



Taking low- code to the next level

Taking low-code to the next level



Introduction

Successful digital transformations require courage and persistence

Every organisation starting a low-code journey has to deal with it: how do you implement a successful digital transformation strategy? To assist organizations in this endeavour, low-code vendor Mendix has developed the 'digital execution framework', which serves as a roadmap for effectively implementing such a strategy. The framework follows three phases: start, structure, and scale.

The start-up phase is relatively straightforward. By making sound decisions regarding small low-code projects that exhibit a 'WOW' factor, it is often possible to swiftly celebrate initial successes and generate considerable internal recognition within the organization. The next phase, the 'structure' phase, where teams are formalised and a strategy is put in place to further accelerate the digital execution of low-code projects, is in many cases a lot more challenging.

In fact, within many organizations, a digital transformation, which begins with great enthusiasm, often comes to an untimely halt at this stage. Research conducted by McKinsey, a consultancy firm, reveals that only 16% of IT managers ultimately perceive their organization's digital transformation as successful.

According to a supplementary survey conducted by Mendix, the primary factors contributing to the failure of digital transformations are the lack of business and IT resources (42%), a corporate culture resistant to change (36%), and the absence of digital skills (34%).

How can you guarantee that your organization's digital transformation doesn't falter prematurely? What measures should be taken to effectively navigate low-code projects through the 'structure' phase? These challenges are addressed in our new whitepaper titled 'Taking low-code to the next level.'

We will guide you through the process of ensuring that your organization's digital transformation successfully navigates the 'structure' phase. You will learn the necessary steps to sustain momentum after the launch phase, such as wholeheartedly embracing the new agile working methodology and ensuring that teams adhere to it. Additionally, establishing clear guidelines, which every team member follows, is crucial during this phase. By doing so, application development gains significant speed and efficiency.

We also address the three biggest challenges organisations face in the 'structure' phase: budgeting, planning low-code projects and setting up the right approval structures. Addressing these challenges proactively, even before they manifest as significant problems in the digital transformation process, significantly enhances the likelihood of a successful digital transformation.

The story of Mourik, a B2B service provider, further emphasizes the significance of initial successful applications and demonstrates how the organization is taking its first steps towards ensuring the success of the "structure" phase.

One of the crucial lessons we've learned is to establish trust and utilize determination and perseverance to set up the 'structure' phase as effectively as possible. By doing so, you can seamlessly progress towards the 'scale' phase, where you can maximize business value and productivity for your organization.

Marc Gelissen, founder Bizzomate

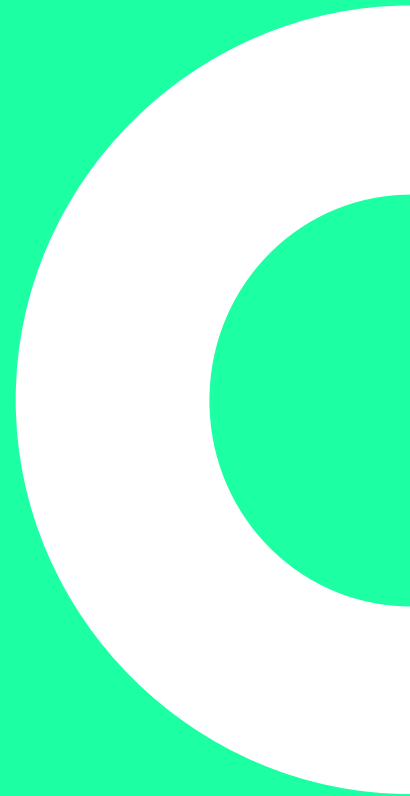


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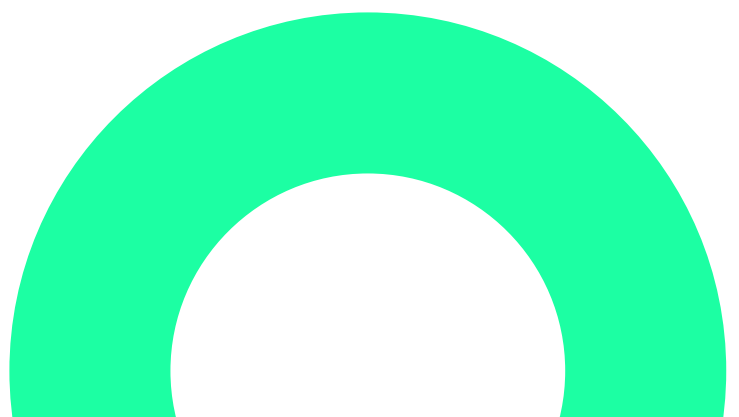
How do you maintain momentum in the 'structure' phase?

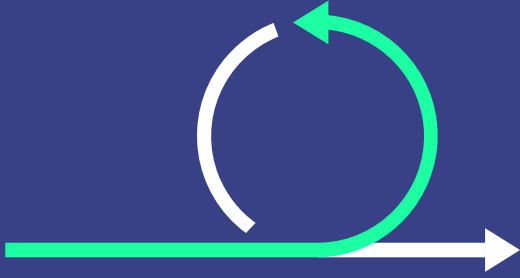
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Addressing the three major challenges of the 'Structure' Phase

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Business Case: Learn how Mourik drove their digitalization journey to new heights





How do you maintain momentum in the 'structure' phase?

One of the success factors for successfully getting through the 'structure' phase is preserving the momentum of the start-up phase. This is crucial to leverage the good results and organisational backing achieved in the first phase. What strategies can you employ, and what resources are available to you, to accomplish this?

"Low-code application development demands a distinct agile approach in contrast to traditional software development," explains Charles Bronzwaer, partner at Bizzomate. "Adopting agile practices with low-code necessitates a comprehensive transformation in the organizational workflow. Rather than relying solely on meticulously planned functional designs that outline how an application should function, the focus shifts towards working with user stories that describe the user's experience. The conventional approach often leads to highly technical process descriptions that can be interpreted in multiple ways, accompanied by an excessive amount of documentation. In agile working, there is a greater emphasis on understanding the impact of a solution on the user, resulting in a reduced need for overly technical documentation."

The adoption of the new way of working also brings about implications in various other areas. With low-code platforms enabling rapid application development, organizations need to create space to accommodate this accelerated pace of development. This requires a shift in how organizations approach problem-solving, budgeting, planning, and even recruitment processes.ambitions."

○ Establish specialized teams

One of the initial steps companies must take for a successful 'structure' phase is the formation of specialized low-code teams dedicated to this methodology. Such teams also require new and consistent guidelines to enable them to meet the high expectations effectively. This can be achieved by documenting model guidelines, which contain descriptions and instructions for best practices, security guidelines, naming conventions, and folder structures, among other aspects.

Bronzwaer emphasizes, "These guidelines hold significant importance as they ensure that all present and future teams can work cohesively based on the same principles. Consequently, the developed applications maintain a consistently high quality and align with the organization's requirements. Moreover, these guidelines establish the groundwork for building secure applications."

Develop high-quality applications faster

Clear guidelines make it easier to collaborate and share new functionalities, as team members always know from each other what guidelines are being followed. It thus also shortens the time it takes new team members to join the teams. After all, a foundation is already in place that they can learn from and fall back on. By performing peer reviews where new functionality is always checked by a colleague to see if it meets the agreed guidelines, you also ensure that those guidelines are actually followed.

The existence of established guidelines provides development teams with a solid foundation to build upon, resulting in increased speed when initiating new projects.

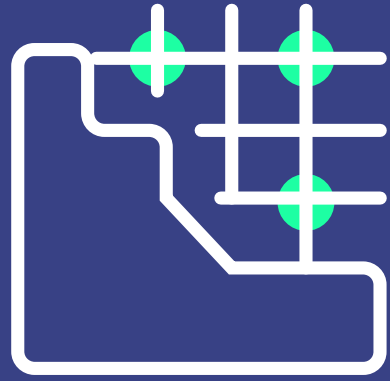
The predefined working methodology brings immediate clarity, eliminating the need to reinvent the wheel. In most cases, only minor additions are required, saving a significant amount of time.

Bronzwaer emphasizes, "Rapid development is truly beneficial only when you don't encounter an exhaustive list of errors and bugs at the project's conclusion. Comprehensive model guidelines encompassing best practices play a crucial role in minimizing errors. And in the event that errors do arise, these guidelines offer clear guidance for efficient error detection and resolution. Therefore, establishing robust model guidelines is a vital step to sustain speed during the 'structure' phase and effectively prepare your organization for the subsequent scale phase."



Visual 1: Digital execution roadmap at Bizzomate

Addressing the three major challenges of the 'Structure' Phase



Challenge 1 - Budgets

In traditional software development projects, the entire project budget is typically predetermined. However, when organizations adopt low-code application development, the working approach shifts towards short, iterative sprints, rapid implementation, and continuous improvements. Consequently, the traditional budgeting method struggles to keep up with the speed of this new way of working.

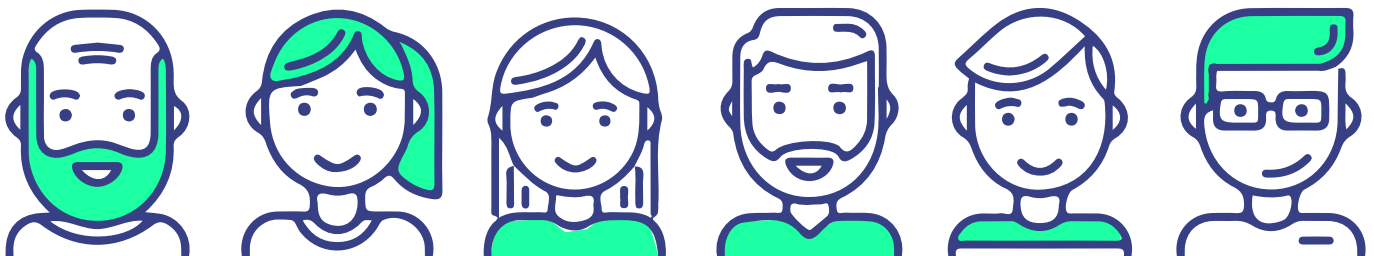
Henry Kraaijenbos, partner at Bizzomate, suggests, "Just as low-code application development benefits from an agile working approach, it is also more effective to adopt an agile budgeting approach. This ensures that budget discussions do not hinder your project's progress. Although it may sometimes lead to discussions with the CFO, budgeting based on results rather than a predetermined trajectory allows you to entrust the low-code team with budget responsibility. They can then utilize the budget as they see fit to achieve optimal results. By empowering teams to make adjustments without excessive intervention or new discussions, based on achieved results and feedback from the organization,

you ensure the momentum is maintained and value is delivered more swiftly."

Challenge 2 - Planning

In traditional development projects, advance planning typically involves extensive functional descriptions and a project plan that requires approval from various individuals within the organization. This approach often leads to delays and becomes increasingly challenging to adjust as the project progresses.

Kraaijenbos: "It is crucial to avoid starting with an overly comprehensive planning. Instead, focus on defining milestones and prioritizing them. This approach provides the team with greater flexibility and agility, making it easier to maintain project alignment even when requirements evolve. This is vital because our experience demonstrates that project requirements are prone to change throughout the project."



Kraaijenbos: "There are many different ways to set up your processes for approval. Some organisations make a product owner responsible, while others place it with project managers or teams consisting of a mix of people from different departments. The most important thing is that it is clear in advance what guidelines the teams must follow in terms of architecture, governance and security, among others. With this, you only need a business case to develop new applications. With a good structure, you thus create trust, which in turn helps to develop applications faster."

Low-code technology offers a faster and more efficient approach to application development, but it necessitates a shift in working methods where certain processes need to be reconfigured or even abandoned. Kraaijenbos remarks, "While many organizations may encounter initial challenges, the advantages of low-code outweigh the disadvantages. Trust is the key factor here. Building trust may require time and coordination, but it is an integral part of the 'structure' phase. By instilling trust in the implementation team, you empower them to make informed decisions that contribute maximum value to your organization. In doing so, you fully leverage the speed and agility that working with low-code platforms brings."

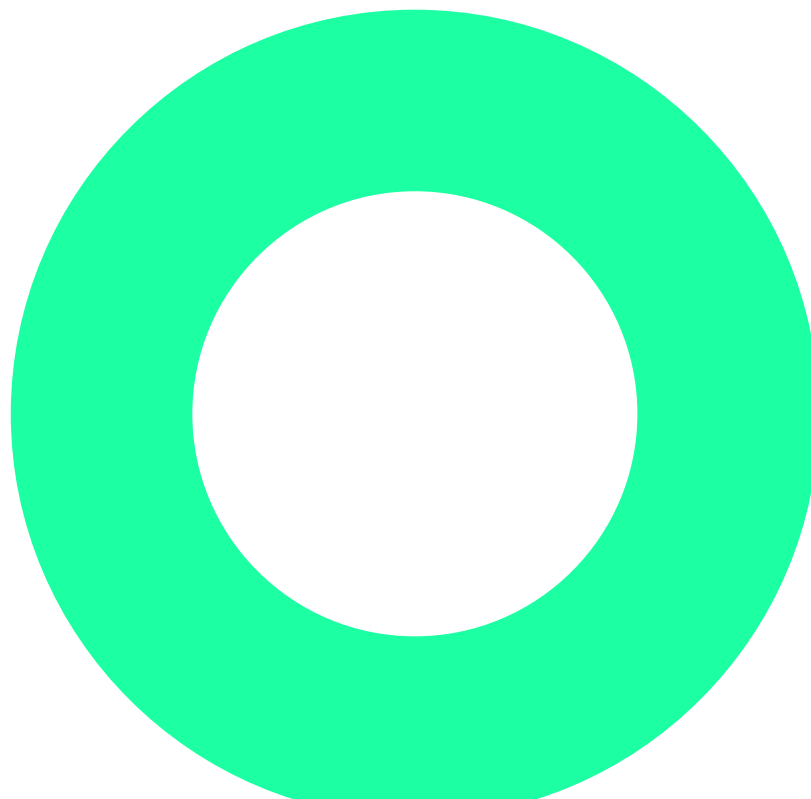
Challenge 3: Approval structures

When working with changing requirements, it is important to design the approval process so that it does not cause unnecessary delays. If it has to go over many stages, it usually takes a lot of time. This is manageable when only a

few projects a year need approval, but when you suddenly start delivering projects on a monthly basis due to the speed of low-code, it often causes serious problems.

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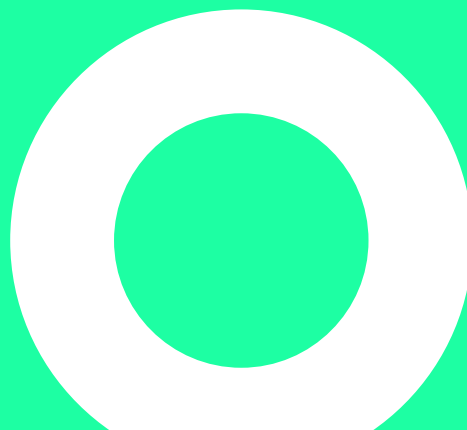
Business case

B2B Service Provider Mourik Sets the Stage for a Successful 'Structure' Phase

B2B service provider Mourik serves as an exemplary organization that has established a solid foundation for navigating the 'structure' phase successfully. After experiencing several small yet highly successful low-code projects, Mourik has now embarked on a broader implementation of low-code within the organization.

One crucial step already taken in this process is the swift and wholehearted adoption of an 'agile' way of working. This approach actively engaged the business and generated increased enthusiasm for more low-code projects across the organization.

Currently, multiple low-code projects are running in parallel, prompting the IT department to establish a dedicated low-code team. Bizzomate is there to define clear guidelines for application development, ensuring consistency and efficiency throughout the process.





Setting the Stage for a Successful 'Structure' Phase

B2B service provider Mourik is committed to becoming the leading digital force across all its operating markets by 2025. To achieve this goal, they have embarked on a digital transformation journey, leveraging the Mendix low-code platform to digitize a significant portion of their business processes. The initial phase of this transformation process has reached its completion, with the successful delivery of the first set of applications. Moving forward, Mourik will continue to advance its digital transformation efforts, further enhancing organizational innovation and competitiveness.

About Mourik

Mourik is a 90-year-old Dutch family-run business with 2000 employees. The company consists of Mourik Infra, Mourik Industrie, Mourik Belgium and Mourik Global. Mourik Infra is engaged in infrastructure projects such as dyke reinforcement and maintenance of roads and bridges. Mourik Industry specialises in industrial cleaning, maintenance and renovation. Mourik Belgium handles similar activities for the Belgian market and Mourik Global serves Europe and the rest of the world.

With the aim of becoming a frontrunner in the IT field within two years, Mourik is focusing on gaining deeper insights from data and improving data-driven decision-making. This strategic objective aligns with Mourik's overarching goal of delivering the best and most intelligent solutions to customers by 2025. Jaap van der Welle, CIO at Mourik: "Becoming a digital leader requires careful planning and execution, acknowledging that until recently the company fully relied on paper-

based and Excel-driven processes, which often resulted in inconsistent practices and inefficiencies. To address these challenges, Mourik recognized the need for a comprehensive digital framework across its entire IT landscape. This approach was chosen to standardize operations throughout the organization and facilitate better data visibility. Furthermore, enhancing project measurability was identified as a key priority. After extensive research, low-code technology emerged as the ideal solution to meet these objectives."

Mourik embarked on a search for an accessible and robust low-code platform. After careful evaluation, Mendix emerged as the platform of choice due to its comprehensive functionality and strong reputation in the market. The subsequent crucial step involved identifying the right partner to collaborate with. Stef Koomans, the low-code program manager at Mourik: We held extensive discussions with multiple suppliers. However, it was with Bizzomate that we felt a distinct difference in approach. Bizzomate demonstrated a broader perspective, offering support beyond application development alone. They provided valuable insights on assembling the right team, optimizing the application infrastructure, and facilitating seamless integration with the business. It was this holistic approach that convinced us to select Bizzomate as the most suitable partner to realize our digital ambitions."

The first digitisation projects

The digitalization journey commenced with the creation of several small-scale applications at Mourik. One notable example is Traffic & More, an application designed for Mourik Infra and its clients. This application offers work planners a centralized view of road closures to be placed around infrastructure projects. As a result, planners can now efficiently issue work orders to operational personnel, reducing administrative tasks. Presently, approximately 40 office staff members are actively utilizing the application. In due course, the operational personnel will also adopt the application to review their work assignments and time sheets.

In addition, Bizzomate has started an 'Order to Cash' application for Mourik Industrie. This application digitises the entire process from order to invoicing in all branches and is linked to the ERP system providing greater insight into the orders issued, hours, materials required, work in progress and outstanding amounts.

Mourik is optimistic about the first results

Mourik is satisfied with the first phase of the digitisation process. Jaap: "I am really impressed with the significant impact we achieved within a few short months. He highlighted the immense benefits gained from the ability to record data unambiguously throughout the organization. Additionally, the adoption of the agile methodology surpassed our expectations, enabling the

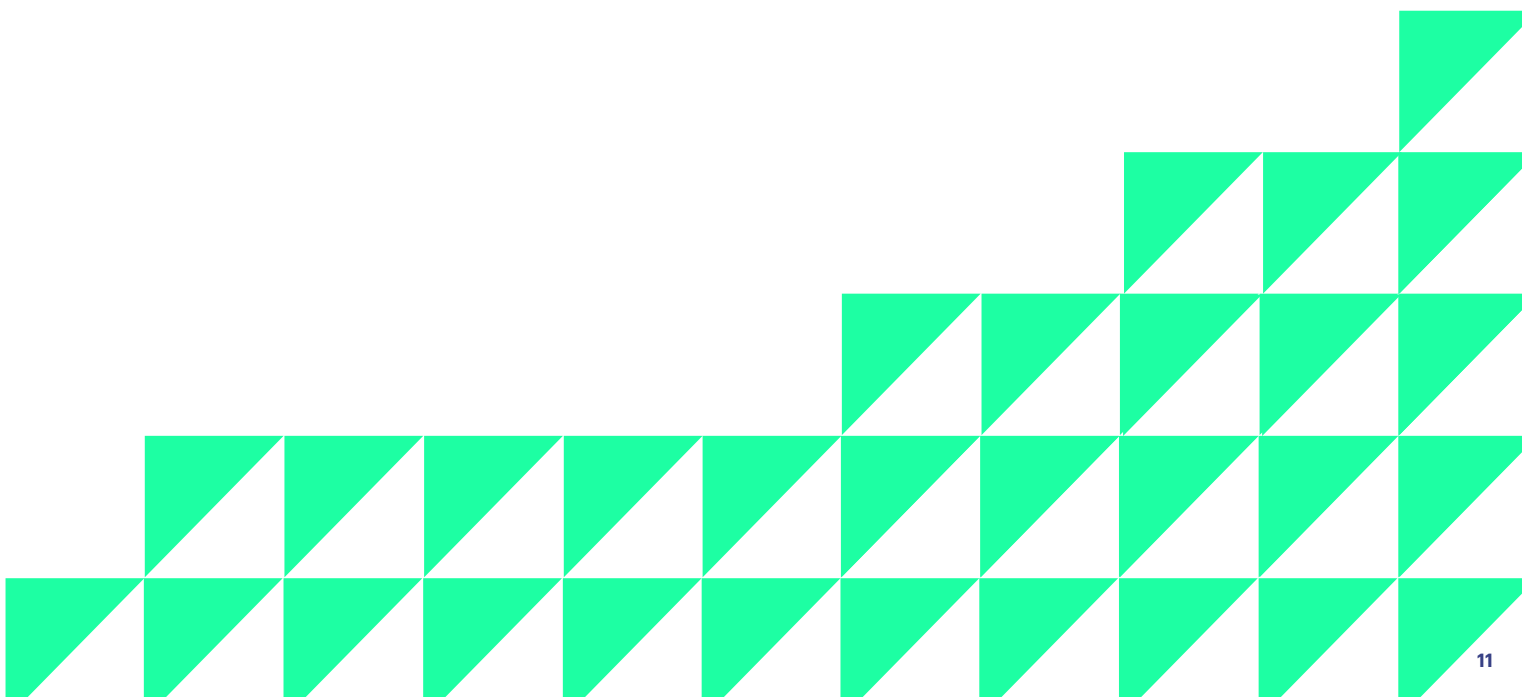
rapid sharing of initial application versions. This approach fostered direct involvement from the business, while also generating a much more important outcome: genuine enthusiasm for the possibilities that digitalization offers. This enthusiasm is what brings the most joy to the team."

Henry Kraaijenbos, partner at Bizzomate: "We are very pleased that Mourik has chosen Bizzomate. We are convinced that with our knowledge of digitising business processes with Mendix low-code, we will fully realise the objectives. This will reduce overhead costs in the future and further reduce margin pressure."

Developing applications ourselves in the future

Stef: "We are delighted with our decision to leverage Mendix low-code for the realization of our digital aspirations. The impact has been evident, as our innovative capabilities have substantially enhanced, and we have an extensive pipeline of upcoming applications. In the near future, we will focus on further refining the 'Order to Cash' application, along with the development of additional applications such as a time registration app and a security incident reporting app."

In due course, the IT department aims to take on the responsibility of developing applications internally. This strategic move will result in a shorter time-to-market for new solutions, further enhancing the IT department's value as a pivotal and agile factor in delivering optimal solutions to Mourik's customers.

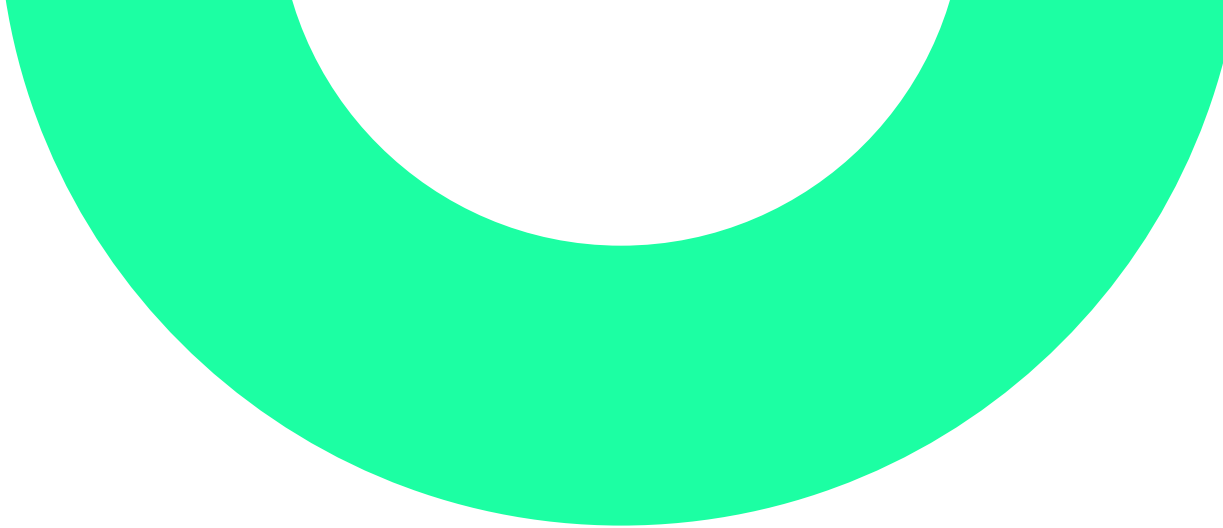


“ We have spoken with various suppliers. Only with Bizzomate did we feel that they truly looked beyond just building applications. ”

Stef Koomans

Low-code program manager
at Mourik.





Bizzomate stands for **Low-Code High-impact.** Contact us now to boost your organization with **Low-Code.**

Would you like to fire up your digital transformation process? Is your organization considering low-code? We would love to share our lessons learned and customer stories!

Contact us through:

Bizzomate

+31 (0)43 3111 05 70
info@bizzomate.com
www.bizzomate.com

Bizzomate Valkenburg

Nieuweweg 25
6301 ES Valkenburg (LB)
The Netherlands

Bizzomate Dordrecht

Burg. de Raadsingel 93
3311 JG Dordrecht
The Netherlands

Bizzomate Amsterdam

Boeing Avenue 215
1119 PD Schiphol-Rijk
The Netherlands

Bizzomate Aachen

Bizzomate GmbH
Oppenhoffallee 143
52066 Aachen
Germany