these strategic objectives, firms must react with greater speed and agility. For example, IT departments are backlogged and take too long to respond to business users' application development needs. Low-code development enables business users to deliver software applications quickly and in closer alignment with business needs, driving responsiveness to rapidly changing business conditions and innovation.

ISIS Papyrus commissioned Forrester Consulting to explore the state of the market, specifically focused on process automation/ optimization, business modernization, and the delivery of new business applications.

Key Findings



Business process automation drives strategic business goals. But traditional approaches to automation fail due to slow development, stretched IT resources, and output that misses business objectives.



Virtually all struggle to automate processes due to misalignment between IT and the business, lengthy/inefficient processes, and a lack of tools to move the needle on automation initiatives.



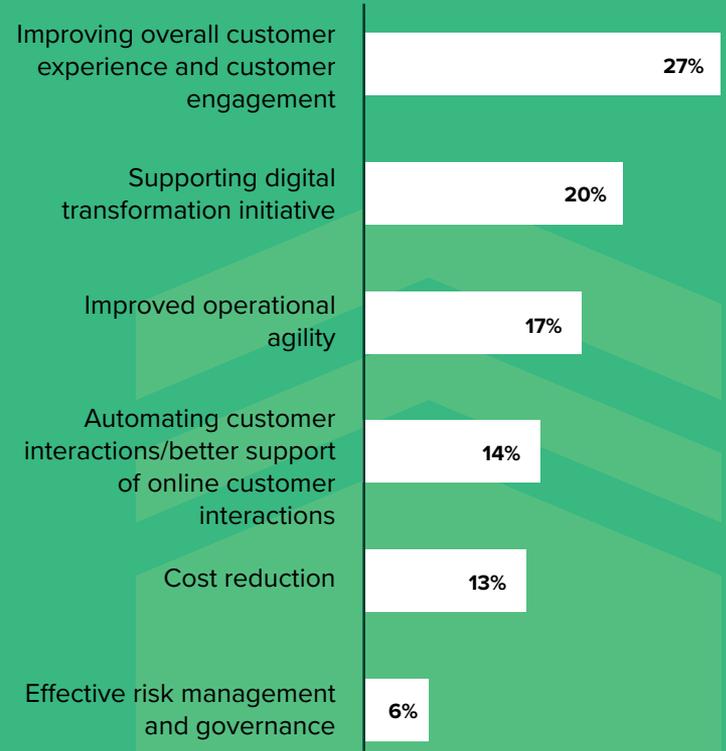
To successfully compete in the digital business, firms need to invest in technologies that support fast development of digital applications and put the business in control to self-serve its needs.

Process Automation Advances Strategic Priorities

Process automation and optimization have moved away from their roots of cost reduction and have become integral to supporting and driving strategic business objectives.¹ As our study shows, the two holy grails of business goals — improving CX and supporting digital transformation initiatives — are the biggest drivers for organizations' business process automation and digitization efforts today.

Decision-makers in our study are prioritizing: 1) becoming more responsive to business requests (85%); 2) enabling business users to self-serve (76%); 3) shortening the time-to-market for new business applications (74%); and 4) reducing the backlog on digital business applications (66%). By focusing on these priorities, companies will move the needle on their business modernization initiatives.

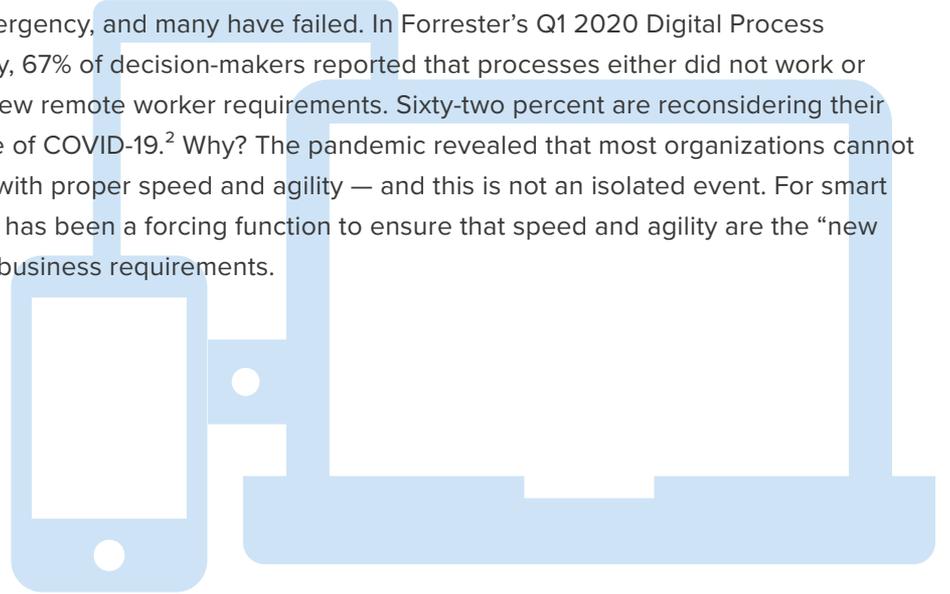
“What is the primary driver for your business process automation/optimization and digitization efforts today?”



You Will Not Meet Your Strategic Goals With Traditional Application Development

To drive true change, organizations must automate (digitize) at scale. But many of them, especially traditional businesses, struggle to meet the process and automation imperative. Traditional software development is too slow, the IT resources required are too scarce and face too many requests, and the output often does not align with business objectives. These traditional approaches to automation are failing and will continue to fail.

To further complexify the situation, the COVID-19 pandemic has tested every organization's ability to respond quickly to an emergency, and many have failed. In Forrester's Q1 2020 Digital Process Automation COVID-19 Survey, 67% of decision-makers reported that processes either did not work or were suboptimal in light of new remote worker requirements. Sixty-two percent are reconsidering their process automation because of COVID-19.² Why? The pandemic revealed that most organizations cannot react to unexpected events with proper speed and agility — and this is not an isolated event. For smart organizations, the pandemic has been a forcing function to ensure that speed and agility are the “new normal” in responding to all business requirements.



Lack Of Resources And Collaboration Stymies Progress With Process Automation

Constrained by a lack of available skills and coordination between IT and the business, 95% of decision-makers say their firms struggle to automate processes, due to:

- **Misalignment.** IT and business users are not aligned. Common pitfalls include language barriers, a fear of investing in costly projects that do not meet business requirements, and a lack of ownership of the end-to-end process.
- **Time.** Lengthy and inefficient processes are common, largely due to the time-consuming discovery of business requirements, the lengthiness of developing in current toolsets, and strained resources to develop applications.
- **Tools.** Business process automation leaders lack the right tools, flexibility with legacy systems, and consistent governance.

Organizations Struggle To Automate Business Processes Due To Misalignment, Time-Constraints, And A Lack Of Tools



Misalignment

Findings show that IT and business users are not aligned. A fear of investing in costly projects that do not meet business requirements, language barriers, and a lack of ownership of the end-to-end process are some of the common pitfalls.

Time

Lengthy and inefficient processes are common. The time-consuming discovery of business requirements, the lengthiness of developing in current toolsets, and strained resources to develop applications are all contributors.



Tools

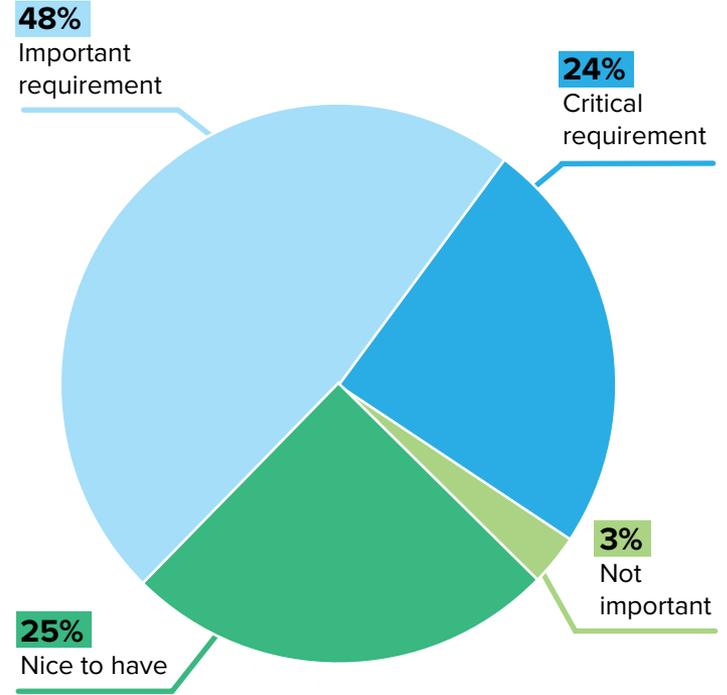
Business process automation leaders lack the right tools, flexibility with legacy systems, and consistent governance.

Bring Automation Closer To The Business

IT teams are unwilling or unable to create new business applications that meet business needs in a timely and cost-effective manner. To progress with digital transformation initiatives, organizations need more than just IT teams. Empowering business users with low-code development tools enables organizations to meet their objectives faster.

Nearly three-quarters of business process automation leaders say that business-empowered application development is an important/critical requirement to meet their objectives with digital business applications. Business application development tools such as low-code development solutions achieve exactly that, as they allow organizations to embrace a business-first approach, enabling business users to develop their own business applications and define their own business value streams without having to rely on IT.

“How important is business-empowered application development (e.g., low-code development) to meet your objectives with digital business applications?”



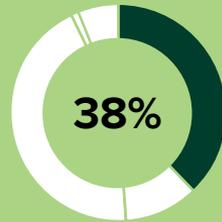
Firms Are Making The Leap From Intent To Commitment With Digital Business Applications

With a clear understanding of the impact of low-code development, firms are taking steps to improve their capabilities. In fact, 76% of decision-makers make it a high/critical priority to provide business users with tools to self-serve. Nearly half of the leaders surveyed say their companies currently allow some form of business app development, and about a third plan to do so. There is a big need for tech solutions to support this: 82% of decision-makers are either increasing their current investments or plan to implement such solutions in the next 12 months.

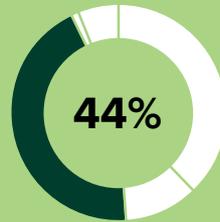


Firms are fulfilling their priorities: Over 80% of decision-makers report their firms are increasing or plan to increase their investments in technology to support the development of digital business applications.

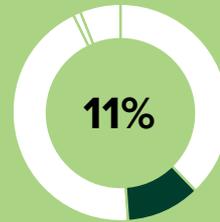
“What are your company’s plans to invest in technology solutions to support the development of digital business applications?”



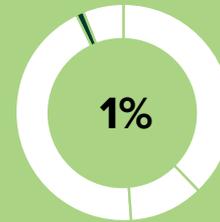
Planning to implement in the next 12 months



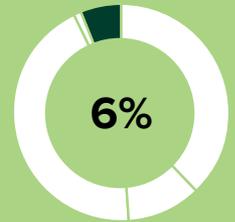
Expanding or upgrading implementation



Implemented, not expanding/upgrading



Decreasing or removing



Interested but no plans to implement

New Innovative Development Approaches Drive Agility With Meeting Business Needs

Companies that use low-code and/or digital process automation (DPA) platforms respond far better to unexpected market forces than those that do not, including meeting the demands of the COVID-19 crisis.³

Companies will need a comprehensive solution to get business process automation right and truly put the development paradigm in line with business value. Thinking of the ideal technology solution to support the development of digital business applications, decision-makers especially value features and capabilities that bring business application development closer to the business user.

“Thinking of the ideal technology solution to support the development of digital business applications, how important are the following features and capabilities?”



70%

Intuitive usability and user experience with no extensive trainings needed



64%

Conversational interfaces for building digital applications in business language



61%

Standard software that reduces or voids the need for coding



60%

Tools for business developers to build their own applications and service their needs



53%

Low-code development

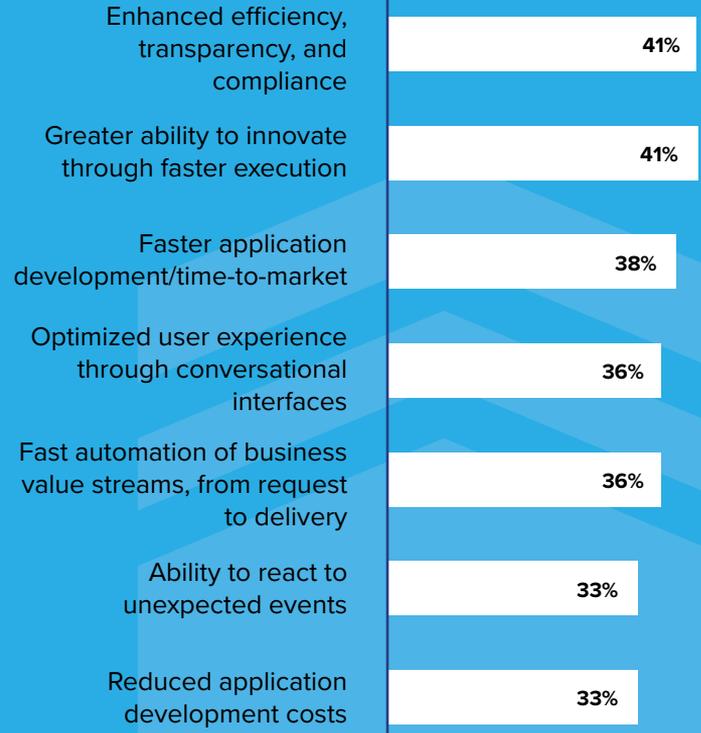
Low-Code Development Drives Business Process Automation

Low-code development is one of the crucial foundations for businesses in the COVID-19 world and an important or critical capability for more than half of business decision-makers.⁴ And unsurprisingly, 99% of process automation leaders anticipate benefits from embracing low-code development, including developing business applications, automating business value streams in an efficient and compliant way, increasing innovation, and reducing time-to-market through faster execution.



99% of process automation leaders expect benefits from embracing low-code development to drive business process automation.

“What benefits do you expect from embracing low-code development to drive business process automation/optimization and digitization?” (Top 7 answers shown)



Conclusion

Organizations will be more adaptive and agile in achieving their strategic goals if they embrace tools that empower business users. The business-aligned paradigm helps hit the ground running and drives successful automation, but most importantly, it creates a foundation for an adaptable digitized business, which is critical for business success today.

- To respond to an increasingly dynamic environment, organizations must act fast. Responding at speed is a competitive advantage and sets apart leaders from the rest.
- Business empowerment, efficiency, and low total cost of application development will enable firms to achieve strategic priorities.
- New innovative tools will put the business in control, allowing it to become more responsive, self-serve its needs, and execute its ideas in a fraction of cost and time.

Project Director:

Miriam Oesterreich, Market Impact Consultant

Contributing Research:

Forrester's Application Development & Delivery research group

Methodology

This Opportunity Snapshot was commissioned by ISIS Papyrus. To create this profile, Forrester Consulting supplemented this research with custom survey questions asked of 216 decision-makers responsible for business process automation/optimization and digitization at global enterprises that are automating/optimizing business processes. The custom survey began and was completed in September 2020.

ENDNOTES

¹ Source: "Advance Process Automation By Keeping Automation Technologies In Their Own Lanes," Forrester Research, Inc., November 11, 2019.

² Source: Forrester's Q1 2020 Global Digital Process Automation COVID-19 Survey.

³ Source: "Navigating The Rapid App Delivery Market," Forrester Research, Inc., September 17, 2020.

⁴ Ibid.

ABOUT FORRESTER CONSULTING

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Demographics

GEOGRAPHY

United States: 24%

Germany, Austria, & Switzerland: 25%

United Kingdom: 25%

Nordics: 26%

INDUSTRY (TOP 4)

Tech & tech services: 14%

F&I: 13%

Retail: 12%

Manufacturing/materials: 9%

TITLE

C-level & VP: 32%

Director: 46%

Manager: 22%

RESPONSIBILITY

Delivery of new digital business apps & products

Business modernization

Business process automation & optimization

An aerial night view of a dense urban landscape, likely in East Asia, featuring a complex multi-level highway interchange with glowing orange and yellow light trails from traffic. The surrounding city is filled with numerous high-rise buildings, many of which have illuminated windows, creating a vibrant blue and white glow against the dark night sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of a bustling, modern metropolis.

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