



# Overcoming Disruption

**Creating an Adaptable  
Supply Chain with Low-Code**



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# Introduction

The coronavirus pandemic revealed weaknesses with our supply chains.

Early on, the world watched as companies dealt with massive disruption in their supply chains, leaving shelves bare of essential items and companies scrambling to move forward.

To correct the systems that failed during the coronavirus outbreak, supply chain professionals across industries – whether in sourcing and procurement or logistics – must work to increase visibility into complex supply chain processes, gather and access data to determine high costs and inefficiencies, and ensure the safety and compliance of employees and equipment, among many other pressing challenges.

All while trying to manage the ongoing pandemic.

## Enter low-code platforms.

Low-code platforms, like Quickbase, can help companies across industries improve visibility into complex processes and increase efficiency to address many of these supply chain challenges while also helping keep employees safe and better prepare for future disruption. The benefits of low-code include:

Eliminate manual processes for true end-to-end transparency

Gain real-time, actionable insights to quickly identify risks

Centralize data by connecting disparate systems

Rapidly digitize your business's unique processes

If there is anything we have learned from COVID-19, it's that change cannot take years. To weather any disruptions in the future and stay ahead, you need your supply chain operations to be flexible.



# Digital Transformation

As companies learn to do more with less, they must continue to meet increasing consumer demands: better products, faster results, and lower prices. To meet these demands, provide additional value, and remain competitive, supply chains must be agile, flexible, and adaptable to address any disruption.

However, many companies still rely on legacy systems, emails, and time-consuming manual processes for their supply chain workflows. This reliance leads to reduced visibility and transparency into typically complex processes, data stuck in ERPs and other legacy systems, increased costs, and inefficient workflows.

## **Digital Transformation = People + Process + Systems**

But it's not just about the technology.

Digital transformation is also about transforming the processes and people. While transformation may start at the bottom, without buy-in at the top where resources are provided, companies retain their status quo.

According to a recent study by Harvard Business Review Analytic Services, 92% of executives said that successful digital transformation requires a dual-track approach: an approach that addresses those grand-scale digital transformation efforts, while simultaneously enabling those closest to the work to modernize those smaller-scale business processes.

Those business processes include your supply chain and all the processes that sit around and throughout it.



# 92%

**of executives said  
that successful digital  
transformation requires  
a dual-track approach**



# Low-Code Platforms and Supply Chains

Low-code platforms, like Quickbase, help companies become more agile by providing greater visibility into risks and opportunities to reduce costs by eliminating the need for manual processes and Excel spreadsheets.

These platforms also help supply chain professionals gain transparency into their supplier's capacity in order to make better informed decisions. By centralizing data that is often locked in core systems, low-code platforms can also help supply chain professionals improve the delivery of materials and foster communication between their teams, vendors, and suppliers.

Many companies have reported previously using phone calls, email, spreadsheets, and other rigid legacy systems to track suppliers. These processes are largely inefficient because it is difficult to track the path of various parts or processes that may cost money down the line.

Quickbase allows you to integrate with ERPs and legacy system to become your single source of truth for all supplier information. Custom reports, roles, and dashboards within Quickbase provide easy access to necessary data, the ability to automate tasks and send communications, and securely access the critical data you need to ensure production moves forward.

For example, in order to ensure the best pricing and supply quality for their suppliers, a medical devices company needed a better system for warehousing and taking procurement data out of SAP. This time-consuming process often meant that the data and insights were likely outdated by the time they finished pulling and analyzing the data from SAP.

The company leveraged Quickbase to create automated dashboards, eliminating the need for the paper system they were previously using, and developed a better workflow for suppliers to manage price and quality.

By using low-code, they were able reduce the amount of time employees spent managing all this data and were able to quickly access real-time updates.

Even across industries, companies have discovered the value of low-code in supply chain management.

One large retail box store was having issues with the items arriving to their distribution centers. Having the wrong items on hand or items damaged upon arrival resulted in poor customer experiences and time lost between identifying and resolving the issue.

To address this, the team built a Quickbase application that provides store managers and distribution center personnel with immediate feedback and the ability to identify delivery errors, like missed products and damaged goods, in order to expedite the remediation process and meet customer expectations.

By implementing repeatable, easy-to-use processes enabled by their low-code application development, this organization spares roughly \$1.2M in time savings every year while improving the experiences of their customers.





# Using Low-Code to Achieve IT- Approved Security and Compliance

As supply chain professionals begin to empower those on the floor or out in the field to build their own solutions, they must confront unique security and governance challenges.

Quickbase is one of the most trusted low-code platforms in the industry because it features comprehensive software security and powerful administrative controls that allow builders to quickly create custom applications while also satisfying corporate IT policies and regulations compliance.

A diversified global manufacturer's facility needed a better way to stay organized and compliant after a corporate policy change led to greater complexity in its parts sourcing process. They were previously using spreadsheets and emails to keep up with its new, complex dual-sourcing process which led to inconsistencies, among other issues.

This company turned to Quickbase to help automate these processes to speed up the parts approval process and make it more accurate.

After building their first application, they wanted to continue to expand.

They created a strategic partnership with IT, who needed to approve software development due to security standards. Once approved, the team quickly built a solution to automate the entire process, without the need for professional developers.

This led to not only a faster and more efficient process and greater accuracy, but more collaboration between departments and suppliers.



# Being Flexible and Adaptable with Low-Code

This is a time for companies to be flexible. Circumstances are constantly evolving and companies need to be ready .

By automating key processes, centralizing data and aggregating insights via dashboards, low-code platforms like Quickbase can help to reduce waste by saving time that would otherwise be spent transcribing information from paper, pencil, and spreadsheets. Simply put, a process that previously spanned 10 man-hours over three days might be reduced to two man-hours over a single afternoon.

Quickbase also allows you to quickly and efficiently digitize the processes that make your business unique. Building a culture of continuous improvement in order to regularly examine processes and identify areas for betterment is a crucial ongoing process because organizations either improve continuously or become disorganized. Lean processes with a focus on continuous improvement also help to determine the root causes of inefficiencies.

Low-code platforms allow users closest to the work to quickly develop and update applications to solve problems tailored to their needs. The ability to innovate and produce applications quickly based on feedback can help reduce waste as soon as it is observed.





A large industrial machinery company and technology/service provider attributes saving not only 1 million dollars, but 6 engineering man-months each year to a suite of low-code applications built on Quickbase.

They went from managing complex engineered orders in disparate systems such as SAP to building applications that managed orders, engineering and inventory. These apps pull data from SAP and other data warehouses via APIs and is regularly updated in Quickbase to ensure both transparency and accuracy of information.

In addition to saving huge quantities of time and money, implementing this suite of apps enabled the business to track estimated work hours for tasks, assign tasks to engineer owners, and distribute other action items to mitigate potential delays or issues throughout the manufacturing process – allowing for complete operational agility in response to any changes to their supply chain.

By ensuring complete visibility into projects and accuracy of information, this company was able to reduce wasted resources within their supply chain and re-invest these savings into their business.





# The Future of Work

Transformation must be a strategic priority starting at the top. Great leadership is as important as having the right tools when approaching the continuous improvement of people, processes, products, and services.

Digital transformation, achieved through tools like low-code application development platforms, offers the support leaders need to implement innovative business solutions with total flexibility.

The results of the recent Harvard Business Review Analytics Services that surveyed more than 400 CIOs and IT leaders demonstrates how digital transformation is tied to business success. 55% of respondents said that increased productivity/efficiency is a primary goal for their business's transformation efforts. These efforts can also lead to enhanced customer satisfaction, rated as a primary goal by 45% of respondents, and improved product/service quality, which was rated by 40%.

These numbers don't lie — the implementation of digital tools in the business has the transformative influence to improve the business outcomes that leaders prioritize .

Those companies that are not on board with new technologies will fall behind, while those that recognize the power of low-code platforms to quickly digitize their unique processes will increase their profits and stay agile as the world continues to change.



**quickbase**

[www.quickbase.com](http://www.quickbase.com)