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What's next.



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A CIONET EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE IN ASSOCIATION WITH BIZAGI

TRANSFORMING OPERATIONS

THROUGH DIGITAL LOW-CODE
PROCESS AUTOMATION

A CIONET executive roundtable in association with Bizagi Transforming Operations Through Digital Low-Code Process Automation



Organisations, within and across industries, are applying different techniques to automate their end-to-end processes. Many have encountered multiple obstacles, such as cultural resistance, knowledge hoarding, information silos, rigid legacy systems, lack of data integration, and a minimal skillset.

Proponents of digital low-code process automation argue that there is another way. Low-code techniques, they insist, help orchestrate people, process, data, systems, and bots, to deliver rapid and effective process automation.

To get a better understanding how organisations across the economy are approaching process automation, CIONET brought together a group of senior executives in early July. The event - 'Transforming Operations Through Digital Low-Code Process Automation' – was convened in association with Bizagi.

Adoption levels among attendees varied which meant some were keen to learn more, better understand the concept, and test its viability. Others had specific use cases in mind such as cyber risk and augmenting established SaaS (software-as-a-service) applications. One was keen to explore how he could apply process automation to some of the workloads destined to the cloud in order to avoid simply “lifting and shifting” existing applications.

Attendees were asked to appraise – in a single word – how they characterised the automation journey they had experienced. Answers ranged from “urgent” and “evolving” at the more optimistic end of the scale, to “inefficient”, “incomplete”, “disparate”, “antediluvian”, and “Neanderthal” at the other end of the scale. The latter set of words are an expression of frustration which in many cases is rooted in a glacial progress caused by a lack of an underlying operating model for the business. One attendee worried that automation simply masks existing inefficiencies. The danger, therefore, is that outcomes disappoint.

“Automation doesn’t necessarily solve your problems; it just makes the problems go faster.”

To get started, and to understand the possibilities of low-code process automation, some supported the idea of beginning with small projects. By taking a single use case – an absence management system in HR, for example – not only do organisations create a real-life proof of concept, they expose those working on the project to the potential of this approach. This creates expertise and evangelism that is likely to spread to other parts of the business. One attendee observed:

“Most business processes should start with automation by default. Only then should you make an argument why this or that process might be an exception.”



Such an approach suggests that pragmatism trumps idealism; that the tactical trumps the strategic.

Another attendee suggested that organisations should consider sorting processes into three categories – runners, repeaters, and strangers. In doing so, firms will get a better understanding of which process are obvious candidates for automation and which will require some pre-emptive re-engineering. Runners are those tasks that are easily repeated and require little if no human intervention. In the airline industry, for example, think online check-in. Repeaters are fairly standardised tasks, too, but with the odd crinkle that will require untangling. Think excess baggage. Finally, strangers are processes that feature very little standardisation and are likely to require a significant degree of human intervention. Think a delayed connecting flight.

Across the evening, Bizagi shared case studies from the likes of DHL Group and BAE Systems to illustrate the success in implementing a low-code process automation platform across their operations. Indicative measures suggest that there are gains to be made in agility (95% automation return in billing process); efficiency (60% reduction in supply chain operation costs); customer experience (nine times faster customer onboarding); and speed (87% increase on approval processes).

‘Transforming Operations Through Digital Low-Code Process Automation’

a CIONET executive dinner in association with Bizagi –
took place on 6 July 2023 at Franco’s of Jermyn Street, London.



