

Accelerate Innovation with Microsoft Power Automate

Scaling automation across your organization



3

Do what matters most and automate the rest

5

Why automate now?

7

Save time and improve accuracy with RPA

9

Automate smarter with AI

11

What can you do with Power Automate?

13

Copilot in Power Automate

14

Transform your business with Microsoft Power Automate

18

Tying it all together

Do what matters most and automate the rest

Repetitive tasks are at the heart of many business activities: receive an email, generate a purchase order, send a message, route a document, and approve a time-off request. These activities don't generate real value themselves. Instead, they are part of a to-do list that must be completed.

What if technology could manage these routine tasks and save employee energy for things that demand skill, critical thinking, or a personal touch? It's these activities that make an organization a leader in their industry, that capture new market share, and that empower employees to do more with less.

That's the real promise of automation—enabling the people most important to the business to optimize delivery and accelerate innovation with intelligent technology. Automation can help organizations streamline and scale operations and identify actionable insights. At the same time, it reduces time to market, development resources, and the costs or mistakes associated with cumbersome manual processes. Organizations using technology to amplify the efficiency of their employees are two steps ahead of those still transposing paper forms into digital records.

Microsoft Power Automate, part of Microsoft Power Platform, is a low-code automation solution that accelerates development by automating almost anything—from simple to complex business processes. Experienced developers can augment low-code workflows and apps to rapidly prototype and build solutions for this new era of productivity. They can also unlock the value hidden inside an organization's most valuable asset—its people.

"By using Microsoft Power Apps, Power BI, and Microsoft Power Automate, we've cut the time it takes to get an app from development to production by anywhere from 50 to 80 percent, which means delivering it in weeks instead of months or even years."

Jeff Toler, Senior Manager, Asset Protection
Implementation and Support Solutions
Walgreens Boots Alliance

Why automate now?

The ideas of automation and optimization have been around for a long time. From the invention of the printing press to the assembly line, people have innovated to minimize repetitive work and the time it takes to execute tasks.

By reducing the time spent on tedious activities, such as data entry or content processing, workers have time to invest in upskilling. These newly empowered workers can focus on pursuing innovations and unlocking new revenue opportunities. The promise of doing more with less has never been more compelling than in today's market.

One of the key opportunities is to assess and modernize legacy applications. Organizations have dozens, if not hundreds, of outdated applications that can't be upgraded. For example, it may be that the original developer is no longer available, or the institutional knowledge to modify the application has been lost. Maybe the organization is already working on a long-term redevelopment effort but wants to drive more efficiency in the meantime.

To accelerate innovation, those with the most business experience can combine their first-hand knowledge of their work with a low-code toolset provided by Microsoft Power Platform. These workflows can include advanced AI-based capabilities, such as sentiment analysis or content categorization and robotic process automation (RPA)—all of which can be used to create solutions that weren't imaginable a few years ago.

Microsoft is at the forefront of this change, with advanced AI technologies already built into Power Platform and more on the way. Microsoft Power Automate can help every developer of any level to create advanced workflows. Along with tools such as Copilot to help transform natural language into automation, Microsoft Power Automate users can use AI to help visualize processes, analyze data, and realize value quickly.

"We are very excited about this solution that will dramatically reduce labor costs, minimize the various points of error in our current solution and will allow us to rapidly expand the Local Freestyle Campaign to better support our customers."

Kaylan Cannon, Customer Service Manager
Coca-Cola Bottling Company United

Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey maker saves thousands of work hours using RPA functionality in Microsoft Power Automate.

[Read the full story](#)

Save time and improve accuracy with RPA

"Robotic process automation has solved a ton of problems with our integration with Sprint because we don't have to develop custom APIs. Within a very short period, we were able to get the RPA solution working without any training. Using the RPA capabilities in Microsoft Power Platform was a very natural process."

Brian Hodel, Principal Developer, Power Platform
T-Mobile

Robotic process automation (RPA) enables automation builders to record their on-screen actions, such as clicking in a dialog box, navigating input fields, and selecting screen elements. An RPA designer can then edit the steps or add to them and replay the sequence, repeating any series of mouse clicks and keyboard strokes they can imagine.

Technology integration between merging companies can be daunting—particularly with large, well-established firms. For example, in April 2020, the US-based telecommunications carrier T-Mobile completed its \$26 billion merger with Sprint, another major US telecommunications company.

Building a complicated integration across two legacy IT applications was no small task. To connect the systems and eliminate some of the manual steps, T-Mobile's development team first attempted to integrate into the application programming interfaces (APIs) of Sprint's legacy system—with little success.

They pivoted to using the RPA capabilities within [Microsoft Power Automate for desktop](#). The UI-based automation approach in RPA turns manual tasks into automated workflows by recording and playing back human-driven interactions—perfect for legacy systems with a few API capabilities.

Once they began using RPA, Hodel and his team were able to roll out a solution in a matter of weeks, quickly eliminating data lags and making huge strides in the T-Mobile and Sprint IT integration work. Hodel says, "I spent more time researching APIs than I did building out the entire RPA system."

Hodel advises, "Don't be fooled by the low-code branding. It is absolutely low-code because anyone can go in, and quickly get in, and learn the tools, and to move forward and to investigate them. But it is fully capable of delivering on any sort of business requirements. Anything you can build with the full-code solution, you're likely to be able to do with this as well. Really, consider it a no-limits platform."

600 Employee work hours saved per year

Reduced average processing time **12x**

Increased efficiency **11x**

Reduced data entry errors from 7% to 0%

Automate smarter with AI

AI has opened new avenues for automation. Tasks that were inaccessible to simple scripting solutions can now benefit from using AI models trained to identify words, patterns, and pictures. AI Builder, a set of pre-trained and customizable models provided by Microsoft Power Platform, enables automation developers to combine advanced AI capabilities with the tools and components of a low-code building environment.

Hexion, a global chemical company, turned to AI Builder's capabilities to create an intelligent app and workflows to link field sales and marketing people with the organization's Dynamics 365 platform. Using AI Builder business card reader components, Hexion's IT team, led by Jim Parker, was able to quickly prototype and deliver ScanIt, an application that could link the data from business cards to Dynamics 365 sales.

"Microsoft Power Platform and AI Builder components allowed us to quickly deliver an innovative and well-integrated solution within our Dynamics 365 platform for our marketing and sales business partners. The platform is a game-changer in this new world of rapid app delivery."

Jim Parker, Web and Collaboration
Services Manager
Hexion

Parker's team went from whiteboard to deployment in six weeks. Within the first week of use, Hexion's sales and marketing employees had processed 250 business cards. Through a combination of automatically recognized structured data and employees entering field notes, Hexion uses Microsoft Power Platform to move the acquired data through the system, attaching the business card images to Dynamics 365 customers and opportunities.

With the AI models of Power Platform, businesses can create new tools to extract, analyze, identify, classify, and translate content into structured data to drive decision-making, discover opportunities, and connect to customers.

What can you do with Power Automate?

You can amplify your teams' capabilities with Microsoft Power Automate, enabling them to create new tools to streamline the business and get results faster. The possibilities are limitless with the creativity teams can bring to the table.

Microsoft Power Automate is flexible, which enables it to stand on its own or integrate with other components provided by Microsoft Power Platform. With Microsoft Power Automate, organizations can:

- Identify company-wide bottlenecks and inefficiencies in workflows using the [process advisor](#).
- Build [cloud flows](#), [desktop flows](#), or [business process flows](#) to scale seamlessly and bridge legacy and modern systems.
- Use [AI Builder](#) to make automated workflows even more intelligent.
- Work in line with [Power Virtual Agents](#) to perform actions on behalf of users through conversational language.

Discover

Use Microsoft Power Automate to identify bottlenecks and opportunities for automation

Create

Use Microsoft Power Automate to design personal or enterprise automated workflows

Enhance

Use AI Builder to make your automated workflows even smarter

Extend

Use Power Virtual Agents to infuse automation through conversation

When looking at improving efficiency, it may be helpful to plot activities on a skill/value quadrant to understand better how much time is being invested in low-skill, low-value activities. Successful automation relies on an organization helping teams identify the tedious business processes holding them back from achieving their full potential. With over 800 built-in connectors, Microsoft Power Automate can connect to existing apps and data with just a few clicks. From a Microsoft-provided [automation toolkit](#) to a full-fledged [migration program](#), there's no better time to get help transitioning to Microsoft Power Automate.



Copilot in Power Automate

Microsoft Power Automate now includes an AI-based Copilot to help build workflows and drive the adoption of cloud automation.

Based on OpenAI Codex, the natural language interface allows teams to describe the business process they wish to automate in a few sentences and let Microsoft Power Automate do the work. Microsoft Power Automate has advanced to the next step in the evolution of code abstraction—moving from custom code

to low code to natural language authoring, where humans and machines work side by side to build applications together.

Like how conversational AI is changing the landscape of application development, the latest AI technology is also transforming how users accelerate automation tasks. This AI assistant can be accessed directly with an interface provided by Microsoft Power Automate, allowing users to describe what they want to automate using natural language.

With the addition of Copilot to Microsoft Power Automate, teams can take advantage of the large investment Microsoft has made in AI capabilities with little effort, gaining precious time that can be spent connecting with customers and achieving business goals.

[Learn more about Copilot](#)

The screenshot displays the Microsoft Power Automate user interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the 'Power Automate' logo, a search bar, and the user's name 'Contoso'. A left-hand navigation menu lists various features like Home, Approvals, My flows, Create, Templates, Connectors, Data, Monitor, AI Builder, Process advisor, Solutions, and Learn. The main content area features a large banner titled 'Start building your flow with Copilot' with a text input field for describing automation requirements. Below this, there is a 'Learning for every level' section with several video thumbnails for tutorials on automating business processes. At the bottom, a 'More to explore in Power Automate' section includes links to Pricing, Video how-tos, Community forum, and Documentation.

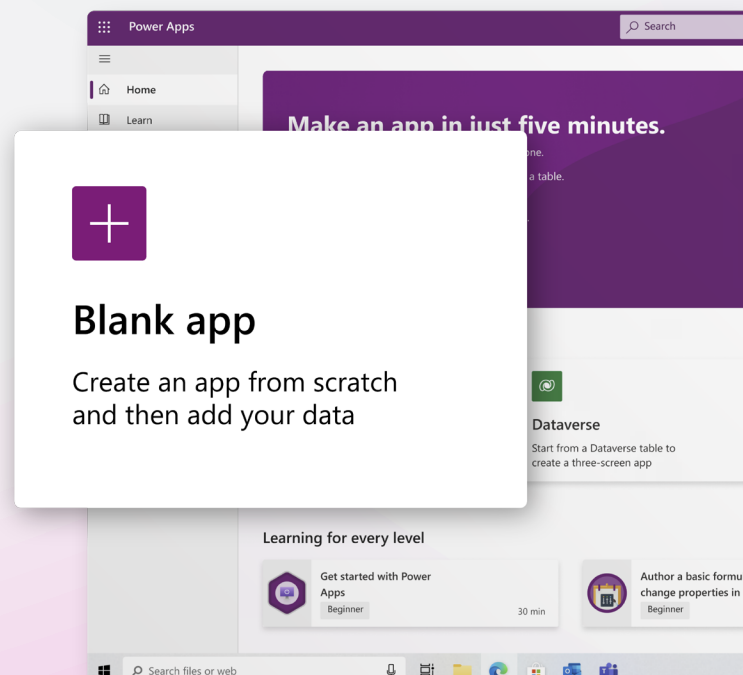
Transform your business with Microsoft Power Automate

Every organization has room for improvement, whether it's capturing feedback from customers, synthesizing collected data points into actionable data, or converting ideas into actions. Automation and business intelligence can be applied at every step of the journey, turning data into information and insights into outcomes.

Wondering where to start with automation? Let's look at three ways to transform your business with Microsoft Power Platform.

Reimagine forms

From schools to government agencies, from doctor's offices to product registration, organizations need their customers, vendors, and constituents to fill out forms. Organizations can request this data on paper forms, mail-in postcards, and sign-up sheets.



Integration between Microsoft Forms and Microsoft Power Automate makes it possible to accept data in several ways, including multiple-choice buttons, dropdowns, ratings, Likert scales, and free-text fields. Connecting Microsoft Power Automate to form submission automatically populates database tables, adds items to task lists, sends welcome or confirmation emails, starts customer service tickets, and even kicks off loyalty and rewards enrollment processes.

Imagine a consumer electronics company that supplies a mail-in warranty registration card with each purchase. By using Microsoft Power Automate with Microsoft Forms, a business user can convert that warranty registration card into a form that can be filled out via a mobile phone. This cuts printing and human data entry costs while capturing structured information on a new customer and avoiding any errors generated when transferring handwritten notes to electronic texts. Pro developers and non-developers can use Microsoft Power Automate and Microsoft Forms to replace decades of forms, reducing paper waste and eliminating errors generated when transferring handwritten notes to electronic records.

Unlock the power of low code with RPA

Millions of people and organizations still rely on legacy applications. These legacy applications touch every corner of the business world—from manufacturing floors to medical billing and customer relationship management. RPA allows organizations to automate anything, connecting legacy applications or websites with modern workflows and digital process automation (DPA)—all in a single interface.

Say an organization manages regional outpatient clinics that rely on several legacy applications for tracking a patient's visit data, insurance information, billing codes, and follow-up appointments. Using a simple desktop application, creators can record their actions as they click on form fields, tab through screens, launch other applications, or copy and paste data.

After the recording session, they can edit out any unnecessary or accidental steps, reorder the steps for even better automation, add steps to connect to the scheduling system, and see the steps come to life. Once the finished automation is ready, it can be exported and shared with other offices—enabling the entire organization to scale its efficiency.

Automation also presents the possibility to reduce or eliminate data entry errors. Manually copying data between forms or disparate systems sets up the opportunity for human error. Computers can excel at this type of repetitive task work, allowing businesses to pivot their employees to add value to customer interactions instead.

RPA can also be the key to unlocking integration and improving efficiency during mergers and acquisitions. For example, say two organizations want to coordinate ordering and fulfillment processes during an acquisition. This task may appear as a simple, straightforward business process—copying an order or request from one system to another.

APIs would typically be the approach for systems integration. But many in-house custom applications haven't been developed with that mindset. RPA can be used to bridge the capability gap—helping overcome the previously impossible task of making two independently designed systems work together without API capabilities.

[Gartner](#) has identified Microsoft as a Leader in the 2022 Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for RPA, for its product, Microsoft Power Automate.¹ The core product behind RPA capabilities, Microsoft Power Automate for desktop, is available as an embedded functionality within Windows 11 and as a [free download for Windows 10](#).

Saikat Ray, Arthur Villa, and 4 more
[Gartner, Magic Quadrant for Robotic Process Automation, 25 July 2022](#)

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Use intelligent AI to interact with customers

Managing customer feedback is an integral part of a modern business. The larger the organization, the more feedback they have to sift through. Timeliness is key when trying to maintain customer satisfaction. It's essential to keep up, with hundreds or thousands of feedback forms, social media comments, and customer service emails to process.

Customer service teams can integrate the AI sentiment analysis of Microsoft Power Automate with Twitter feeds, inboxes, form submissions, and other data sources to filter incoming messages from customers, patients, constituents, or vendors.

Typically, organizations need an entire team dedicated to reading customer feedback and prioritizing responses. AI can help your organization transition from high-touch email analysis to managing by exception. Sentiment analysis-based workflows can empower organizations to separate the positive and negative responses and connect customer care representatives to help ensure quick resolution of issues.

AI-based solutions can also help with the sales cycle, too. For example, Ingram Micro used the AI Builder capability of Microsoft Power Automate to create a new product, [InstaQuote](#), to automate the generation of sales quotes from customer emails. The InstaQuote solution extracts information from emails and attachments, looks up products and SKUs, and then assigns the completed quote to a sales associate to refine and present to a customer. This helps reduce time spent filling in forms and performing searches and increases the time employees can spend on high-quality customer interactions. This type of automation directly results in improved experiences for employees and customers alike.

"The speed we get with a low-code solution like Microsoft Power Platform eases change management. It's easier to show employees that we can enhance their experience and accelerate adoption."

James Laws, Director of CRM and Business Applications
[Ingram Micro](#)

Tying it all together

Every organization needs the information and capability to manage the lifecycle and control of their data and processes—whether it's auditing data activity, tracking down identities connected to a workflow or application, transitioning ownership and responsibility of a workflow to someone new, or preventing critical business information from leaking outside a process. This includes:

- Deep usage analytics
- Data loss prevention rules
- Identity-based security to help your organization manage risk
- Compliance requirements

As organizations increasingly encourage developers and business owners to work together on optimizing workflows, consolidating the number of tools to create, manage, and audit the flow of data has never been more important.

Microsoft has provided a complete set of best practices documentation and compliance tools to help organizations tackle these tasks in a streamlined fashion. By setting up a Center of Excellence (CoE), organizations can build robust governance and maintain control to help track and audit the entire lifecycle of workflows, applications, and processes built with Power Platform. The [Microsoft Power Platform CoE Starter Kit](#) provides tools and guidance for deploying world-class governance for your Power Platform investment.

The CoE Starter Kit includes components for application lifecycle management (ALM) and templates to help automate auditing and compliance throughout the organization. The CoE Starter Kit also provides a framework for organizations that want to train and onboard future innovators, equipping organizations for success.

Turn ideas into innovation with Microsoft Power Platform.

Your organization can accelerate innovation and reduce costs with Microsoft Power Platform, including Microsoft Power Automate, Power Platform enables you to analyze data, automate processes, and build apps, websites, and virtual agents—helping you do more.

Learn more:

- Try [Microsoft Power Automate](#) for free
- Take a [guided tour](#) of Power Automate
- Read [Workflow Automation with Microsoft Power Automate, Second Edition](#)