



5 Essential Elements of **Enterprise-Grade** Workflow Automation



Five Essential Elements of Enterprise-Grade Workflow Automation

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Accelerate Innovation.

Digital transformation is sweeping across the enterprise. Organizations are racing against competitors to reimagine customer experiences. And business units are under constant pressure to deliver groundbreaking innovations.

To meet this growing demand, **many business departments are turning to no-code workflow automation platforms** to reduce the backlog for homegrown IT solutions, lower application development costs and achieve faster time to market.

In fact, “line of business technology spending is forecast to grow faster than that of the IT organization,” according to IDG’s Worldwide IT Spending Guide, and is projected to be nearly equal to the IT department by 2020.

Unlike custom software applications that often take 6-12 months to deploy, **no-code platforms are designed to allow business users to rapidly build enterprise-grade workflow applications in days or weeks**, without knowing how to code.

This doesn’t mean settling for cookie-cutter applications that don’t meet your needs or low-code applications that still require programming. You can have powerful, easy-to-use applications loved by users, trusted by management and approved by IT.

This executive buyer’s guide covers five essential elements organizations should consider when deciding to “build vs. buy” an enterprise-grade workflow application platform to streamline operations and achieve digital transformation.



Vaughn Thurman
Chief Executive Officer,
HighGear



“Line of business technology spending is forecast to **grow faster than that of the IT organization.**”

IDG’s Worldwide IT Spending Guide

A young woman with long, wavy brown hair is smiling warmly while looking down at a tablet computer she is holding. She is wearing a light blue button-down shirt under a grey blazer. The background is a blurred office environment with warm, bokeh-style lighting. A yellow triangular graphic element is in the top right corner, and a yellow banner with white text is at the bottom left.

1. Usability



Embrace Ease of Use.

While many no-code workflow platforms often sacrifice *power* for *ease of use*, and low-code platforms trade *flexibility* for *speed*, it's important to find a platform that delivers non-technical users the best of both worlds.

The best no-code application platforms allow enterprises to **use visual, drag-and-drop tools to design processes, automate workflows and streamline operations** quickly without waiting for available IT resources.

Yet many organizations end up implementing platforms that force business users to modify their processes to conform to software limitations, instead of choosing a platform that addresses their business processes.

"A product that's difficult to figure out, inefficient to use or poorly supported is not going to win much of a user base," according to TechRepublic. As soon as it "... becomes complicated, users will bail and move on to something easier."

If onboarding is inefficient, training is unavailable and templates are non-existent, it will be difficult for your organization to ensure widespread adoption and impossible to realize the full value of workflow automation.

In order to get the most out of your automation investment, **it's essential to find an application platform that is easy for admins, intuitive for analysts, simple for teams, accessible for managers and worry-free for IT.**

1. Usability:

- Who is it designed for?
- How easy is it to use?
- Does it deploy quickly?



"A product that's difficult to figure out **is not going to win much of a user base.**"

Tech Republic



2. Security



Enforce Enterprise Security.

Although no-code solutions are built to meet the needs of non-technical business users, it will be difficult for a workflow platform to receive IT buy-in and approval without also meeting enterprise-grade security requirements.

While hosted, cloud-based applications might be desirable for many small- and mid-sized businesses, **large enterprises and government agencies often prefer platforms with an installed, on-premise option for storing sensitive data.**

“Trust issues are ... difficult to overcome for IT executives,” says Information Age. “Mission-critical data ... may be best kept on premises. It depends on the business you’re in, the data you possess and your comfort level.”

For example, some organizations accept platforms with application-specific passwords, while others prefer to reduce risk by centralizing user authentication through SAML single sign-on, secure tokens and multi-factor authentication.

Once logged in, **granular permissions and role-based access controls are equally essential to ensure only the right people have access to sensitive data**, along with separate partitions for different departments, regions and teams.

And data encryption can further protect intellectual property from unauthorized access and prevent data from being compromised, which is imperative for regulated industries, such as healthcare or financial services.



2. Security:

- Prefer cloud or on-premise?
- What about permissions?
- Does it offer data encryption?

“Mission-critical data may be best kept on premises. **It depends on the business you’re in.**”

Information Age



3. Compliance



Ensure Compliance.

From general data privacy regulations such as GDPR in the E.U., to industry-specific financial reforms and consumer protections such as Dodd-Frank in the U.S., enterprise compliance requirements are often overwhelming.

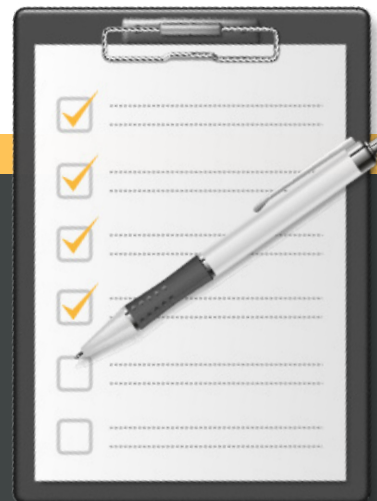
It's not enough for many businesses to simply demonstrate compliance with industry regulations. Organizations must also prove the right people continuously followed the right policies, processes and procedures at all the right times.

Fortunately, **"there are many ways to use automation to help build an effective culture of compliance,"** according to Corporate Compliance Insights, "including using it for policy and procedures ... audit workflows and more."

Enterprise-grade workflow application platforms can enable lines of business to **enforce compliance with widespread regulations automatically**, by configuring recurring tasks and workflows to simplify auditing and reporting processes.

For example, some systems provide a non-repudiable audit trail that records all user activity, file versions and time stamps, which allows auditors to easily verify policies and procedures were followed when workflows were executed.

Automated reporting can also reduce the cost of compliance and a lot of manual effort by quickly assembling, regularly scheduling and securely distributing compliance reports to authorized managers, auditors and recipients.



3. Compliance:

- Do compliance capabilities exist?
- Is an audit trail available?
- Can reporting be automated?

"There are many ways to use automation to help **build an effective culture of compliance.**"

Corporate Compliance Insights

A man with a beard and short hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, is sitting at a desk in a modern office. He is looking intently at a large computer monitor. The office has large windows in the background, letting in natural light. There are other desks and computers visible in the background, and a person is working at a desk further away. The overall atmosphere is professional and focused.

4. Integration



Confirm Data Integrations.

Integration is the cornerstone of digital transformation, with enterprises striving to make data from internal business applications accessible to those who need it across the business, from sales and marketing to customer service.

“This ability to integrate anything, anytime and anywhere can be used as a **powerful tool for businesses who want to drive innovation and create lasting competitive advantages**,” according to CIO Magazine.

By connecting these siloed business applications, organizations can automate complex business processes, seamlessly share data between systems of record and gain visibility into the status of operations.

Which is why many no-code platforms often provide a variety of pre-built integrations for leading ERPs, CRMs and other business applications, such as PeopleSoft, Salesforce and Office 365, to simplify the data configuration process.

Enterprise-grade workflow platforms also provide open API frameworks for IT developers to **build custom integrations with internal homegrown solutions and legacy software systems**, as well as industry-specific business applications.

And when IT resources are not available internally to support your unique business process requirements, it's helpful to consider workflow platform providers that also offer professional integration services.



4. Integration:

- Is it easy to add new integrations?
- Are pre-built integrations available?
- What integration services are offered?

“This ability to integrate can be used **to drive innovation and create competitive advantages.**”

CIO Magazine



5. Scalability



Demand Scalability.

Performance and scalability rank high on the priority list when researching and evaluating no-code platforms. Some applications work well for a handful of small teams, but are simply not capable of supporting enterprise workloads.

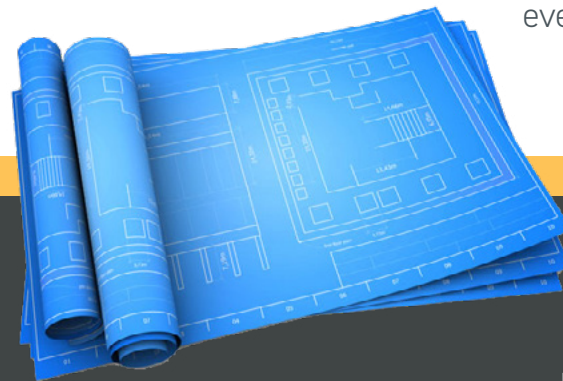
Applications might run smoothly for 100 employees working in a single building, but suffer intermittent delays when over 1,000 users **manage work, process workflows and generate reports across dozens of office locations at once.**

"Creating web applications that are both resilient and scalable is an essential part of any application architecture," according to Google. "A well-designed application should scale seamlessly as demand increases and decreases."

It's critical for enterprises to verify a workflow application platform is reliable, scalable and trusted by leading companies with proven deployments across thousands of users, workflows, processes, tasks and reports worldwide.

Enterprise-grade workflow platforms should be available as easy-to-use, cloud-based applications for business users to maintain without IT support or on-premise systems that are IT-ready and deploy faster than homegrown IT solutions.

Some platforms also offer scalable pricing plans that allow organizations to automate workflows for additional business units, teams and departments without charging for every new user, process or workflow.



5. Scalability:

- Is it enterprise-ready?
- Can it support 1,000's of users?
- Are flexible pricing plans available?

"A well-designed application should **scale seamlessly as demand increases and decreases.**"

Google



Let's Get Started.



Your Workflow Awaits.

No-code workflow platforms have the potential to unlock significant value for enterprises exploring alternatives to traditional application development to streamline operations, accelerate innovation and achieve digital transformation.

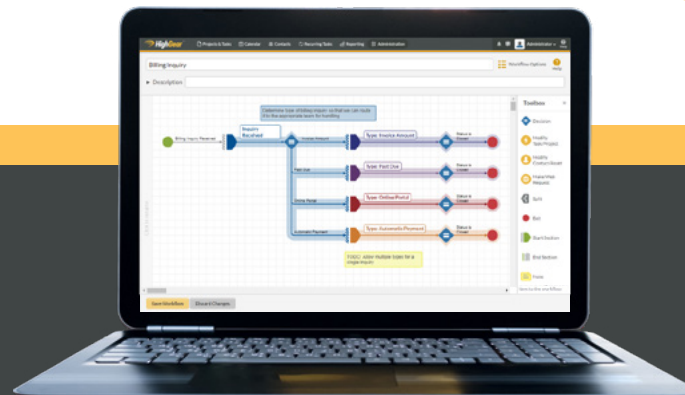
From marketing, sales and finance to HR, operations and legal, **organizations are embracing workflow automation to improve visibility, increase efficiency and maximize productivity across the entire enterprise.**

“Speed is crucial in introducing new disruptive products, engaging and responding to customers across different channels, and adapting existing services based on shifting competitive drivers,” according to Forrester.

Organizations that leverage the expertise of their line of business team members to develop new business models, processes and workflows have an opportunity to **deliver powerful, new applications at an unprecedented pace.**

But in order to successfully empower your workforce, these platforms should be easy to use for non-technical users, while meeting the enterprise-grade security, compliance, integration and scalability requirements of IT departments.

To determine if a no-code workflow automation platform is the right fit for your enterprise, department or line of business, please [contact HighGear today, watch our explainer video](#) or [schedule a product demo](#).



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“Speed is crucial in introducing new disruptive products and responding to customers.”

Forrester



The No-Code Workflow Automation Platform

HighGear is the leading, intuitive no-code platform for business analysts to rapidly build enterprise-grade workflow applications. The world's leading companies depend on HighGear to manage work, improve visibility, streamline operations, meet compliance requirements and achieve digital transformation. **Your workflow awaits.**



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