The benefits of citizen development

What's in this Success Insight

Application development on the Now Platform® can help developers of all levels be faster and more efficient in delivering value. Low- and no-code development can help organizations expand their application development beyond their normal development teams to include citizen developers who can further support innovation and digital transformation.

1. What are the benefits of a citizen developer program?

2. What are the characteristics of the strongest candidates to be citizen developers?

3. How should I begin to implement a citizen developer program?

Key insights

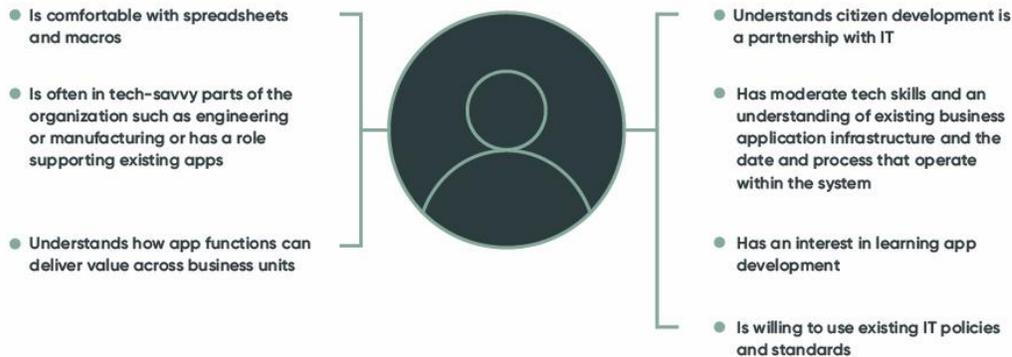## 1. What are the benefits of a citizen developer program?

Developers at varied levels of experience can create web and mobile applications using no- and low-code development. They use drag-and-drop components and model-driven logic on a graphic user interface.

These capabilities can make your developer team more efficient. But more than that, you can extend no- and low-code application development to include citizen developers—end users from outside your IT development organization—to create new business applications on platforms that IT sanctions. Citizen development can have compelling benefits, including:

Potential benefits of citizen development	
Innovation and efficiency	Citizen developers have front-line knowledge of various business units and are aware of potential process improvements. Citizen development can motivate innovation and foster creative thinking.
Speed	You can reduce the wait times to launch new apps.
Improvement	Citizen developers receive feedback directly from their colleagues who are also using their apps. When they realize they need to fix something or there's room for improvement, they can handle the adjustments independently.
Increase organization IP	Apps are developed by citizen developers using company resources. These apps are proprietary to your organization.
May reduce the risk of shadow IT	Shadow IT occurs when employees go outside of the IT-sanctioned applications and servers to do their work. Providing employees with the tools to develop their own solutions can encourage them to create viable solutions within IT-approved space.
Cost effective	Providing non-IT employees with the tools, support, and training to develop on the Now Platform can offer a cost-effective alternative than outsourcing.
Scale	Citizen development drives scale because you're working with people who already exist in your business.

2. What are the characteristics of ideal citizen developers?

The ideal ServiceNow citizen developers have process expertise, are comfortable with spreadsheets and macros, and have a desire to learn no-code app development. The image below shows a suggested profile that you can use with your business stakeholders to nominate potential citizen developer candidates. Our customers recommend starting your search in the more tech-savvy parts of your organization, such as engineering or manufacturing.

- Is comfortable with spreadsheets and macros

- Is often in tech-savvy parts of the organization such as engineering or manufacturing or has a role supporting existing apps

- Understands how app functions can deliver value across business units

- Understands citizen development is a partnership with IT

- Has moderate tech skills and an understanding of existing business application infrastructure and the date and process that operate within the system

- Has an interest in learning app development

- Is willing to use existing IT policies and standards

3. How should I begin to implement a citizen developer program?

A citizen developer program is key to expanding your low-/no-code developer pool, but it needs structure: Simply opening the floodgates can compromise your ability to provide oversight to development and manage technical debt.

Focus first on building a solid application development foundation by establishing governance, process, and expertise within the IT organization on no-, low-, and pro-code development. Confirm that you've identified ownership and roles as well as established effective processes to curate and maintain your applications. This will give you a solid foundation to expand to citizen developers effectively. Our Success Workbook Manage Application Development on the Now Platform will walk you through all the steps to achieve this.

As your strategy expands, identify a few ideal citizen developers for a pilot group. Align your pilot citizen developers with the appropriate application team that will apply their process and business expertise. Your roadmap should set some type of entry criteria for each group of citizen developers by defining training requirements and allocating appropriate resources for training and communications for each population.

Additional resources

- Managing Application Development on the Now Platform

- Manage platform demand

- How should citizen developers enhance their learning?

- Managing Application Development on the Now Platform video

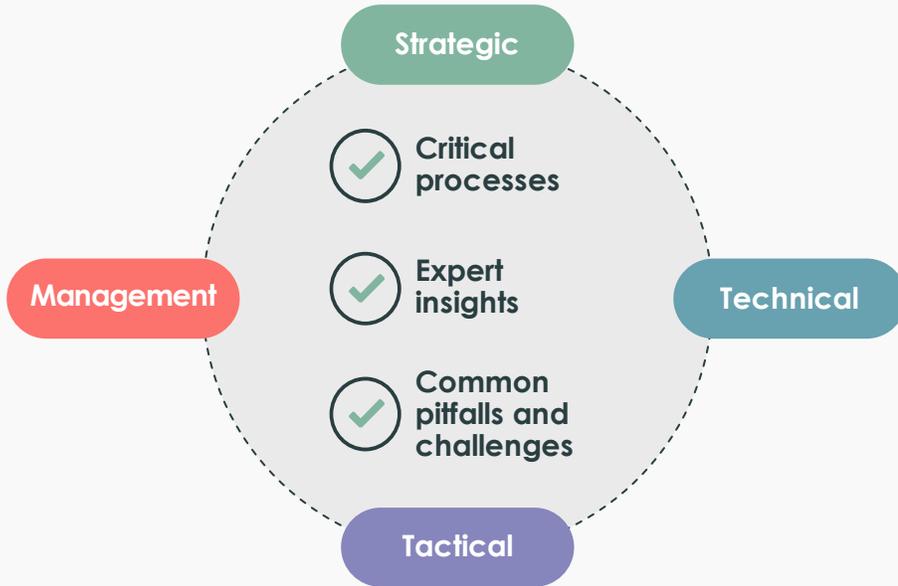Additional resources are also available on our Customer Success Center.

If you have any questions on this topic or you would like to be a contributor to future ServiceNow best practice content, please contact us at best.practices@servicenow.com.

servicenow

Customer Success Best Practices

ServiceNow's Best Practice Center of Excellence provides prescriptive, actionable advice to help you maximize the value of your ServiceNow investment.

Definitive guidance on a breadth of topics

Strategic

Management

Technical

- ✓ **Critical processes**
- ✓ **Expert insights**
- ✓ **Common pitfalls and challenges**

Tactical

Designed for:

- Executive sponsors
- Platform owners and teams
- Service and process owners

Created and vetted by experts

Best practice insights from customers, partners, and ServiceNow teams

Based on **thousands of successful implementations** across the globe

Distilled through a **rigorous process** to enhance your success

Proven to help you transform with confidence

Practical

Actionable

Value-added

Expert-validated

Get started today.

Visit **Customer Success Center**.

Contact your ServiceNow team for personalized assistance.