



Zoho  
Creator

# A Manufacturer's Guide to Low-code



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# Digital Landscape of the Manufacturing Industry

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Owing to persistent changes in global and economic conditions, the digital landscape of the manufacturing industry is constantly evolving. From mechanization and assembly lines to automation and cyber-physical systems, the industry has always adapted quickly to new technologies and tools for digital transformation.

While off-the-shelf software and ERP systems have dominated the manufacturing digital space for a long time, they don't cater to individual business functionalities and tend to be expensive in the long run. This is why many manufacturers are embracing low-code.



## What is low-code?

Low-code is a visual development approach to application building. Using a low-code application development platform, users of varied technical expertise can build and deploy highly functional applications faster. They come with intuitive user interfaces, ready-to-use code snippets, and guided scripting, to make application development effortless and agile.



By 2024, low code will be responsible for 65% of application development activity.

**Gartner**<sup>®</sup>





# Challenges faced by Manufacturers

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Some of the major challenges faced by manufacturers are **underutilized inventory resources, communication impasses, lack of transparency, and scattered information**. While readymade solutions can solve these issues, they lack customization capabilities, which means massaging your processes to suit the software.

With low-code's flexible development environment, you can create a solution that exactly fits your unique business model, without compromising on functionalities or features, and at a more reasonable price.



## How low-code addresses these challenges

Based on our experience working with manufacturers, we identified the top three challenges they face, and how our low-code platform, Zoho Creator, addresses it. Read on to learn more in detail.

# Inventory visibility



Failing to track inventory properly leads to overstock, frequent backorders, and inaccurate financial accounts. This results in additional problems throughout the supply chain, resulting in poor customer satisfaction. To manage inventory effectively and gain end-to-end visibility of your stock:

- ◇ Simplify and automate the stock-taking process
- ◇ Collect real-time inventory information
- ◇ Forecast demand to optimize inventory



## Simplify and automate the stock-taking process

Using our *QR and barcode scanner* feature, you can simply scan the QR code or barcode and effectively track your inventory throughout the production process—all the way up to sales. You can also handle order management, track stock across multiple warehouses, and integrate with your billing system.



## Collect real-time inventory information

*Alerts*, a command based on Zoho's proprietary scripting language Deluge, can be used to create and send alerts via email or SMS to recipients. Setting up an alert for product restocking, slow-moving stock, and expiration dates can make a

huge difference in overall stock wastage, and improve inventory visibility.



## Forecast demand to optimize inventory

To predict customer demand for an inventory item based on past data, our AI-facilitated *prediction field* can be used. For example, if you want to share the expected delivery date of an order with your customers, factors such as the type of product, number of units, and delivery partners will be the input parameters. Then, by using machine learning, the prediction field will create a model that's capable of predicting a field value for all future records.

## Order management



Another challenging facet of every manufacturing operation is streamlining the order fulfillment process. As the process includes multiple stakeholders and touchpoints, having a centralized and efficient system in place is crucial. A successful order management system should be able to:

- ◆ Oversee accounts and payments effortlessly
- ◆ Manage cross-channel orders on a centralized platform
- ◆ Track KPIs and key data points to gain actionable insights



## Oversee accounts and payments effortlessly

Automate invoice and BOM generation with *workflows*. Optical character recognition (*OCR*) can be used to scan and digitize legal filings, tax documents, and financial investments. We also support integration with finance applications like QuickBooks and Zoho Invoice, and payment gateways like PayPal, Razorpay, and Forte, to manage every aspect of your bookkeeping on a single platform.



## Manage cross-channel orders on a centralized platform

Manage multichannel sales with our *third-party integration* support, using custom APIs. Connect with various ecommerce sites, like Amazon, eBay, and Shopify, and access order details like customer information, delivery address, and shipment details on your internal order management application.



## Track KPIs and key data points to gain actionable insights

Get an overview of your business activities at a glance with our powerful *dashboards*. You can create personalized dashboards based on the widgets and panels of your choice, and analyze key data to assess performance measures and make accurate

data-driven decisions. Moreover, you can access and view all your insights on the go with our native mobile apps.

## Self-service portals



In today's connected world, self-service portals are becoming more of a requirement than an add-on feature. Gartner predicts that by 2020, 85% of all customer interactions will no longer be managed by humans, and the average person will have more conversations with virtual assistants than with their spouse. An optimal self-service portal should have:

- ◇ White-label branding
- ◇ Federated identity
- ◇ Personalization



### White-label branding

While by default self-service portals are hosted on the software provider's domain, you can choose to host on your own domain using Zoho Creator's *custom domain* feature. Custom domains allow for customized portal landing pages, email customization, and rebranded native mobile applications. This helps in maintaining your brand identity and providing a personalized experience for customers.



## Federated identity

The purpose of a federated identity sign-in model is to facilitate true single sign-on (SSO), and allow users to have the same password for on-premises and cloud applications. Zoho Creator's *federated login* allows sign-in via Facebook and Google, making access to applications quicker and convenient.



## Personalization

Providing clients with a personalized portal based on their role is an important factor in improving customer satisfaction. For example, self-service portals can have overlapping information for both customers and suppliers. In such instances, you can use *permissions* to restrict their access based on their role, so they can only see relevant information. You can also enhance the portal interface using external HTML/CSS coding, and use the translation feature to make your application consumable by a larger audience.



# Conclusion

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Zoho Creator's low-code platform supports all features across web, mobile, and tablet. You just have to create an app on one platform and you can automatically access it on other devices. With over 40 types of reports, multi language support, seamless integrations, and AI features, the possibilities for building a bespoke solution for your manufacturing business are limitless. Just [sign up](#), pick a plan, and start building!



# About Us

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At Zoho Creator, we've always worked towards a single purpose—enabling problem solvers of varied technical skills to build business solutions that make a difference. Equipped with features like a drag-and-drop interface, predictive analysis, and prebuilt integrations, we empower users to build and deploy custom applications 10x faster than conventional methods. Build tailor-made solutions from scratch, or choose from our extensive range of prebuilt apps to kickstart your digital transformation.





# Contact Us

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**Creator**

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