



Workflow & Automation | Article

How Microsoft Business Applications Is Transforming Businesses Today

In today's ever-shifting digital landscape, businesses are looking to digitise their workflows to empower a seamless business experience and improve productivity. One of the trends that has proven to be a game-changer in accelerating digital transformation is low-code automation tools, which empower technical and non-technical users alike, as well as speed up app development time.



80% of respondents see automation as the foremost driver to achieve cost optimisation.

(Gartner I&O Leaders Survey, 2021)

Identifying the right automation platform and tools is the bedrock that empowers businesses to automate and optimise their everyday processes. Microsoft Business Applications puts the power of AI and user-friendly code building apps into the hands of businesses that are looking to simplify the connection between their people and data.

Thanks to Ricoh's expertise and strong partnership with Microsoft, companies can rely on Ricoh to integrate and implement Microsoft Business Applications seamlessly into their business to fulfill their true potential.

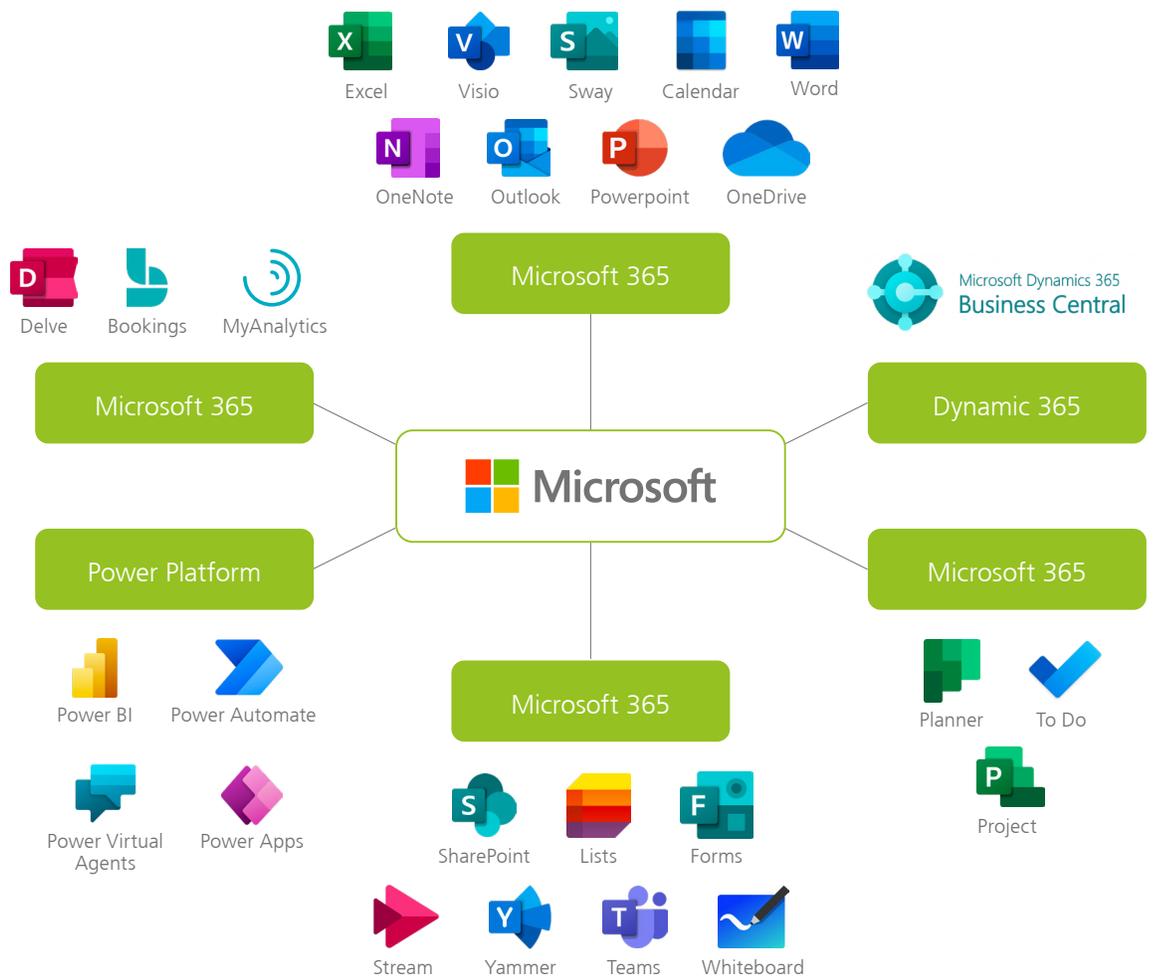
In this article, we'll dive deeper into why Microsoft Business Applications is a game changer, what it entails, and how to create business solutions using the Power Platform, with eight use cases for your reference.



Why Adopt Microsoft Business Applications?

Microsoft's mission is to "empower every person and every organisation on the planet to achieve more." Taking that into account, Microsoft Business Applications is at the core of democratised augmented intelligence (AI), empowering millions to make an impact through data-driven decisions.

To facilitate this empowerment, Microsoft invests heavily in its Intelligent Business Application platform.



Microsoft Business Applications consists of Dynamics 365, the Power Platform (Power BI, Power Apps, Power Automate, and Power Virtual Agents), and the Common Data Service. These solutions either run on or are integrated with Microsoft Azure.

In addition, Dynamics 365 brings together CRM and ERP capabilities to help you run your business more efficiently through a single platform. It consists of the following:

- Traditional CRM / Customer Engagement applications (Sales, Service, Marketing)
- Field Service, Talent, Finance & Operations (ERP)
- Retail
- Project Service Automation Portals
- Resource Scheduling
- AI and Mixed Reality.

With Microsoft Business Applications, you can look forward to:



A unified view of your business data from any source



AI-powered insights to help you make better decisions



The ability to automate business processes



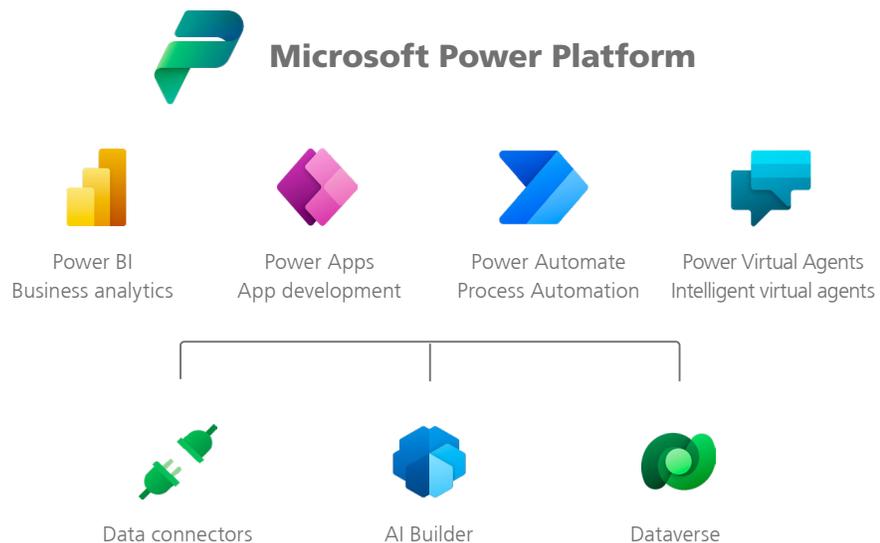
A flexible platform that can be customised to your specific needs



Integrated solutions for sales, customer service, field service, marketing, and more

Create Business Solutions With Microsoft Power Platform

Easily create customised apps for your business with a powerful, point-and-click approach to app-building with Microsoft Power Platform.



Microsoft Power Platform is a popular solution within the Microsoft 365 (M365) suite, helping organisations resolve common business process challenges. It enables users to simplify tasks and address workflow needs, including employee onboarding, inspections, new user setups, and service requests.

As Power Apps is a part of a suite of apps, services, and connectors (while also being a data platform), it provides the rapid development environment you seek to build custom apps for your specific business needs. Your employees can build mobile and web-based forms and apps with low to no code. There's no need to worry about sourcing additional talent with coding or developer knowledge to set automation in motion.

Power Apps enables interaction with multiple data sources, Microsoft's Dataverse, and other services within the M365 ecosystem. Your newly fledged app creators can infuse business intelligence dashboards and automation into apps, making the platform more precise in its delivery towards attaining your business goals and milestones.

Eight Use Cases for Microsoft Power Apps

At Ricoh, we understand the need for the right advancements to eliminate manual and outdated approaches and achieve a simpler, easier way to work.

With Microsoft Power Apps, you can:

1

Interact easily during meetings with Meeting Capture

Meeting Capture is a free template for Power Apps users. Microsoft designed the feature to help users take notes and assign activities or tasks to meeting attendees. The app also enables users to capture rich media through a device's camera and handwritten notes from a touchscreen device.

This use case highlights some key capabilities Power Apps offers, which include integration with other M365 services and the ability to use device hardware and touchscreens.

- Integration with M365 services such as Exchange Online, Planner, and OneNote.
- The ability to use device hardware, such as cameras.
- The ability to use touch screens to take notes or draw.

2

Support employee onboarding

As Power Apps can interact with and tap into data from other M365 services, many businesses use the free Power Apps template to create an onboarding tasks app to support HR and new employees during the onboarding process. It offers many resources to new employees, such as links to policy guides, team member contact information, and forms to complete their internal profiles.

3

Leverage image processing tools

Power Apps can sync with camera-enabled devices, allowing businesses to build apps that offer image-processing functionalities. Retailers, construction companies, and healthcare providers can capture photos of products and other items during inspections. All they need is a smartphone's camera and the data collected from its GPS. The customised inspection app stores part of the information within SharePoint or in a common data service layer, mimicking a hosted database.

Additionally, manufacturing companies can use the Power Apps platform to build apps for quality checks, enabling employees to inspect products and capture photos for documentation. Developers can also use the platform to create apps that capture photos of individuals, send the said images to a back-end facial recognition process, and retrieve information about them.

4

Streamline new user setup scenarios

Power Apps can streamline new user setup processes. It offers easy-to-use intake forms for hiring managers to complete and submit to the necessary departments for new employees. Many businesses have begun to incorporate Power Apps forms with Power Automate for process automation and approval.

5

Use automated sales intake forms

Field employees visiting client sites generally need to complete sales orders outside of the office. They can use Power Apps with a subscription to Microsoft Dynamics 365 to extract and insert data into the Dynamics 365 CRM with easy-to-use, automated digital forms.

6

Create service request applications

Some businesses use Power Apps to build an interactive helpdesk app that enables users to submit IT tickets directly from their device.

7

Design applications with complex entity relationships

With the model-driven approach in Power Apps, users can design applications containing several co-dependent entities. This approach helps users build apps that support complex relationships while maintaining information efficiently.

As Power App users no longer have to build different screens for the CRUD cycle and can instead generate fully functioning apps within the platform, they also save development time.

8

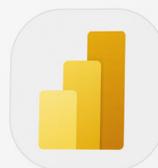
Develop tracking applications

Post-pandemic, many businesses and facilities needed to adhere to new restrictions, which included tracking visitors, temperature checks, and vaccination validation, among other checks.

Many organisations resorted to paper to gather information, which caused challenges in extracting information during outbreaks.

Businesses using Power Apps were able to overcome such challenges as they could create apps for devices to track visitor counts, temperature checks, and appointments, meeting pandemic restrictions quickly and efficiently. Users easily accessed their custom apps via SharePoint or the Power Apps application on iOS, Android, and Windows devices.

Microsoft Power Platform



Power BI



Power Apps



Power Automate



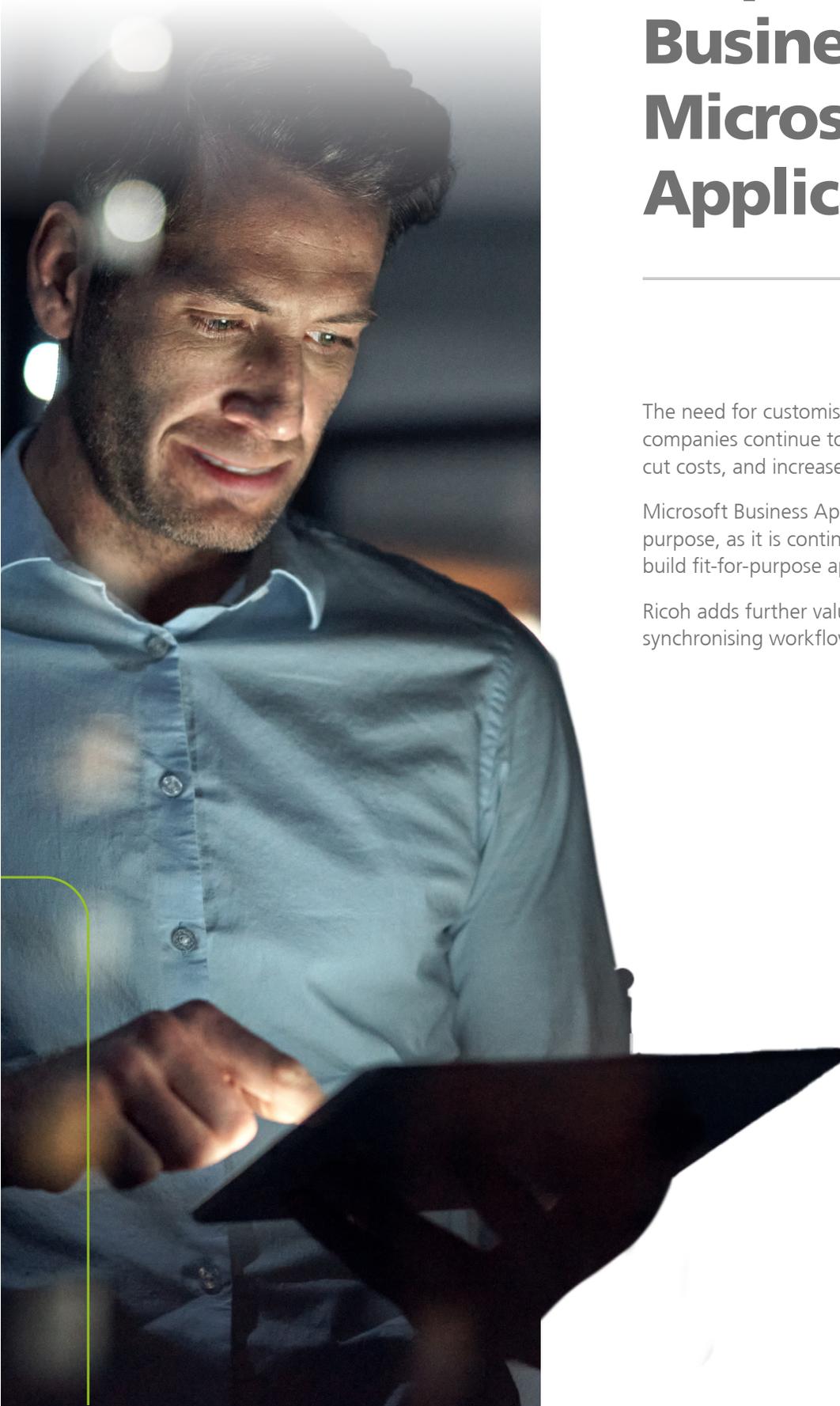
Power Virtual Agents

Empower Your Business with Microsoft Business Applications

The need for customised business apps will continue to rise as companies continue to look for ways to streamline processes, cut costs, and increase productivity.

Microsoft Business Applications is the ideal platform for the purpose, as it is continually enhanced to enable businesses to build fit-for-purpose apps with all the latest features.

Ricoh adds further value with our expertise in digitising and synchronising workflows across the robust platform.





Learn more about how
Ricoh's Workflow & Automation
solutions can help transform and
simplify your business processes for
future readiness.

About RICOH

Ricoh is a leading provider of digital services, process automation, and information management solutions designed to support digital transformation and optimise business performance. Backed by an 85-year history of cultivating

knowledge and nurturing organisational capabilities, Ricoh empowers the creation of digital workplaces utilising innovative partners and technologies, providing the expertise and services that enable individuals to work smarter from anywhere.



Learn more about our Workflow & Automation solutions at [ricoh-ap.com](https://www.ricoh-ap.com)

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