



Own the workflows, not the work

How intelligent workflows keep
IT and lines of business on track



Introduction

Why should IT be in everyone's kitchen?

In the age of digital transformation, everything is an IT issue. From scheduling, to HR, to sales, most processes require some level of IT support. And that means people can start to feel powerless about the processes running their work lives. In fact, because not everyone can create their own workflows, 58 percent of employees feel that IT processes are broken; 52 percent feel that onboarding processes are broken; and 44 percent feel that admin processes are broken.

And whom do they blame for all this? IT, of course.

And it's not just a tech thing; it's a very emotional issue. Right now, 67 percent of workers say their company's broken processes prevent them from maximizing their potential. And as you'd expect, it's worse among job-seekers, with 86 percent of those looking for new jobs saying their company's broken processes are a factor behind their decision.

Sure, IT is part of all these things—yet it's central to none of them. And as your company grows and scales up, unless processes are efficient, the problem just gets worse, saddling IT with more requests from all over the organization. So, if things don't change, IT will need to be expert in every process within the organization. The reason is fairly simple: IT pros are the ones creating and often custom coding solutions for everyone. If you think about it, that really shouldn't be necessary. And in fact, saddling IT with this additional burden creates bottlenecks that often lead to "shadow IT" behaviors, which are detrimental and dangerous to efficiency and security.



A closer look: Where is IT wasting most of its time?

IT should be the technological driver of an organization rather than the catchall for process development and management. There are several areas where IT departments tend to spend an inordinate amount of time.

Employee onboarding and offboarding should be handled by the respective managers, employees, and human resources. IT often winds up in the center of both processes, where a few simple improvements could streamline the processes and empower the right people. An automated sequence of events can much more easily alert multiple departments and trigger the phases of multiple onboarding processes. To reduce IT job tickets regarding employee ins and outs, we recommend that you:

- Replace paper documents with digital ones for faster approvals and reduced costs
- Use a centralized portal to inventory all equipment and software licenses
- Assign equipment (such as laptops, monitors, keyboards) and software licenses to employees
- Unify management of mailboxes, active directories, user groups, and external systems

Provisioning should be automated and easily configurable. Provisioning new accounts is one of IT's most important duties, but a workflow for doing things like adding or deleting user accounts or enabling phones and computers can be automated to take minutes rather than hours. Automated provisioning also gathers critical information, routes approvals, and notifies managers and employees without sucking more IT time for mindless admin and support duties. This can also save IT time on creation of forms that capture all required data and routing of provisioning requests to the correct approver.

Hardware and software requests are essential for evolving business; but they also cause IT headaches with multi-user licensing with enterprise, transaction, processor, concurrent user, or named user constraints. In fact, the average annual cost to organizations for maintenance fees and unused software licenses is \$12 billion. An automated workflow that fields requests, assigns user licenses, tracks usage, and pushes updates easily can help you:

- Track software licenses you've purchased
- Automatically assign and recycle licenses and hardware resources
- Monitor what you have, where it is, and who's using it
- Stay on top of compliance

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A closer look: Where is IT wasting most of its time?

Process message notifications can be a kind of internal spam in your organization, wasting time on an industrial scale. An automated messaging notification workflow uses predetermined logic to request, notify, and update only the most critical individuals in the process, allowing you to:

- Route messages to the correct employees and groups
- Improve employee productivity and morale by eliminating unnecessary messages
- Manage all pending tasks, notifications, and communication structure from a single portal view
- Prevent information leaks and ensure confidential information is secure

Help desk support is painfully familiar to every IT pro, from CIO to admin. And it only gets worse when lost tickets and slow responses trigger multiple requests and frustrate employees. Sending that first response acknowledging the request is perhaps the most critical step. Your internal customers need to know their issues are being addressed. Automating this customer service step can help you improve trust and relations by reassuring users that they are on the radar. It can also:

- Stop problems in the system before they start, and solve them faster so you can get employees back to work
- Capture required information and set notifications to keep requests moving to the correct technician or escalate overdue tickets
- Integrate with knowledge bases to provide faster and more accurate responses
- Get real-time data with insights on the number of incidents, time to resolution, and user satisfaction

Better living through automation in the cloud

If all of this seems like a tall order, it doesn't have to be—if your process automation strategy includes a few key capabilities.

First of all, it should be easy to implement and use advanced Low-code/No-code workflow creation and management. Low-code/no-code means you can delegate time-consuming workflow creation to those who need the processes without the need for extensive training. Look for a solution that allows you to offer a drag-and-drop user experience that's simple but sophisticated.

To solve an organization-wide process need, you need to think business-wide with a strategy that's connected to business systems and content repositories for better collaboration (on-premises, in the cloud, or a hybrid). When you can connect to virtually any business application, you can much more easily:

- Send and receive task notifications
- Fill out and submit forms
- Review and approve documents
- Keep business processes running efficiently

Finally, your strategy must take full advantage of the cloud's agility to scale quickly and efficiently at the moment needed. This is one of the basics of cloud computing. For instance, by partnering with Microsoft Azure, you get all the benefits of the cloud, including automatically archived documents in the cloud, with file names and locations specified within the workflow, for efficient and easily managed disaster recovery.

The next generation of workflow at a glance

Baseline criteria for an automation solution



Document generation
Automatically create consistent, compliant, up-to-date documents.



Robotic process automation
Look for this emerging technology to help reduce wasted IT and lines of business (LOB) time on repetition.



Process mapping
Improve efficiencies with a clear view of entire processes from the first stage to completion.



Process intelligence
Govern, analyze, and increase the efficiency of process automation with real-time analytics and insights.



Mobile apps and forms
Capture critical data anywhere to create a consumer-like app experience online or offline.



Machine intelligence
Get assistance in completing tasks with best-of-breed machine learning and natural language processes.

How intelligent workflows improve business

To determine the real-world effects of all these improvements, Forrester Research conducted a study of users of intelligent workflows. They found that when organizations strategically use workflow tools like Nintex with easy drag-and-drop functionality, LOBs can quickly build the workflows they need on their own without IT or consultants. This improves employee productivity, helps define and document processes, and saves time on onboarding and training to free up time for the business to focus on strategic goals.

The benefits of automating workflows with Nintex are dramatic. Forrester found that it saved over 40,000 hours of improved productivity by year three on everything from simple one- or two-step manual tasks to sophisticated multistep processes.

As you might expect, automated workflows can be delivered more cost-effectively—but that's not all. The savings Forrester reported are dramatic. Without having IT do it all, workflows took significantly less time. Forrester found that between \$350 and \$20,000 in costs per workflow could be avoided through automation with Nintex. In addition, these automated workflows help with compliance, leading to fewer failed audits and penalties.

Finally, Forrester found that workflow automation could be launched fast—in as little as a couple of days to be up and running with minimal training—empowering more employees quickly.

The numbers on workflow

Forrester found the economic impact of automating workflows can be substantial:

- Over **40,000** hours saved in year three
- Over **\$550,000** saved over three years on workflow creation
- Return on investment: **324%**
- Total benefits over three years: **\$3 million**

Case study

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Workflows in the eye of the healthcare storm

Organization

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is one of the most highly complex and strictly regulated bureaucracies in the US. CMS is the agency within the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that oversees federal healthcare policies in addition to implementing quality standards of care and combating insurance fraud. The agency has more than 6,000 employees, and their mandate includes a huge portfolio of processes and responsibilities.

Business situation

The CMS Office of IT lacked efficiency in managing projects throughout their life cycles. For one of the busiest offices in HHS, this caused unacceptable delays in completion of critical initiatives, which decreased overall employee productivity.

Solution

CMS implemented a combination of Nintex workflows and forms to more efficiently manage and track projects throughout their life cycles. Their strategy also provided for automated workflows to maintain critical compliance through proper governance.

Results

- Reduced help-desk ticket processing time from 24 hours to 6 hours
- Agency savings of \$1.5 million per year
- Greatly improved productivity through ability to support the entire agency's projects from project trackers, procurement plans, and HR trackers

Automate workflows. Don't do the work.

Nintex partners with Microsoft Azure to help thousands of customers around the world achieve greater efficiency and improved business performance through digital transformation. Operations leaders and IT professionals turn to the Nintex platform in the Azure environment to map and automate processes of all types, using data from a wide range of sources to empower more productivity and greater autonomy for every line of business.

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