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Seeking Greater Operational Efficiency in an Inflationary Economy?

Meet High-Performance Low-Code

The days of companies driving growth through price increases are over.
A combination of inflationary pressures and economic worries means tech leaders must find creative ways to help their companies grow faster or achieve their margin objectives with fewer resources.

CIOs are responding quickly. Slightly more than half (**55%**) of tech leaders surveyed by Gartner in late 2022 said they had already slowed down hiring for new positions.[1] Another **52%** implemented across-the-board spending cuts.[2]

Yet even the darkest economic predictions aren't dampening CIOs' enthusiasm. In early 2023, **94%** of tech leaders told consulting firm EY that they believe company-wide innovation will help them emerge from the current economic downturn stronger than before.[3] **But how do you cut costs and innovate at the same time?**

To find an answer in this highly uncertain business environment and rapidly evolving technology environment, companies are embracing practical, affordable solutions that will help them adapt and innovate at speed and scale. Increasingly, CIOs are finding that using a high-performance low-code platform is an optimal way to simultaneously innovate and maximize operational efficiency, and in many cases, fund the development of future apps with the savings generated from current apps.

In this guide, you'll discover:
• 3 traits that help organizations innovate faster today
• The benefits of a high-performance low-code platform
• Impactful use cases that empower organizations to enhance workforce
  efficiency and improve their processes and technology

[1] https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2023-03-20-gartner-survey-finds-72-percent-of-high-tech-leaders-expect-to-grow-revenue-in-2023-despite-economic-uncertainty

[2] Ibid

[3] https://www.ey.com/en_us/news/2023/05/ey-survey-reveals-innovation-remains-a-major-business-priority-for-technology-companies-despite-economic-disruption

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Each dollar an enterprise saves on current projects by improving operational efficiency allows them to fund new projects that will advance innovation.

3 Traits Enterprises Should Embrace to Achieve Greater Efficiency

Today's cost pressures won't abate anytime soon. IDC estimates that IT organizations will remain sensitive to future cost shocks associated with people and processes regardless of how inflation or currency conditions evolve.[4]

To protect themselves from volatility, tech leaders should take a systematic approach to operational efficiency. Start by embracing these three traits that help move enterprises forward:

1. Agility

Unstable times change the way enterprises compete for customers and protect their profits. When market forces suddenly shift, the organizations that capitalize on them the fastest will reap the bigger rewards and avoid costly mistakes. Because high-performance low-code platforms accelerate software development up to 10x faster than traditional methods, teams that use them can create prototypes quickly, pivot rapidly, and seize opportunities.[5]

2. Iteration

When time is critical, overthinking is a monumental barrier to achieving productivity. Top organizations today test often and fail fast. They foster a continuous improvement culture and create an iterative environment that allows them to make small tweaks, adjust as needed, and continually experiment. High-performance low-code platforms allow developers to build applications through an iterative process in the spirit of modern development practices like continuous integration/continuous deployment (CI/CD) and DevOps.

3. Perspective

It's tempting to look at efficiency on a local level inside your organization and make quick fixes. But tweaks that make one team more productive can quickly cause downstream headaches for another team. That's why IT leaders need to have a more holistic end-to-end perspective. Low-code platforms can facilitate the development and implementation of high-powered, productivity-focused, end-to-end applications organization-wide so that the company as a whole can benefit.

[4] https://blogs.idc.com/2023/02/06/how-to-manage-it-spend-in-an-inflationary-environment/

[5] https://www.forrester.com/blogs/why-you-need-to-know-about-low-code-even-if-youre-not-responsible-for-software-delivery/

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The Evolution of Low-Code Development Platforms

The current technology landscape includes multiple solutions capable of driving organizational efficiency forward. Let's review a few of the most popular and explore why high-performance low-code stands above them all.

Low-code vs. commercial off-the-shelf solutions

Commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software allows enterprises to select and quickly deploy market-tested solutions and avoid hiring in-house software developers. But the same software is available to everyone, including your competitors, and it's most often inflexible and unable to meet a company's unique needs. When this happens, organizations end up investing in multiple SaaS solutions to add needed functionality, which raises management costs and creates multiple inefficiencies with disconnected systems. In contrast, high-performance low-code gives enterprises the freedom to customize their software, and integrate applications for a seamless user experience, thereby reducing the risk of SaaS sprawl and boosting employee productivity.

High-performance low-code vs. standard low-code

Most standard low-code platforms enable IT teams with varying skill sets to create a wide range of simple applications with minimal hand coding. They typically sacrifice functionality through greater abstraction in the development process. But only high-performance low-code gives teams the enterprise capabilities to build exactly what they want for both internal users and external customers, while also accelerating the entire software development lifecycle (SDLC).

High-performance low-code combines visual development tools with integrated automation throughout the SDLC. It provides security and governance for large development teams, and supports highly scalable cloud-native infrastructure. As a result, teams can build complex, mission-critical apps fast on-prem or in the cloud, update them quickly as business or market needs shift, accelerate internal process automation, and deliver unique enterprise customer experiences.

What makes high-performance low-code a differentiator?

A best-in-class high-performance low-code platform like OutSystems includes multiple features that help enterprises work smarter:

- State-of-the-art visual tools and reusable modules, connectors, and UI components across multiple channels to boost efficiency and consistency for multi-experience apps
- Automated scriptless deployment, application lifecycle management, and cloud-native runtime for mission-critical performance and scalability
- AI-based development assistance and automation that accelerates the entire SDLC, such as coaching, architectural guidance, security, and dependency checking

3 Operational Efficiency Benefits of High-Performance Low-Code

1. Increased agility
Development teams can quickly present working prototypes. From there, they can gather more relevant business feedback faster and adjust accordingly, helping enterprises outpace their competition.

2. Faster innovation
High-performance low-code automates and assists development, deployment, and change management tasks that slow developers down. That enables faster time to market.

3. Maximized developer productivity
Upskill and motivate your entire staff. Empower your newer developers to build apps as if they were full-stack developers. Allow more skilled and experienced developers to focus on the more creative aspects of their job.

Process Efficiency: Optimize Your Workflows

Processes, people, and technology are the three pillars behind nearly all enterprise transformation or operational efficiency initiatives. Let's look at how high-performance low-code improves all three, starting with business processes.

As a starting point, review your business processes and determine your current maturity level. A step-wise approach to digital process automation can be useful for organizations navigating change. Most organizations will fall into one of these three phases:

Phase 1: Digitize

If you still use paper-based forms, you'll first need to convert them into digital assets and structured data. This is essential to reduce the busywork of rekeying information multiple times across programs. It also improves data quality across the board and allows the data to be used more easily by workflow tools and apps.

Phase 2: Automate

Once you've moved to digital forms and structured data, you can then introduce apps that will digitize processes and automate workflows. You can also leverage technologies such as electronic signatures, document approval, and contract management.

Phase 3: Orchestrate

Enterprises in this most mature phase will have orchestrated processes, coordinating cross-functional workflows that allow employees to access and share information easily across business silos and lower end-to-end cycle times.

USE CASES

Explore how these use cases can propel process efficiency within your enterprise.

- Intelligent automation
- Business process management
- Case management

Efficiency in Action

> " The speed of low-code development gave us the courage to experiment. A minimal viable process in four months showed the art of the possible, and we never looked back."
>
> Angus Kennedy, Chief Technology Officer, Tysers

A U.S.-based business advisory firm, HORNE needed a better way to get real-time information to disaster recovery construction inspectors in the field. Using the OutSystems high-performance low-code platform, it built Canopy Inspect, a mobile app that gives its inspectors site-specific inspection checklists and uses logic to track progress. Inspectors use the app to report deficiencies and provide final documents for payment. With Canopy Inspect, HORNE:

- **Saves inspectors days** in the office preparing paper reports

- **Moves faster** on construction projects **with fewer people**

[Read the full case study](#)

A leading independent Lloyds of London insurance broker, Tysers faced a pressing competitive need to better coordinate and speed up paper-based business processes without hiring multiple full-stack developers. Using OutSystems high-performance low-code, Tysers built its Tconnect platform and automated custom processes such as sanctions checking and task-and-query management workflows. The streamlined processes:

- Saved staff **400 hours a week**

- Created **60% faster** customer query resolution

[Read the full case study](#)

Technology Efficiency: Extend Your Systems for Greater Value

The reality is that most enterprises don't need *more* technology. They need to get more from the technology they currently have. To do so, they must find fresh approaches that let them extend their current systems without making significant additional cost investments, especially in an era of higher priced software and shrinking IT budgets.

Start by reviewing your current systems. Before ripping out and replacing, decide whether you need to take one of these steps — or both.

Extend your core systems' capabilities
Now is the perfect time to take a second look at your mission-critical systems — CRM, ERP, or Supply Chain Management tools — and find out if you can make them do more and operate more efficiently for your business. High-performance low-code can help you build adjacent applications around your core

systems quickly and easily so you can expand their capabilities and deliver exactly what your business needs. In many cases, high-performance low-code platforms will expand your legacy systems even better and faster than the basic low-code tools offered by your core system providers.

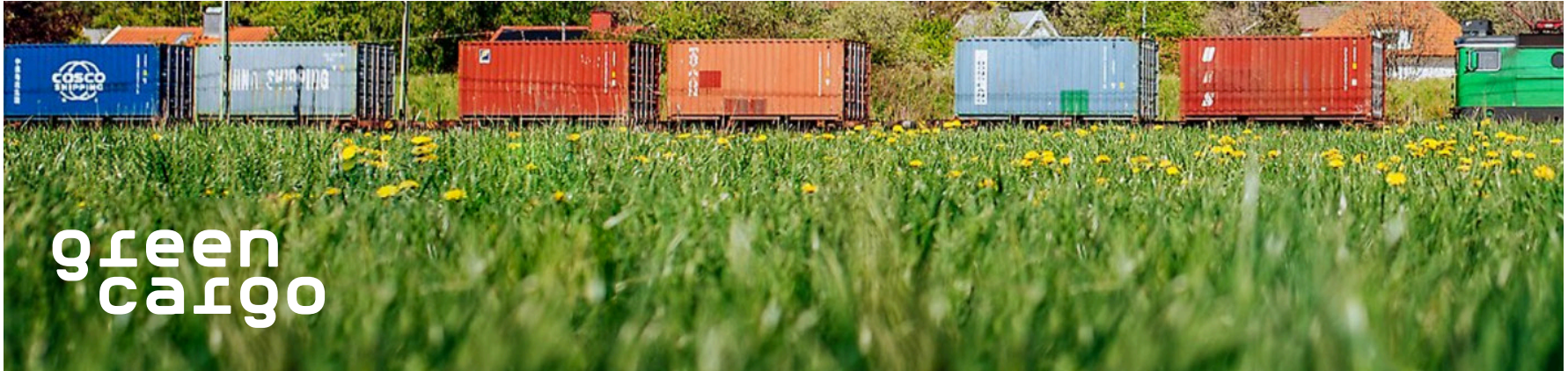**Extend the useful life of your legacy systems**
Legacy technology doesn't last forever. But not all components of your legacy systems will age at the same rate. You may want to keep your core data intact and just update your user-facing applications, thus avoiding the cost and chaos of rip-and-replace and the hassles of expensive upgrades. With the OutSystems platform, you can take a high-efficiency, low-risk, phased approach to modernization. Start by decomposing your current systems, then use OutSystems to systematically replace the components and features that will help extend their useful life.

USE CASES

Explore how these use cases can improve the efficiency of your existing technology.

- Extend SAP
- Extend Salesforce
- Extend ITSM
- Extend PowerApps
- Rebuild Lotus Notes and Domino

Efficiency in Action

> "One of the most exciting achievements is that we are now working like a full-stack software company, building outstanding applications with low costs on our fully scalable platforms."

Ingo Paas, *Chief Information Officer, Green Cargo*

A leader in sustainable rail logistics across Scandinavia and Europe, Green Cargo needed to accelerate sustainable innovation. But it was hampered by a legacy mainframe and SAP system. Ripping-and-replacing would put digital innovation on hold for seven years. So, Ingo Paas, the company's incoming CIO, made a counter-proposal: Find new ways to access data in legacy systems and shift digital innovation to the cloud. By embracing a combination of Microsoft Azure and OutSystems, Green Cargo rediscovered its innovation mojo.

- **Achieved a 10x productivity gain in just 15 months**
- **Built multiple new apps in three months** an integrated them with its mainframe and SAP ERP

Read the full case study

People Efficiency: Empower Your Employees

Modern enterprises must achieve a delicate balance. They need to accomplish more with fewer staff members. But they also must create a positive work environment and avoid employee burnout. A high-performance low-code platform can help organizations tackle this challenge on two fronts:

1. Empower your developers
COTS solutions typically require some deployment or configuration support, and traditional low-code solutions don't ease developers' burdens the way high-performance low-code does. The OutSystems platform helps developers at all levels build more apps faster with ease. More than 400 pre-built templates, patterns, and connectors mean teams never have to start an app from scratch. Instead, developers can drag-and-drop UIs, business processes, business logic, and data models to build enterprise-grade mobile apps, automate workflows, and custom business process applications.

2. Empower your line-of-business stakeholders and their teams
The proliferation of company-specific internal business apps built with COTS can create additional challenges for enterprises.

For example, when your employees have to log into different COTS systems 20 or 30 times a day and struggle with suboptimal user experiences, it creates frustration and erodes employee morale.

With a high-performance low-code platform, you can rapidly build and deploy intuitive apps that will help your stakeholders do their jobs more effectively and efficiently, with less training. What's more, you can fully integrate your internal apps with any internal database, document repository, or external system to elevate operations, reduce friction, and improve the UX for your employees. Organizations can use low-code built apps to streamline employee onboarding, simplify inventory management, get real-time information to their field services teams, and accelerate HR-related functions such as talent management and compensation and benefits.

USE CASES

Explore how high-performance low-code can drive workforce efficiency in your enterprise.
- Employee onboarding
- Performance management
- Field service operations
- Supply chain operations

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Efficiency in Action

> "Even though there was a significant opportunity for efficiency improvement, this was first and foremost about improving our employees' experiences."
>
> Angus Hatton,
> Innovation Project Manager,
> Monadelphous

A leading Australian engineering group, Monadelphous performs hundreds of maintenance projects in parallel each year. To do so, its workforce management team must continually assemble and deploy teams of 100+ people. Its former processes lacked automation. With OutSystems, Monadelphous created the MonaWork app in 12 weeks with three professional developers. The app unifies all field work-related communications and scheduling. Today, MonaWork:

- **Receives five-star reviews** from employees
- Activate **20,000 workforce applications** per year

[Read the full case study](#)

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Improve Operational Efficiency with OutSystems High-Performance Low-Code

Operational efficiency is the new competitive differentiator across industries. High-performance low-code empowers enterprises to:

- Automate business processes from early-stage digitization to advanced orchestration
- Empower employees to perform their jobs more efficiently
- Save money on current projects and reinvest it in future innovation

Discover the multiple ways that the OutSystems platform can help you speed the pace of your business and empower your teams to work smarter.

Learn More