



The inside story:

How Zoho runs on Zoho Creator

The AI-powered low-code platform powering
6,000+ internal apps across Zoho Corporation



Executive summary

According to **IDC**, nearly a billion new business applications will be developed globally by 2028.

Application demand across enterprises continues to rise, but there aren't enough skilled developers to keep up. IT teams are already stretched across modernization and maintenance, leaving important business needs delayed or deprioritized.

AI-powered app development platforms aim to speed up app creation from idea to prototype. But the challenge isn't just generating apps faster. Applications must meet standards for security, governance, scalability, and integration with other existing systems to operate reliably in day-to-day business environments.

Zoho Creator, an AI-powered low-code platform, bridges the gap between growing application demand and limited IT capacity — while meeting the standards required for enterprise-grade use. More than 30,000 organizations across industries and regions use Zoho Creator to power their operations.

In this ebook, we share insights from within Zoho on how Zoho Creator powers thousands of business applications across the organization, and how a single platform supports diverse departments and critical functions at scale.

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The idea behind Zoho Creator

As organizations grow, multiple challenges emerge that affect momentum. External challenges often come with little warning and limited control. Internal challenges, however, are shaped by the systems, processes, and tools organizations choose to build.

Over time, these internal challenges intensify as scale and complexity increase:

- ✿ Business teams lack tools tailored to their specific operational needs.
- ✿ Processes designed around old constraints begin to strain as complexity grows.
- ✿ IT teams struggle to keep up as application needs multiply across the organization.



At Zoho, we experienced these challenges firsthand in 2006. Our unaddressed long-tail needs slowed teams down across the organization. These needs ranged from tracking competitors and monitoring vendor quality to capturing employee feedback—the kind of requests that rarely make it to the top of IT's list.

Over time, the cost of waiting became clear. That led us to a simple but powerful question.

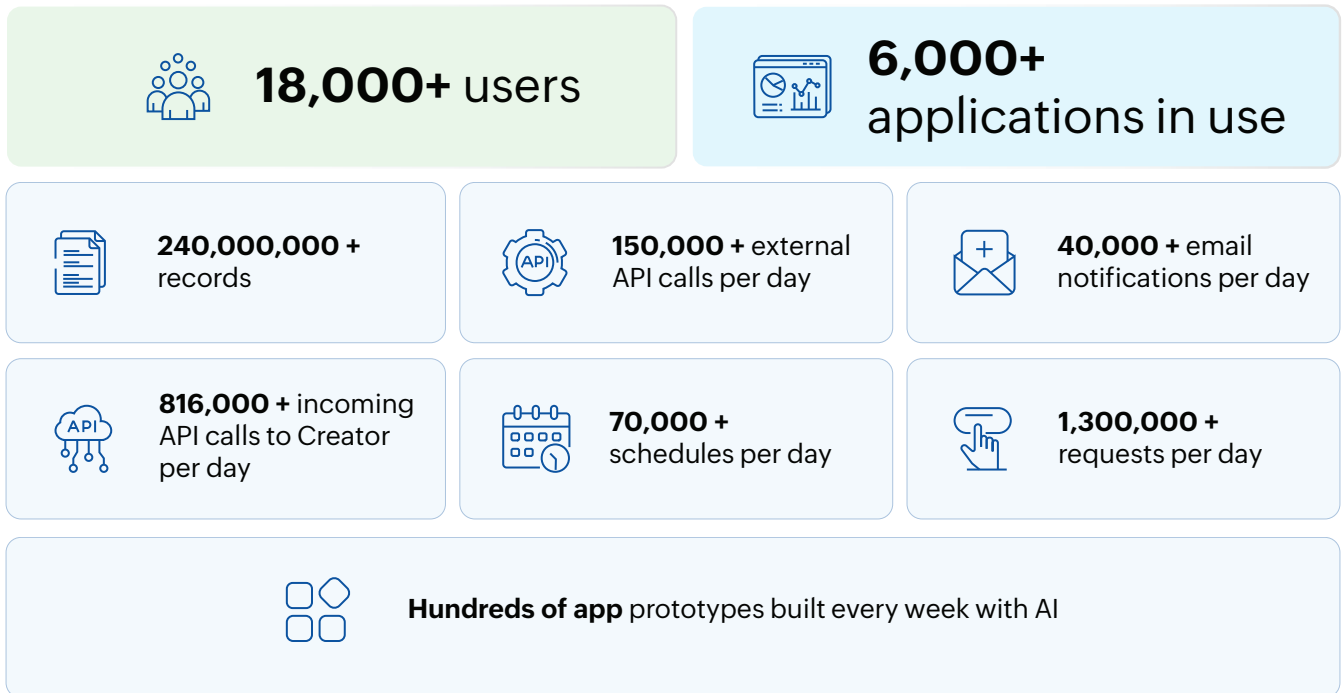
What if the people closest to the problem could build the solution themselves?

Back in 2006, the idea of low-code or no code platforms had not yet taken shape. But the belief was clear. If teams could create tools around their own context, friction could be removed rather than added. That belief became the foundation for Zoho Creator.

In the years since, the platform has evolved, with AI further bridging the gap between problems and solutions, making custom app development faster and more accessible than ever.

Where we are today

Today, hundreds of teams at Zoho use Creator to build custom apps that power their daily operations. Here's a snapshot of how deeply Zoho Creator is woven into our operations:



* Based on internal usage data from Zoho.

What teams at Zoho have built on Zoho Creator

Across Zoho, teams began building applications when no off-the-shelf tool fit their needs, or when existing processes were manual and not digitized. Most efforts started small, with apps to manage approvals, track items, or reduce repetitive manual work.

As teams see the impact, they expand these apps to cover more functions and automate larger parts of their operations. Some of these apps have evolved into comprehensive systems that teams depend on to run their day to day operations.

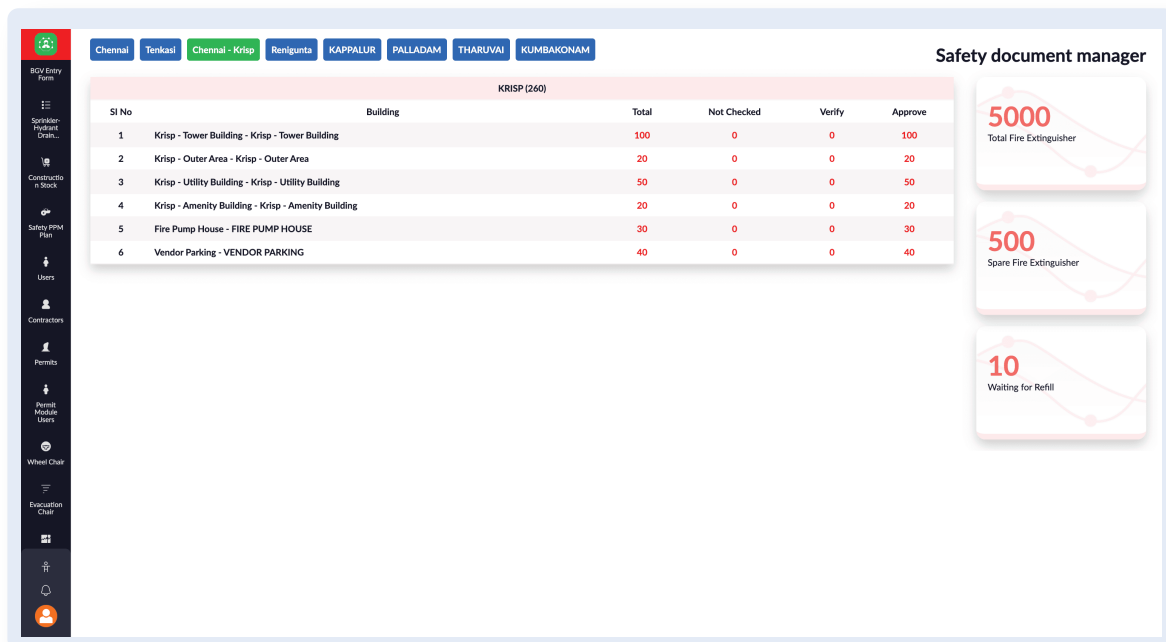
Flagship applications



Safety management

Challenge:

Zoho operates offices across India with strict safety compliance requirements. Assets such as fire hydrants, extinguishers, gas monitoring systems, wheelchairs, and first aid kits require regular inspection. Without a centralized system, records were spread across spreadsheets, limiting real time visibility. A single platform was needed to manage safety operations across locations.



*Sample data shown.

Solution:

Using Zoho Creator, the admin & safety team built a custom safety management app that brings all of these processes into a single place. It helps the teams at Zoho get a complete view of the safety and compliance aspects of the organization.

The app allows safety officers to:



Plan mock drills



Respond quickly to incidents



Track licenses and incident reports



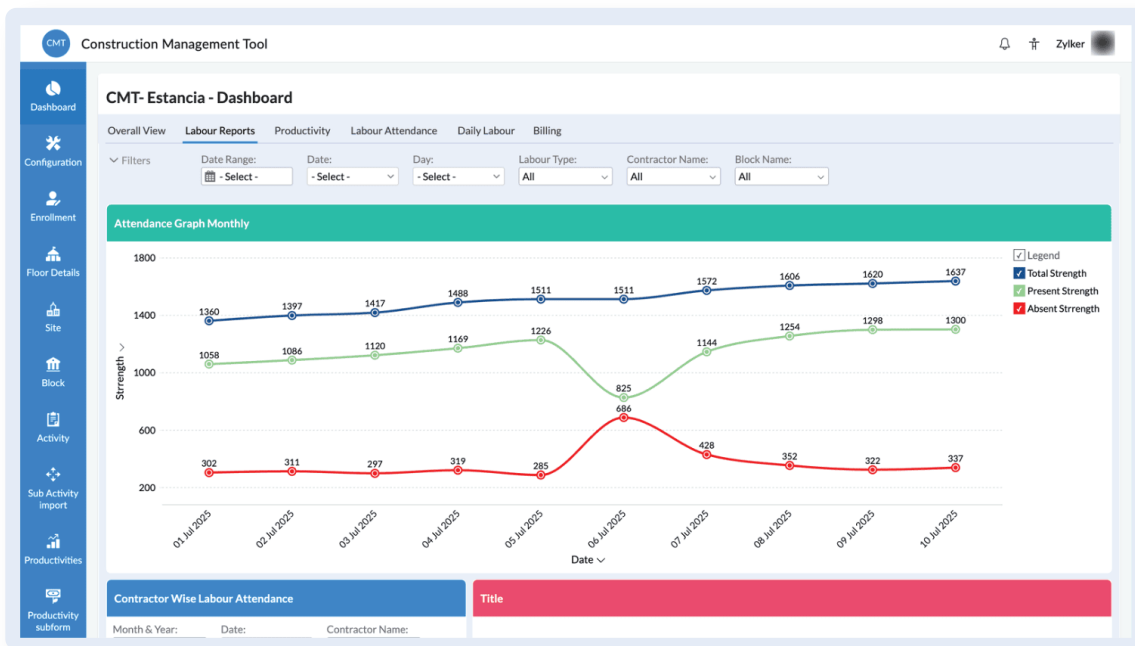
Run maintenance checks



Construction management

Challenge:

At Zoho HQ, multiple construction projects run in parallel with different contractors and workers. Relying on spreadsheets made it hard for the civil engineering team to get real time visibility into on site activity, project spend, and progress. The team needed better tools to track and optimize operations across ongoing projects.



*Sample data shown.

Solution:

The team built a custom construction management app on Zoho Creator. It initially focused on labor attendance, captured multiple times a day across sites. As new modules were added, the app improved visibility into daily operations. It revealed manual work that slowed teams down, including cleaning and material movement, leading to targeted equipment investments.

The app helps the civil engineering team:



Track productivity and site-level activities



Manage vendors and compare vendor rates



Calculate budgets and track expenses



Identify areas for improvement



IBMS - Integrated Building Management System

Challenge:

The security and facilities team at Zoho manages multiple offices with many contractors moving in and out daily. Without a centralized system, access control, attendance tracking, and visibility across building systems became difficult. The team also needed a proactive way to monitor critical equipment and schedule preventive maintenance.

The screenshot shows a user profile form in the IBMS application. The form is titled 'IBMS Docs' and includes a navigation menu on the left with options like 'BMS Operators', 'Daily Shift Report', 'User Details Entry', and 'Vendor Rope and Holder'. The main form area contains the following fields:

- Vendor / Employee ID: 1001
- Operator / Employee Name: Zylker
- Qualification Details: B.Tech
- Email: Zylker@Zylker.com
- Mobile Number: +91 - 9999999999
- Date of Joining: 01-01-2015
- Location: Estancia
- Seating Location: Main Building
- Team: Other
- Responsible Location's: Tenkasi
- DRI: Other
- Team Head: John
- Team Lead: Mike
- BDV Status: Received
- Deployment Order: Received
- IPF ID / Employee ID: 1001
- Zoho Card / ID Number: 0000
- Aadhar Number: 101010101010
- Date of Birth: 01-01-1990
- Marital status: Unmarried
- Emergency Contact Number: +91 - 9999999999
- Father's Name / Husband Name: John
- Blood Group: O+
- Micro responsibility: Manage security systems in the building.
- Operator Status: Active
- Creator Access: Chennai BMS
- Signature: Select image

Solution:

Using Zoho Creator, and with the help of the central IT team, they built an app to centralize facility and security management. The app governs access for cleaning crews, electrical technicians, and other maintenance staff. By consolidating all of this into one system, the team has significantly improved oversight and coordination across facilities.

The app helps security and facilities team:



Monitor building devices such as CCTV, etc.



Track security and housekeeping attendance



Plan workforce training sessions



Manage repairs and maintenance of devices



Compliance management

Challenge:

At Zoho, privacy and compliance have always been top priorities. The compliance team manages multiple management systems but lacked a single tool to support the full lifecycle, from onboarding and risk assessment to training, audits, and readiness. They needed one system to manage activities and stay audit ready across standards.

The screenshot displays the Zoho Compliance Management dashboard. On the left is a navigation menu with options like Dashboard, Team Based Dashboard, Team Dashboard, Compliance Score Dashboard, Risk Dashboard, GRC, GAP Assessment Dashboard, WCAG Success criteria, Change Management for SDLC, and ECC & CCC Audit. The main content area features a top navigation bar with tabs for Score Board, Associated Interested Parties, Internal/External Issue, Asset Register, Risk Assessment, Security, Privacy & Quality Objectives, Communication Plans, RACI, Awareness & Training, Audit, CSA, Document Management System, and CISP Open Issues. Below this is a 'Health Status' table with columns for No, Requirement, Health Status, and Record Count. The table lists five requirements, all with a status of 'Existing'. Below the table is a 'Health Status Description' section with 'Missing' and 'Existing' definitions. At the bottom is a 'Not Reviewed / Not Approved' table with columns for No, Requirement, Record Count, Reviewed Count, Approved Count, Reviewed Status, and Approved Status. The table lists four requirements, all with 'Not Reviewed' and 'Not Approved' statuses.

No	Requirement	Health Status	Record Count
1	Risk	Existing	00
2	Information Security & Privacy Objectives	Existing	00
3	Communication Plan	Existing	00
4	RACI	Existing	00
5	Document Management System	Existing	00

Health Status Description
Missing - Need to add the necessary data to fulfill the requirement
Existing - Adequate data is present, ensure to review and approve the requirements quarterly.

No	Requirement	Record Count	Reviewed Count	Approved Count	Reviewed Status	Approved Status
1	Risk - ISMS, Cloud Security, Cloud Privacy & ITSM	00	00	00	Not Reviewed	Not Approved
2	Information Security & Privacy Objectives	00	00	00	Not Reviewed	Not Approved
3	Communication Plan	00	00	00	Not Reviewed	Not Approved
4	RACI	00	00	00	Not Reviewed	Not Approved

*Sample data shown. Sensitive information has been redacted.

Solution:

The team chose Zoho Creator early on to build the compliance management app, knowing it would scale across multiple areas. The app is integrated tightly with other Zoho products, like Cliq, Writer, WorkDrive, Learn, and Mail. It underpins all compliance activities, and helps Zoho stay compliant.

Today, the app supports modules for:



Team onboarding
and training



Risk assessment
(ISMS, PIMS,
QMS, etc.)



Audits and document
management

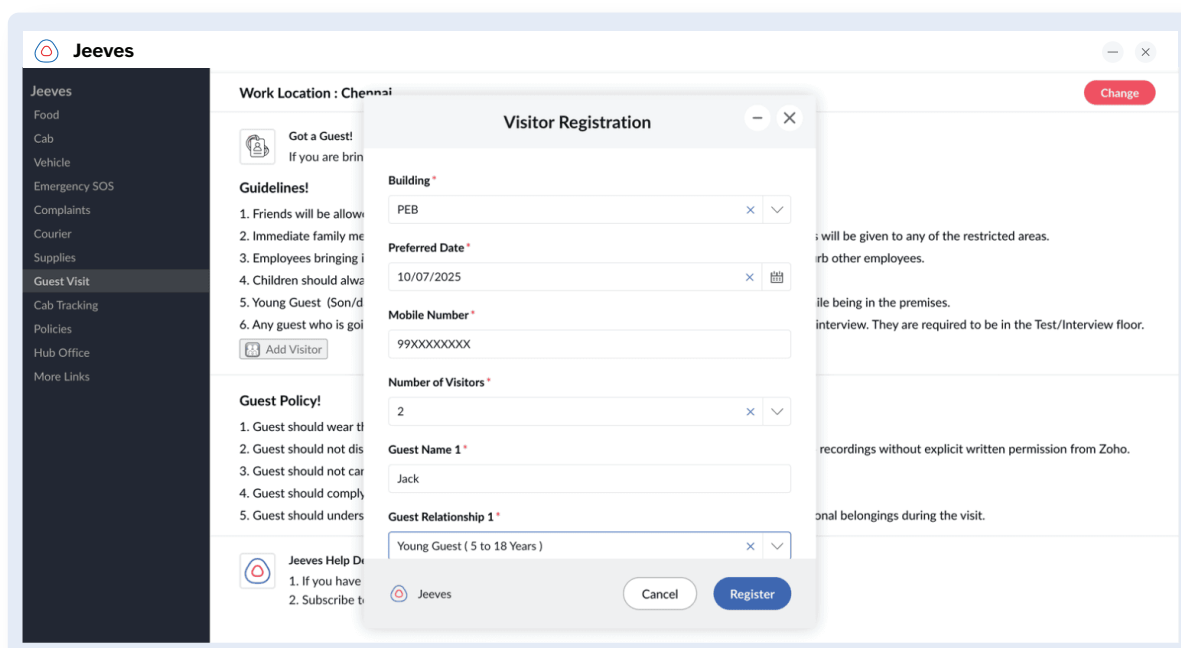


Compliance scoring
and readiness



Challenge:

As Zoho grew in size, even simple employee requests began to add up across teams. Employees were often unsure where to go for facility requests, or even simple needs like cafeteria menus or booking charging slots. This led to confusion and repeated support queries.



Solution:

The HR team at Zoho built a self-serve app on Zoho Creator for employees to request and access IT, HR, and facility services in one place. The app is integrated with Zoho Cliq for direct access from chat, helping reduce dependencies on teams and speed up everyday requests.

Using the app, employees can:



Raise and track complaints



Request office supplies and furniture



Check cafeteria menus and occupancy



Reserve electric vehicle charging slots

These comprehensive apps offer a glimpse into how Zoho Creator is used within Zoho. What follows highlights a broader set of use cases built by different teams across the organization.

For admin and facilities



Guest house management

Employees request and manage guest house stays across offices; admins handle booking coordination.

Key Modules:

Occupancy tracking

Maintenance scheduling

Reservation management



Material movement

Digitizes asset movement tracking for laptops, servers, and phones through intelligent gate pass workflows.

Key Modules:

Asset status visibility

Utilization analysis

Gate pass generation



Visa process letter

Employees request visa invitation letters for Zoho events and track application status throughout the process.

Key Modules:

Letter requests

Merchandise requests

Foreign currency exchange



Blood donation camp tracker

HR announces blood donation drives, manages employee registrations, and tracks participation across campaigns.

Key Modules:

Donor database

Engagement tracking

Drive scheduling



Night cab service

Night shift employees register for daily cab rides with automated driver assignment.

Key Modules:

Driver database

Driver allocation

Trip management



CSR program management system

Plans and tracks corporate social responsibility initiatives with budget oversight and volunteer coordination.

Key Modules:

Budget allocation

Volunteer registration

Employee feedback collection



Seating analysis

Analyzes workspace seating requirements across all Zoho Corp offices in India for capacity planning.

Key Modules:

Office-wise seat mapping

Utilization tracking

Facilities optimization



AC and electrical asset tracker

Manages electrical and AC assets across 40+ offices with complete lifecycle tracking and maintenance.

Key Modules:

QR-based movement tracking

Issue logging

Asset requests



Visitor management

Controls office and restricted area access with differentiated security protocols and regulatory compliance.

Key Modules:

Access authorization

Facility usage analytics

Compliance reporting



EV charger slot booking

Employees reserve electric vehicle charging slots in advance to eliminate wait times and uncertainty.

Key Modules:

Reservations

Charging station management

Usage tracking



Parking management

Employees register vehicles for security clearance; system integrates with parking sensors for real-time tracking.

Key Modules:

Vehicle registration

Availability tracking

Vehicle location finder



Scrap sale tracker

Manages multi-site scrap sales from vendor bidding through payment confirmation and asset collection.

Key Modules:

Quotation management

Approval workflows

SEZ duty calculations



Vendor portal

Self-service vendor platform to manage onboarding, payment processing, and invoice approvals with complete visibility.

Key Modules:

Vendor onboarding

PO management

Performance dashboard



Zoho Creator has transformed the way our safety, security, and maintenance teams operate. We run multiple apps seamlessly on a single platform. The platform's low-code, customizable nature made it possible to build solutions quickly, like launching a complete shift scheduling system for our security teams in just 15 days.

Even non-technical users pick up on these apps in no time, which speaks volumes about the platform's simplicity. We truly feel fortunate to have Zoho Creator—it has become indispensable to our daily operations.

- Soundararaman,
Head of Safety & Security, Zoho Corp

For product and engineering operations



Performance tracker

Monitors server performance and manages demand across Zoho Creator infrastructure for capacity planning.

Key Modules:

Server usage analytics

Resource utilization tracking

Optimization insights



Product analytics tracker

Creator product team analyzes feature usage patterns, tracks adoption metrics, and measures the business impact of product changes.

Key Modules:

Feature usage analytics

Adoption tracker

Product insights dashboard



QA & release management

Manages feature requests and release cycles with automated test case generation and defect tracking.

Key Modules:

Feature request assignment

Defect logging

Release cycle coordination



Build tracker

Streamlines CI/CD workflows by combining build management, deployments, task assignment, and team coordination processes.

Key Modules:

Task pooling & assignment

Mentor approvals

Fix monitoring



Looking for the right automation platform can be a draining experience, especially when you believe there isn't a tool that can handle the level of customization your organization needs. But that is not always the case. With a powerful solution builder like Zoho Creator, you don't have to fit your requirements into a prebuilt mold.

- Prakash Rathinam,
Senior Product Manager, Zoho Creator

For HR and employee experience



Employee PF tracker

HR and payroll teams process provident fund transfers for new employees from their previous employers.

Key Modules:

Transfer request management

Documentation handling

Status tracking



ID card request tracker

Employees request new ID cards or photo updates with approval-based scheduling ensuring smooth processing.

Key Modules:

Request submission

Photo update scheduling

Production tracking



Employee benefits tracker

Manages welcome kits and gifts distribution for events and celebrations across locations with complete visibility.

Key Modules:

Registration tracking

Proxy management

Location-wise distribution



Daycare request tracker

Assists employees on maternity leave with daycare arrangements during rejoining including vacancy allocation and coordination.

Key Modules:

Babysitter selection

Location preferences

Vacancy management



Campus placement tracker

Organizes campus recruitment drives by coordinating all resources and logistics in a single application.

Key Modules:

AV equipment tracking

Venue booking

Drive scheduling



Zoho Creator is the best for building online apps! We can easily build applications with the drag and drop fields. The apps also seamlessly integrate with other Zoho products like Zoho People, etc. For a non-tech savvy HR person, Creator acts as a boon to manage our voluminous data with strong security.

- **Gurumurthy Kalyanaraman,**
Senior HR Manager, Zoho Corp

For IT and security



IT asset management

Tracks IT assets while delivering lifecycle intelligence that shapes procurement strategies and reduces capital expenditure.

Key Modules:

Asset tracking

Predictive maintenance

Lifecycle analysis



Anti-spam tracker

Employees report suspicious emails and messages to maintain secure and clutter-free communication channels.

Key Modules:

Suspicious content reporting

IP blacklisting

Threat tracking



Incident management tracker

Employees log security incidents across products with detailed data capture including root cause analysis.

Key Modules:

Incident reporting forms

Root cause analysis

Findings management



Network change management

Manages network operations and change requests across firewalls, switches, and ISP vendors with issue resolution.

Key Modules:

Change request handling

Shift management

Root cause analysis tracking



Access control management

Tracks employee requests for restricted area access with purpose documentation and multi-level approval workflows.

Key Modules:

Access request tracking

Active user reporting

Temporary access automation



Zoho Creator is designed with security and privacy at its core, with built-in compliance capabilities, role-based permissions, and audit trails by default. Teams can focus on building solutions without worrying about security gaps. Enterprise-grade encryption protects data and systems, while privacy controls ensure GDPR and HIPAA compliance—all without added complexity.

- **Saravanan Muthian,**
Chief Information Officer, Zoho Corp

For marketing



Customer advisory board

ManageEngine's marketing team onboards enterprise IT leaders to share product usage insights and shape roadmap direction.

Key Modules:

Customer onboarding

Feedback collection

Program management



Content review tracker

Writers submit drafts, editors review and update content, managers track progress and workload distribution.

Key Modules:

Draft submission

Editorial review workflows

Progress tracking across 500+ writers



Central marketing tracker

600 ManageEngine users coordinate creative requests, content reviews, events, analyst interactions, and social media planning.

Key Modules:

Creative request management

Event coordination

GTM activity planning



Customer consent portal

Marketing teams use a Creator app integrated with Zoho CRM to track customer consent for case studies, and testimonials.

Key Modules:

Consent tracking

Customer self-service portal



Zoho brand repository

Consolidates brochures, decks, guidelines, infographics, and key brand data for quick employee access.

Key Modules:

Brand guidelines repository

Resource version control

Team messaging alignment



Creator marketing tracker

Creator marketing team manages campaign planning, task coordination, and content workflows in one platform.

Key Modules:

Design requests

Content review

Event management



Creator's use isn't restricted to any departmental boundaries. From an organization's perspective, different functional teams can use the platform, be it HR, marketing, finance, legal, or even admin. That's the power of Zoho Creator.

You don't have to be a developer or know coding in-depth to create solutions, since it's low-code. All you need is a clear idea of your requirement and you can build an app in a day. I would recommend Zoho Creator to anyone looking for quick development and an even quicker turnaround time.

- Ajay Kumar K.G,
Head of Global Marketing, ManageEngine

For sales, solutions, and partnerships



Zoho Creator POC

Serves as central repository for all proof of concept apps built for prospects during evaluation.

Key Modules:

POC request
tracker

Approval
workflows

App repository



Creator partnership app

Manages complete Partner lifecycle from initial interest through ongoing collaboration and network growth.

Key Modules:

Solution offerings
catalog

Performance
leaderboards

Training
programs

For training and user education



Zoho DX training tracker

Tracks and organizes Zoho's developer suite training programs from planning through post-event surveys and revenue.

Key Modules:

Trainer availability
tracker

Pre-event
checklist

Revenue
tracking



User education tracker

Manages user education requests for Zoho Creator including documentation, tutorials, RFIs, translations, and UI guidelines.

Key Modules:

Request
management

Personalized task
dashboards

Feedback
collection



Translation tracker

Manages product content translation workflows connecting product teams, translation vendors, and finance for end-to-end coordination.

Key Modules:

Content submission

Vendor quote management

Translation delivery



Creator is so empowering because it allows you to map and execute new and complex processes exactly as you envisioned them. It lets you build the ideal solution that you've always wished for without having to make compromises.

Compared to out-of-the-box solutions, it doesn't force you or your team to conform to someone else's understanding of how a particular process should look or work. With Creator, you're set free of the constraints of somebody else's vision, and you get to bring your own to life.

- David Elkins,

Head of US Enterprise Content Strategy, Zoho Corp

For customer support



Escalation matrix

Zoho Creator's support team manages ticket prioritization in Zoho Desk using escalation scores and sentiment analysis.

Key Modules:

Ticket categorization

Stakeholder routing

Critical issue tracking



SME process tracker

Provides real-time subject matter expert availability for instant support connections with centralized knowledge management.

Key Modules:

SME availability tracking

Knowledge base repository

Developer escalation tracking

For finance



Swift chaser

Transforms multi-day manual invoice follow-up into intelligent bulk processing for overdue and payable invoices.

Key Modules:

Batch processing workflows

Invoice status tracking

Follow-up scheduling



Payment tracker

Streamlines facility-related spending management for Zoho's Chennai campus with spend and payment monitoring.

Key Modules:

Spending oversight

HVAC sensor monitoring

Maintenance calculations



We needed a customized solution to optimize our AR follow-up process in order to avoid duplicate reminders and overwhelmed clients. With Zoho Creator, we quickly built a tailored app that unified reminders and tracking, helping us stay aligned and meet targets more effectively.

- **Ivan Cecil,**

Finance Manager (Invoice & Accounts Receivables), Zoho Corp

For legal and compliance



Legal agreement tracker

Legal team manages and tracks agreements including MSAs, NDAs, and contracts with seamless document workflows.

Key Modules:

Agreement management

Contract tracking

Zoho Writer, Sign integration



Legal MAF requests

Handles manufacturer's authorization form generation required for bid submissions by sales teams and Partners.

Key Modules:

MAF generation workflows

Request tracking

Approval workflows

For events



Zoholics one-on-one tracker

Tracks one-on-one meetings and presentation details for events like Zoholics and Zoho Inspire.

Key Modules:

Availability scheduling

Registration mapping

Best-fit employee matching

These apps reflect a slice of the apps built internally at Zoho using Creator. Next, we look at how teams are enabled to build these apps.

How teams build on Zoho Creator

The true strength of Zoho Creator lies in being both accessible and empowering for the people closest to the problem. Most of these apps are built directly by the business teams that use them. Problems are solved faster, and there's very little dependency on the IT team.

This works because there is clear structure in place. The central IT team at Zoho operates as a Center of Excellence (COE), using the platform to guide application strategy, and ensure security and governance, while enabling teams across the organization to build.

Development environments in Zoho Creator allow business and IT teams to co-create applications when needs are more complex. In cases that require deeper expertise, the central IT team steps in as an enabler and builds on the requesting team's behalf.

With **AI-powered app development** in Creator, supported by Zia (Zoho's AI assistant), teams can move faster from thought to execution. Users can build functional apps in just minutes and then refine or customize the apps within days.

This reflects a broader approach within Creator. As new technologies emerge, Creator incorporates them in ways that align with how teams already work. This helps organizations adopt new capabilities without disruption and keeps their application strategy future proof.

Security and governance at scale

Security and governance in Zoho Creator aren't afterthoughts—they're built into every layer from the start. This is especially important for AI-powered app development.

Many platforms add AI capabilities first and figure out security later. Creator is security first by design, which means AI capabilities operate within the same enterprise grade controls as the rest of the platform.



Data in Creator is protected through encryption and compliant with business and regulatory requirements such as GDPR, HIPAA, ISO 27001, and SOC 2. With secure authentication mechanisms like single sign on, and access controls, Zoho ensures only authorized users interact with applications and data. And, every application, simple or complex, operates within the same security framework.

Audit trails, role based permissions, and usage monitoring allow policies to be enforced consistently, even as more teams build and manage their own applications. With clear governance controls in place, IT teams gain visibility into how applications are created, accessed, and modified across Zoho.

This foundation becomes especially important at scale. We run more than 6,000 applications on Creator, built by employees across Zoho. These applications vary widely, from simple internal apps to complex core systems. Creator handles this range of complexity within a single platform, backed by an architecture designed to support large volumes of users, data, and transactions.

All of this empowers IT to guide and monitor the environment, while business teams build with confidence.

A blueprint for transformation

Our ebook titled [How AI Powered Low-Code Drives Enterprise Success](#), shaped by insights from the Zoho CIO, laid out the major IT challenges enterprises face and made the case for AI-powered low-code as a strategic advantage for enterprise agility. This ebook shows how Zoho applied those same principles internally to transform our operations.

Our journey with Creator began with a few teams solving specific operational problems, often replacing manual or fragmented processes with purpose built apps. As impact became visible, adoption spread organically across teams.

Throughout this journey, what made the difference for us was the synergy between business teams and IT. Instead of operating on separate tracks, both worked together on a shared platform. This collaboration allowed application development to scale steadily without fragmentation. **For enterprises looking to improve agility without compromising governance, the same approach offers a practical path forward.**



Zoho Creator empowers teams to **build internal tools, create external portals, run mission-critical core systems, extend applications, and modernize legacy systems.**

Today, over 30,000 organizations globally use Zoho Creator to solve problems unique to their teams. Zoho Creator empowers enterprises to build faster and smarter, with AI simplifying app creation and adding intelligence to every app built on the platform.





Powering Zoho and thousands of organizations every day.



Ready to power yours?

zoho.com/creator | hello@zohocreator.com | |

