NUCLEUS RESEARCH

DO MORE WITH LESS WITH ZOHO CREATOR

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THE BOTTOM LINE

Nucleus interviewed multiple Zoho Creator customers and found benefits including improved productivity, reduced staffing costs, and enhanced organizational scalability. A medical organization reduced triage and incident recording times by over 75 percent. A financial services firm cited an 83 percent decrease in report generation times, and the elimination of several hours per week in data review. As organizations continue to strive for leanness in uncertain economic waters, Nucleus expects increased adoption of Zoho Creator for the low-code enablement of citizen developer initiatives.

OVERVIEW

Developing software traditionally requires expensive programmers with technical knowledge of a range of computing languages. These developers are often detached from the business problem or process being addressed. In contrast to standard programmers, citizen developers are business users who are empowered to develop their own solutions, circumventing technical teams. This approach brings the development process closer to the business task, at a leaner headcount and a faster pace. Low-code Application Development Platforms (LCAPs) provide a way for citizen developers to quickly create and deploy applications without the need for extensive programming knowledge. With proper training and governance, citizen developer initiatives powered by LCAPs can deliver significant ROIs for companies of all sizes.

Reduce triage and incident recording times by over 75%

ZOHO CREATOR

Zoho Creator is an LCAP that enables businesses of all sizes to develop custom applications without the need for coding. Forms, pages, reports, and dashboards can be created by users to simplify processes surrounding integration, workflows, and customer portals. Developers can use Zoho Creator to build applications that are compatible with web, mobile, and tablet devices simultaneously. For non-technical users, the platform provides toolkits to assist throughout the development cycle. The solution supports customizability for web and mobile applications through SDKs, widgets, and extensions. Zoho Creator also supports SAML, LDAP, and OAuth2 protocols to ensure users have extensive access management controls. These protocols provide security by authenticating and authorizing users to access the data. The solution additionally provides REST APIs that are available without the need to build endpoints.

TYPICAL BENEFITS

Through end-user conversations, Nucleus found that Zoho Creator improved productivity, reduced staffing costs, and enhanced organizational scalability.

- **Improved Productivity.** Zoho Creator allows businesses to quickly develop and deploy applications without the need for time-consuming coding projects. Low-code platforms also allow businesses to easily make changes to their applications without having to recode them, which further reduces development time. Additionally, deployed applications improve business productivity through the automation of targeted processes. One organization cited a reduction in triage and incident recording times by over 75 percent by reducing manual data entry. Another company deployed an application that updated a centralized dashboard 49 times per day. It additionally cited the elimination of several hours per week in manual data review, and an 83 percent decrease in report generation times.

- **Reduced Staffing Costs.** Zoho Creator enables businesses to save on staffing costs. By developing applications with non-technical business users, businesses save on hiring technical specialists. This can lead to eliminated FTEs or avoided hires for application development projects. Additionally, Zoho Creator's automation capabilities lead to time savings, reducing hiring needs as existing employees are more productive. One customer cited time savings equivalent to a $50,000 FTE.

- **Enhanced Organizational Scalability.** Adopting Zoho Creator helps organizations scale their operations by allowing them to develop, deploy, and customize applications rapidly. One customer cited selecting Zoho Creator for its ability to create a custom CRM solution that would scale better with the organization during its period of rapid growth. Later, the organization was able to further scale with Creator by developing various automation and data validation tools in a timeline of hours. Another customer cited being able to fully plan and deploy most new applications within three to five days, rapidly adopting new functionalities on demand.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

Nucleus interviewed multiple Zoho Creator customers to investigate the value delivered by the platform.

REGIONAL SPECIALIZED CARE CENTER

This company is a major care center offering specialized medical services. The organization had been attempting to move off paper-based processes for tasks including data storage, display, and consolidation. It had originally attempted to digitize these processes with Database Oasis; while better than paper, the organization desired functionality beyond

database creation. The company prioritized a cloud-based LCAP that would have minimal maintenance requirements for the IT department. In addition to Zoho Creator, the organization considered Microsoft PowerApps. During the trial of the latter, users found the solution too technically complex. When the organization trialed Zoho, it built a clinical incident reporting application without training within a month. This ability to rapidly deploy a business app served as the differentiator in choosing to implement Zoho Creator. The organization began implementation in 2018 and achieved its first use case within a month. It reported some applications can be built within half a day, with most taking three to five days from planning to deployment. The most complex application took between five and ten weeks to deploy and required no support tickets with Zoho.

Decrease report generation times by 83%

The organization was immediately able to retire Database Oasis. It reported a reduction in triage and incident recording times by over 75 percent by reducing manual data entry. With between 150 and 200 incidents per month, the organization experienced time savings equivalent to a $50,000 FTE. The organization was additionally able to develop an enterprise-wide risk management system. Before Zoho Creator, each department had an individual Excel spreadsheet to log risks; each spreadsheet would need to be manually compiled together for the organization-wide log. Following deployment, discrete registers were eliminated and a central risk log can be accessed over the center's internet connection.

DEDICATED PROPERTY MANAGEMENT FIRM

This organization offers specialized real estate investment services in the United Kingdom. It has approximately 10 employees and £5 million in annual revenue. The organization had entered a period of rapid growth, taking on a large influx of clients and associated projects. Before Creator, the organization utilized various spreadsheets for contacts and assets. Data was often lost due to manual data entry being required in communicating across silos. It could not afford developers, even as part-time employees, and therefore needed an LCAP accessible to non-technical business users for consolidation. The company initially looked for a CRM solution, considering Zoho and Salesforce. It chose Zoho due to it being five times less expensive than Salesforce. It additionally cited Zoho as easier to customize for its use cases. Following CRM deployment, the company discovered Creator as a tool to develop customized CRM functionality. In 2014, the organization chose to switch entirely to

Zoho Creator to build a customized CRM and adopt low-code application development elsewhere in the company.

Initially, the organization leveraged Zoho Creator for its contact and asset management. It has since deployed automation and data validation tools citing applications being deployable within hours. The organization experienced zero errors in logging its hundreds of transactions per month, a process that was highly error-prone before. The company also deployed an application that updated a centralized dashboard 49 times per day. This dashboard automatically adjusts to gaps in data, including offer expiration dates, which were manually adjusted before. The organization cited a decrease in report generation time of 83 percent. Additionally, it cited the elimination of several hours per week in manual data review, eliminating the need for future hires.

LOOKING AHEAD

As uncertain economic projections linger, organizations of all sizes are prioritizing leanness in operations. By offloading workloads traditionally assigned to technical developers, LCAP initiatives deliver a strong value proposition. In a crowded low-code market, Nucleus expects increased adoption of Zoho Creator through its focus on the non-technical business user and direct integration with competitive, high-use applications across the Zoho Suite.