

# Creators

The story of  
Gordon Mankelow



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# About Gordon

Mankelow is an expert Zoho Creator developer with over a decade of experience creating complex solutions using the platform.

He graduated from the University of East Anglia, with a bachelor's degree in Computer System Engineering in 1991. He then founded a development firm, Relativity, in 1994, where he's been ever since.

Read on to learn how Mankelow started and grew into his programming career.



*Working in the IT industry is always a challenge—the speed of change at times can be overwhelming—but if you embrace, it's quite rewarding.*



# Key skills



Zoho Creator platform



Application process building



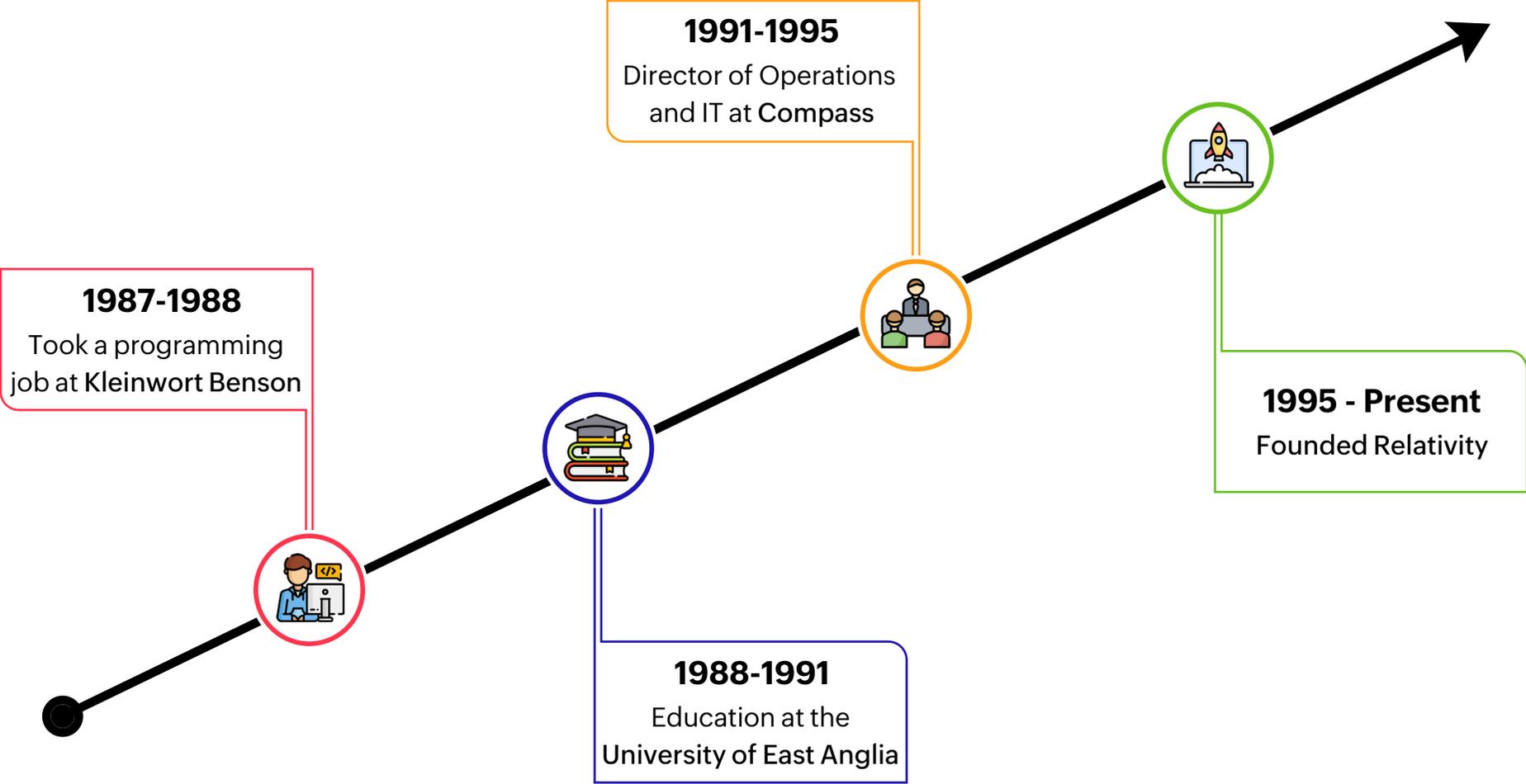
Business development



Deluge, HTML, Basic, Modula-2, PL/1,  
Visual Basic, VBA, JavaScript



# Timeline

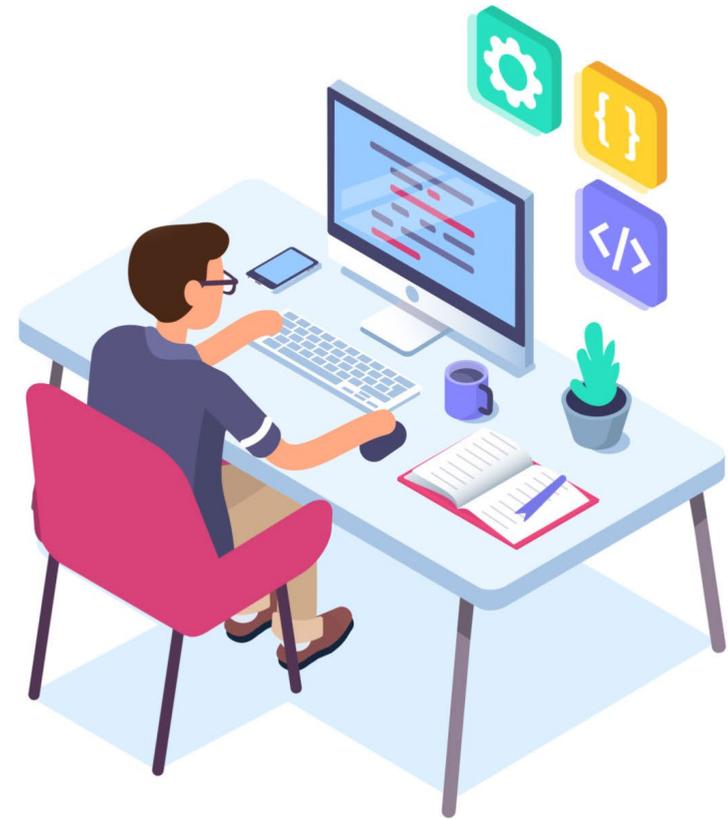


# Early career

Mankelow was fascinated with computers from a young age. His interest in coding got him into learning early coding languages, such as Basic, Modula-2, PL/1, Visual Basic, and VBA, in his free time.

Over the years, he became more confident in his coding abilities and picked up a junior programming job at Kleinwort Benson, a multinational merchant bank, back in 1987.

While working as a junior programmer, Mankelow realized that he needed to hone his coding skills further, and decided to join the University of East Anglia in 1988. He graduated from the university in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in Computer Systems Engineering.



Coming out of university, though, he found it difficult to get a job. He eventually managed to find a programming role at a software development firm where he wrote software for companies operating in the human resource (HR) industry using an elegant piece of software called Superbase (a database program).

Then, in 1995, Mankelow picked up a freelance gig that allowed him to leave his programming job and start his own business.



# Starting his Zoho journey

From starting Relativity in 1995, till about 2007, Mankelow developed on-premise desktop-based software for his clients, and later developed internet-based systems.

At the time, Mankelow was a NetSuite reseller. Although the software was very flexible and expansive, it needed quite a bit of work to set up, on top of costing a lot. It was a tough sell for Mankelow's prospects back then.

*I was looking for something flexible that would allow me to quickly develop applications for my clients and take care of the complete backend, because I didn't want to monitor and manage servers constantly. I found what I was looking for in Zoho Creator.*

**Gordon Mankelow**  
Founder, Relativity



He soon signed up for the Zoho partnership program and became a supplier/reseller.

*Back in the 2010s, Zoho was just a small part of my business—I was still supporting many clients to manage their intranet systems and desktop systems. Then, in 2015, I got in touch with the Creator team, and since then, I've been building solutions using the platform.*

In 2015, Mankelow earned his Zoho Creator certification and turned his whole business around.

*I pivoted my entire business from building legacy software, and now I do nothing but Zoho. I spend most of my time in Zoho Deluge—be it in Creator or CRM.*



**Gordon Mankelow**  
Founder, Relativity

# Why Zoho Creator?

## Flexibility

The main thing that attracts me to Creator is its flexibility. When a client comes to me and asks if we can make some changes to their app, and I do it in about 10-15 minutes, that's just wonderful.

## No need to worry about the backend

The other part that I love about Creator is that I don't have to look after the servers. That was one of my main concerns when I started looking for solutions back in 2007. Not having to look after servers takes a big load off of my back.



## **Fast time to market**

The apps that we build are complex, but we put them together in a short time. I mean, it's literally 10x faster development.

## **Simplicity**

I have a client that came to me after they built an entire system on Zoho Creator, themselves. They only reached out because they hit a snag and needed a developer to help hook up their app to an external system; something that needed a bit of coding. I was really impressed by the app that they built with no skills—no programming skills whatsoever.

***With Zoho Creator, I can develop complex business applications in half the time as with traditional methods.*** ””

# Projects with Creator

## Client 1

**Industry: Multiple**

**Solution: Project management**

This client is a conglomerate with multiple businesses, based out of the UK. Mankelow created a thorough PoC for them using Creator, and they were so impressed with the app that they requested he make apps for all of their businesses.

The client went from relying on Excel for planning, time management, and other activities, to having it all in one

simple Creator-based app, where all they need to do is press a few buttons and get everything going. They get a bird's-eye view of the entire business through dashboards built right into the app.

*At one of their businesses, they hire pontoons to work on bridges. We built a complete project management platform for them, and that revolutionized the way they worked.*

## Client 2

### Industry: Heating Solution: Mobile system for external customers to track water samples

The client is a leading supplier of heating system additives. Their service includes testing water samples from external engineers and advising their customers on what products should be used. The solution was a white-labeled Zoho Creator app hosted on the App Store that engineers could download.



The app uses barcodes on the sample to automate data entry, keeping customers updated on the progress of the water sample test—from transit to testing to the final result. The application sends a notification to the engineers when testing is completed, and a certificate can then be produced.

## Client 3

### Industry: Member reporting system Solution: Creator portal app

The client has thousands of international members. They used an MS Access system that was run locally by each member to collect data about work being carried out. The issue was releasing new versions of the app, and the collection of their data in one place.

The solution was a Zoho Creator portal app. Each member now logs in to the web and enters their data directly. Any changes to the app can be made centrally, and rolled out immediately, to all members, without any input. Likewise, data is constantly kept up to date.



The client has integrated the application with Zoho CRM and Zoho Analytics, and has created more applications for course onboarding and course evaluations.

# Thoughts on the forums

*There's also a wonderful camaraderie between Zoho developers. The forum is a great place to talk, but we've also built up developer groups on Zoho Cliq, where we pass tips and hints on how to do things.*

*The forums have also helped me land quite a few projects. You can stick your head in and answer questions on the forums, which usually leads to work.*

# Advice to new developers

*The developer community should spend time understanding each other's strengths and weaknesses and pass on suitable work to each other.* ”



# About Zoho Creator

Running a business is no mean feat, and we believe we can help. Rapidly build custom applications that are a perfect fit for your business, or choose from our extensive range of pre built apps and modify them. The best part? You don't have to be a programmer. Just sign up, pick a plan, and start building!





[www.zoho.com/creator](http://www.zoho.com/creator)

**We'd love to talk! Reach out to us at:**

[hello@zohocreator.com](mailto:hello@zohocreator.com)

