



courierlogistics

An insider look into Courier Logistics' transformative journey from legacy software to custom apps, courtesy of Zoho Creator.

Summary

Logistics is an art. With customer-facing logistical operations, the sheer number of variables involved translate to a need for high degrees of refinement and accuracy—a need that can and should be met by software. After all, even the small risk of human error could be devastating to meticulously built professional reputations.

In this ebook, you'll see how Courier Logistics transitioned from impractical manual task management routines, to kludgy cookie-cutter software applications, and finally, to customized enterprise-grade ERPs (courtesy of Zoho Creator). We'll walk you through their journey in a step-by-step narrative to make it relatable to standard business cases, while also elaborating on the what, why, and how of the digital transformation exercise.

Part 1

Thinking ahead of shrink-wrapped software

Ch. 1:

Background information

Primarily a conventional delivery service, Courier Logistics soon found themselves expanding into pallet handling and pick-and-pack shipping. While paper-based record-keeping and their existing ERP handled the former with relative ease, it simply lacked the processing clout and flexibility to tackle the latter.

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Prior to Zoho Creator, the majority of Courier Logistics business processes were time-consuming manual tasks. Else, the programs in use were limited in functionality.

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Rachel McCartney

IT Manager

After all, there's only so much an off-the-shelf program can do to accommodate unique business processes.

Ch. 2:

The chains of growth

In time, Courier Logistics scaled up. With customers submitting requests that required customized add-ons like barcode-labelled parcels and part-picking for individual shipments, management soon realized a pressing need to acquire a system that could comfortably handle the minutiae of their fulfilment process. Specialized requests aside, there were also peripheral issues that needed to be addressed that, if resolved, could add hours of overall productivity per day. For instance:

- Customer service reps who were hired to handle inbound calls (approx. 300 calls every day) were relegated to manually assigning collection information to drivers and confirming pickups with them.
- As a result of unoptimized inventory algorithms, stock inaccuracies became a major obstacle to customer satisfaction—Courier Logistics came very close to losing the business of a large customer owing to a slip up in this department.
- There was a sizeable amount of time, money, and resources expended on menial tasks—a problem that could be solved by the addition of a mobile component to their repertoire of daily drivers.

Ch. 3:

The hunt for a solution

Soon, Courier Logistics realized that switching to smarter software was no longer an option, but a necessity. Once the decision to replace their existing off-the-shelf ERP was made, they were left with two options:

- ✔ **Hire a developer to build one for them.**
- ✔ **Build it themselves, from the ground up.**

Now, hiring a dedicated developer to work on this task would send operational costs into the stratosphere—development, maintenance, troubleshooting...the list was endless. On the other hand, if they did want to build it themselves, whowould build it? Courier Logistics' staff didn't have professional developers among their ranks. How long would it take to set up? What exactly went into the development of a native mobile version of their application?

Option #2 really seemed to raise more questions than it answered.

Part 2

Upping the ante with low-code platforms

Ch. 4:

Upping the ante with low-code platforms

After vacillating between several turnkey solutions and complex application development tools, the team stumbled across the concept of low-code development, online databases, and eventually, Zoho Creator.

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Financially, we were chucking money in the wrong direction. That was, until we came across Zoho Creator. ”

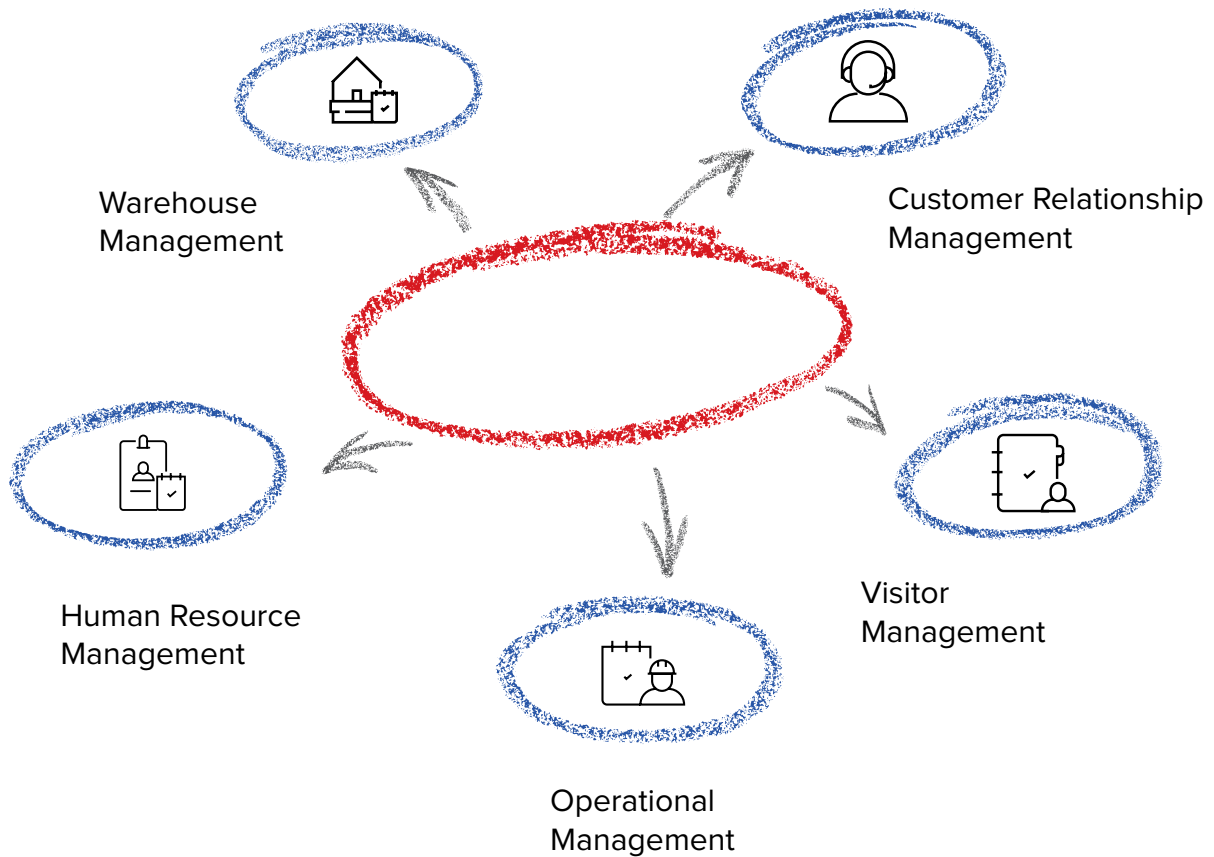
Rachel McCartney,
IT Manager.

As a web and mobile application building platform bundled into an easy-to-use package, Rachel, the IT manager, found delight in the ease with which she could craft workflows adhering to Courier Logistics' business processes. Within days, she'd diagnosed their system with critical pain points, and commenced work on an inventory management app, organically built on the platform. It didn't stop with that, though. In time, one app proliferated into an entire business management suite:

Ch. 5:

Dissecting an ERP

The app was comprised of five independent modules which synergized to contribute towards managing and executing smooth day-to-day operations at Courier Logistics.





Warehouse Management - The forerunner of the app suite, this was the first module Rachel's team built on Zoho Creator. It finds extensive use within the warehouse, where employees use it to keep tabs on **storage, pick-and-pack permutations, invoicing, and consignment bookings**—courtesy of a handy integration with external booking software. Shop floor staff even use it to scan barcodes off of labels using Zoho Creator's native mobile app.



Customer Relationship Management - The nucleus of Courier Logistics' business model, this module gives employees a comprehensive overview of **clients, their details, and specific information often unique to each account**. The custom workflows embedded into the module made follow-ups effortless by dramatically minimizing the amount of manual data entry involved.



Visitor Management: - This versatile module serves two purposes—keeping tabs on the number of visitors on campus at any given time and, more importantly, serving as **a record of parcels collected from the depot directly by customers**.



Human Resource Management - This module straddles several functions. Ranging from **a database for employee details, to an online leave request center**, it's an all-inclusive HR hub. It also doubles as **timesheet software**, and uses the hours clocked by employees to calculate wages automatically.



Operational Management - This module finds extensive use via Zoho Creator's mobile app, which employees use to communicate with drivers in the field. Once a driver is assigned a task, they accept or reject it from their mobile apps. This information is automatically reflected in all instances of the module, enabling office staff to get real-time visibility into the completion status of the job. Drivers are also asked to provide updates on collection and delivery. A color-coded report that pulls data from the information submitted by drivers gives supervisors a high degree of visibility into task completion statistics, which helps them improve customer experiences.

Ch. 6:

A runaway success

With the implementation in place, Courier Logistics had a lot to be happy about. In one fell swoop, Zoho Creator changed the entire status quo of the business' operational scheme, and then some. Their information conveyance system morphed from a haphazard mosaic of scattered data to a stringent, well-structured database. The best part? The entire system could be molded by employees to work exactly how they required it to.

Here's a quick rundown on how the firm benefited from adopting Zoho Creator:

Substantial monetary gains:

Net savings resulting from the replacement of their existing ERP with the Warehouse Management app alone hit £13000 per financial year. Bypassing the off-the-shelf software route gave management a larger degree of autonomy and drastically magnified their wiggle room where IT requirements were concerned. This facilitated the investment of the saved costs into better hardware and security infrastructure.

What's more, the CRM and Visitor Management modules save Courier Logistics £5000 and £1600 a year, respectively. The Operational Management module's real-time update system eliminated nearly all the outbound calls handled by the customer service department, thereby increasing the number of inbound calls they could respond to by nearly 90%.

The Operational Management module contributed towards a 90% increase in call handling capacity.

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Zoho Creator has enabled Courier Logistics Ltd to perform processes exactly the way they want to, and save vast amounts of money. ”

Rachel McCartney,
IT Manager.

Optimized time management:

The addition of a mobile component to the lineup greatly simplified the way information was conveyed from the field to the office, which in turn contributed towards maximizing working hours saved on a macroscopic scale. This was especially beneficial for field personnel and the staff coordinating with them, with significantly less time and effort expended on either side. Of course, this reflected positively on the latency and lead time of orders by shrinking them—resulting in happier customers.

The inherent nature of Zoho Creator as a definitively structured aggregation of data helped staff simplify the way they retrieved and viewed it. Detailed, color-coded reports and custom-built dashboards made analysis of business stats and performance metrics exceedingly simple for managers, who could tweak the visuals to accommodate periodic requirements.

Flexible IT governance:

As the head of IT at Courier Logistics, Rachel's job was to ensure that all their business systems were online and working perfectly at all times. Given the rate of growth of the organization, this would have required an endless effort from the entire IT department, from maintenance, deployment, and updates to the constant need for troubleshooting. What's more, the nature of off-the-shelf programs or complex custom systems make employees contingent on IT for even the smallest of back-end alterations or adjustments.

Zoho Creator, being entirely cloud-based, eliminated the issue of server maintenance and updates. Apart from the convenience of being accessible from any device with an internet connection, this also meant the servers and hosting environment were looked after by the parent company

The fundamental principle of Zoho Creator's app-dev mechanism is low-code. Which, simply put, allows non-developers to build entire logic-assisted systems replete with workflows and task automation—in other words, build apps. Contextually, this gives the user the power of development, allowing them to add, remove, and modify functionality without having to rely on developers. This is a tremendously understated capability in everyday corporate scenarios, and relieves IT of the incremental duty of having to resolve trivial issues for users.

ABOUT Creator

Zoho Creator provides a platform for businesses to transform their processes into powerful, cloud-based applications. With the promise of enterprise mobility, flexible cross-service integration, and omni-channel distribution, low-code is the future—and is bringing digital transformation to the doorsteps of businesses worldwide. Get on board!

Learn more at: zoho.com/creator/enterprises.html