

BUYER'S GUIDE

The new (and winning)
option in the

BUILD vs. BUY debate



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Form.com: Resolving the Build vs. Buy Dilemma

The search for enterprise software can feel like a long and arduous journey, especially if you're looking for a mobile inspection or audit solution for safety, quality, risk, or compliance monitoring.

Sooner or later, you're bound to face the same dilemma that's been dogging tech shoppers since the dawn of enterprise software:



Despite the benefits of both approaches, each comes with major drawbacks. And with the high stakes of Enterprise Software implementation, can you really afford to compromise?

In this buyer's guide, we'll delve into the pros and cons of building vs. buying a mobile data collection solution, and dig deeper into how and why the flexible Form.com platform could be the "best of both worlds" for your company.

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Form.com is faster and easier to deploy than an internal build, but is still fully customizable to meet your company's unique requirements.



ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

If you work at a large company, your first instinct might be to build. After all, you already have the technical resources in-house to create a custom solution that checks all your boxes. But you also know that any major internal build can take a very long time complete—probably longer than you or your stakeholders can wait.

You've probably also crossed paths with a few sales folks claiming that their preconfigured solution can satisfy all your requirements. But you know that most out-of-the-box solutions can't be customized, and the way your company operates is far too unique for an off the shelf platform.

Before you venture down either path, there are some important questions to ask.

Important Initial Questions

Does your team have the expertise to build what you need?

How long would it take to build? Is that time better spent on other things?

How customized are your needs? Can off-the-shelf products meet them?

Does that solution meet your most important requirements?

What are some of your competitors using? Can you one-up them?

How easy/complex is each implementation option?

Do you have complex integration needs?

How customizable is each solution you're considering?

How user-friendly is each solution?

Will the solution make you change your business processes?

Does the vendor have customers in the same field as you?

BUILDING IN-HOUSE

The idea of building an in-house mobile solution seems logical at first, especially if your company isn't interested in dealing with cookie-cutter platforms. But building a homegrown solution that has the right look, feel, and function comes with some drawbacks...

Building can be unpredictable

Homegrown solutions rarely launch on time with the functionality needed. In fact, 46% of all internal software projects under-deliver on requirements. Even worse, 43% under-deliver while still going over budget, and 51% are late (if they're ever launched at all).¹

Most projects fail due to factors beyond IT's control, such as unexpected budget adjustments, scope creep, and pressure from the top to meet unrealistic deadlines. These unforeseen obstacles can add up quickly. Before you know it, your project could end up dead in the water, like 68% of all homegrown initiatives.¹

Be wary of ongoing costs and conflicting motivations

Any time you embark on an internal build, you've got to consider the resource drain involved. Chances are, your team will be busy working on your project and won't have much time for anything else. This need for dedicated resources won't go away after implementation, either. Not even close. Remember, there's maintenance, support, and ongoing innovation to consider.¹

Support and maintenance will be some of the most costly and time-consuming commitments of building a mobile platform, especially right after you launch. In fact, companies with in-house solutions spend up to 80% of their original budget fixing post-launch defects. After that, they spend an additional 15-20% each year on support and maintenance. This usually means hiring a new team to manage everything – not an inexpensive endeavor to say the least.

Think about how frequently iOS and Android Operating Systems are upgraded, not to mention browsers. New features and security updates will always require ongoing maintenance, and users will always expect that you're making improvements to keep up with OS innovations.

You could also consider hiring a third-party consultant to supplement your team's efforts and help them navigate the ups and downs of building, supporting, and maintaining your solution. But remember, a consultant's motivation is different from yours. They aren't as invested in the long-term success of your platform as an internal team would be. And while their intentions of building a great

In-House Solution Checklist

- ✓ *Have the technical expertise and IT staffing you need*
- ✓ *Employ project managers with IT experience*
- ✓ *Be prepared to dominate your tech team's time*
- ✓ *Define requirements before development starts*
- ✓ *Have time to stay current on industry tech trends*
- ✓ *Set objectives and milestones beyond deployment*
- ✓ *Have resources for maintenance & upgrades*

Internal software projects: By the numbers

don't succeed	68%
are delivered late	51%
have cost overruns	43%
under-deliver on requirements	46%
of budget goes to fixing defects	80%

product for you are probably good, they will always be focused on their own bottom line, and looking for ways to secure ongoing revenue sources. If you're not diligent in managing your consultant's costs, you could find yourself stuck paying for added expenses and surprise charges when their invoices arrive.

Temper expectations at launch (and beyond)

Since most internal architects and developers don't have time to do anything but code to meet requirements, homegrown solutions rarely offer any added utility or surprise features. In fact, 46% of "important features" are either dropped altogether, or pushed out for "phase 2" – which may never even happen.¹

Also consider the fact that homegrown builds usually don't work for other divisions within your company, nor are they created to scale and pivot with your business as it grows and shifts. Even worse, in the year or so it takes to build an in-house platform, the governing rules, regulations, and procedures for your industry could quickly change, leaving your solution out-of-date before it even launches.

As for ongoing innovation, even the largest enterprises can't afford to let an investment as large as a mobile data collection platform grow stale and outdated. You don't want to rest on your laurels for the next 1-5 years as your competition slowly makes your "new" solution look like it was built in the Stone Age. So, if you plan on continuing to innovate your in-house build (which you should), be prepared to hire even more employees in addition to your requisite support and maintenance teams.

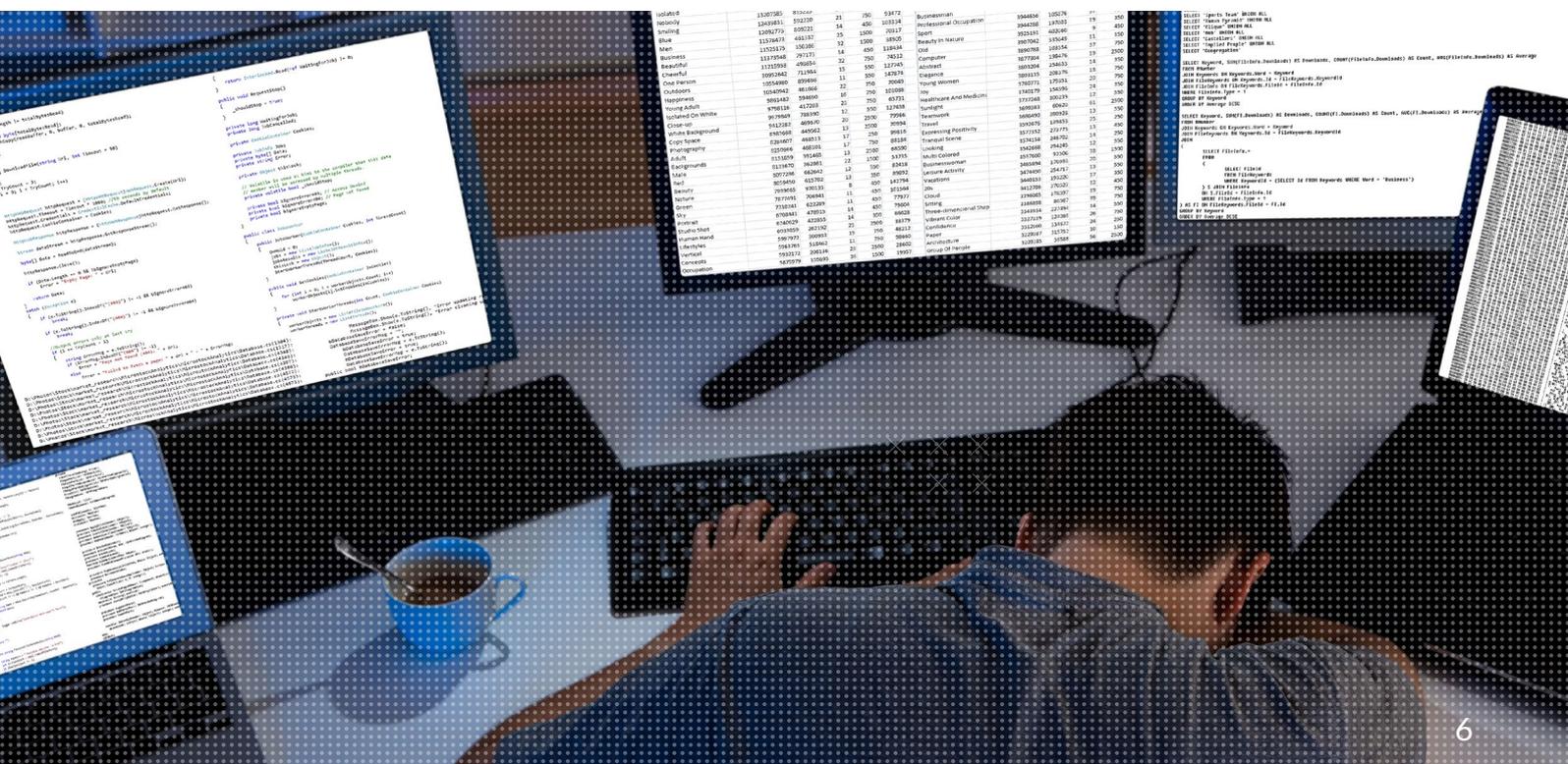
Pros and Cons of Building In-House

PROS

- Tailored to business needs
- Complete control of solution
- Developers know nuances
- Ownership of code
- Full control and flexibility
- Support from developers

CONS

- Extended dev timeline
- Internal resource drain
- Software quickly out of date
- No economy of scale
- No documentation or training, minimal support
- Ongoing support & maintenance costs
- Stability & security questions



Internal Builds and the Form.com Difference

Problem	Form.com
<p>Internal builds are often incomplete and delivered late</p> <p>Homegrown solutions are usually delivered late, and with fewer features than expected or promised.</p>	<p><i>Our project management and professional services teams use the Form.com 80/20 Methodology to ensure all projects are on time, on-budget, and packed with more features and utilities than you knew you needed.</i></p> <p><i>Keep reading for details on the 80/20 Methodology.</i></p>
<p>Building may cost more than you think</p> <p>Most internal solutions spend their support and maintenance budgets fixing post-launch bugs. Ongoing innovation requires time, money, and resources.</p>	<p><i>At Form.com, we're always upfront with pricing for our annual subscriptions and professional services, so you'll know what to expect from day one.</i></p>
<p>Ongoing innovation and extensibility is limited</p> <p>Homegrown solutions are quickly outdated, and can't be leveraged across multiple departments. Extending and innovating will cost additional time, money, and resources.</p>	<p><i>Form.com subscribers are always upgraded to the latest version of our software at no additional cost. Your solution will also be extensible to other departments, so you won't have to pay for a new project or start from scratch.</i></p>

BUYING OFF THE SHELF

In the past, large companies didn't have the option to buy off-the-shelf software. IT decision makers opposed them due to a lack of transparency and insight into integration, security, and hosting details. Stakeholders on the business side, meanwhile, were also opposed to static pre-configured solutions because that often meant compromising on "must have" features and functionality.

Today, however, a handful of mobile app developers are creating some intriguing niche solutions that are packed with features and utilities. Newer vertical solutions are also providing value to customers with innovative ways to solve industry-specific problems. Horizontal solutions, meanwhile, are creating platforms with advanced capabilities, functionalities, and user experiences.

Still, implementing any of these pre-built solutions can often feel like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. For example:

Industry-specific solutions lack process depth and experience

If you're reading this, chances are what you're really looking for is a mobile application that will make it easy to quickly and accurately collect, manage, and distribute data to the people who need it most.

While you may be tempted to buy an industry-focused solution that claims to "understand your business", remember that your goal is to find the best long-term solution for your organization. Sure, niche solutions with pre-labeled industry fields and familiar terminology appear convenient at first. But how important is industry-specific field labeling to the success of your project, especially if it comes at the expense of top-tier process optimization?

Security and hosting are still concerns

Most of today's off-the-shelf data collection platforms are hosted in the cloud. This can be a deal breaker if you're trying to monitor and control everything internally with an established level of scrutiny. Plus, depending on national laws and regulations, it may not even be an option for your company to host data outside of your country. In those cases, self-hosting is the only option, and most pre-built platforms don't have the resources to support updates for self-hosted instances.

Customization is limited (at best)

Most large companies begin their mobile application projects with unique requirements that range from specific branding and design guidelines to the need for complicated integrations, processes, and workflows.

Unfortunately, today's pre-built platforms are rigid, stiff, and either unable (or unwilling) to let you make customizations to meet your specific needs.

Pros and Cons of Buying off-the-shelf

PROS

-  Covers most of your requirements
-  Fast timeline and economy of scale
-  Guaranteed to work, fewer bugs
-  Automatic enhancements & upgrades
-  Lower total cost of ownership

CONS

-  Might not meet your unique needs
-  Rigid platform can't be customized
-  May not integrate with legacy systems
-  Competition/wait time for features
-  3rd Parties lead to competing invoices
-  Point solution – no support, no insight into security

Three is a crowd

If you do find a company that will let you customize their platform, chances are they probably won't have the development resources available to help you do it. That's just not part of their business model. As a result, you'll probably need to hire a third-party developer to take on the work.

Bringing an additional company into the mix will not only put a dent in your budget, but it could also dramatically impact the dynamic of your project. We know this because we've heard the horror stories from many companies who are now our clients.

Here's how it usually works: A third party comes on, and suddenly the project becomes infinitely more difficult to manage. Communication wanes, deadlines are missed, and blame starts to get passed back and forth like a hot potato. Soon enough, you start receiving competing invoices for the same work from each company and you're the one left trying to reconcile to your budget while keeping your project from imploding.



TIP:

If you're considering a pre-built solution, don't let a promise of "we'll add that to a future update" sway your decision. Adding new SaaS features takes time, and you'll still have to wait behind other customers before getting the updates you need. This can sometimes take 1-2 years.



External Builds and the Form.com Difference

Buying Software	Form.com Difference
<p>Industry solutions lack operational expertise</p> <p>Niche solutions lure clients in with pre-labeled form fields and recognizable industry terminology. But their focus is on appealing to an audience instead of process improvement and operational efficiency.</p>	<p><i>Our focus is on perfecting the art of distributing data across the enterprise. From construction and manufacturing to restaurants and retail, we create solutions that get data exactly where it needs to go as quickly as possible. And if you really want those industry-focused field names, we can do that too thanks to the inherent flexibility of Form.com.</i></p>
<p>Many enterprise companies have a “No-SaaS” policy</p> <p>Large companies have different guidelines, especially when it comes to controlling and securing proprietary data. As a result, many enterprises dismiss SaaS models due to a lack of self-hosted options that meet their company's guidelines or country's regulations.</p>	<p><i>In addition to offering a securely hosted solution, we can also help you implement an on-premise model installed behind your company's firewall.</i></p> <p><i>Not sure which is right for you? Form.com can help your company decide the best option for your unique infrastructure and environment.</i></p>



TIP:

The Secure Form.com Platform

If you select our cloud-based option, rest assured that the security of our SSAE 16 certified data centers are our top priority. They're compliant with documented controls and follow strict operational procedures. Form.com is TierIII/TIA 942 compliant from both a design and operational perspective.

Buying Software	Form.com Difference
<p>Customizing a pre-built solution is nearly impossible</p> <p>Most SaaS solutions don't let you adjust their platform to meet your company's unique procedural and branding requirements.</p>	<p><i>Form.com's 80/20 development methodology enables us to customize our core platform to meet your design and operational needs.</i></p>
<p>Third party tech teams can derail your project</p> <p>If you find a customizable SaaS solution, you may need to hire a 3rd party to help you implement it. This can be expensive and confusing.</p>	<p><i>Our professional services and project management teams always maintain full transparency, and are experienced in customizing Form.com for clients.</i></p>

Software Buying Checklist

- ✔ Document exactly what you want the software to do
- ✔ Include stakeholders in discussions, manage expectations
- ✔ Ensure software needs are aligned with business goals
- ✔ Identify processes that the software will impact
- ✔ Note any current operational problems or limitations
- ✔ Consider how existing processes can be improved
- ✔ Identify all potential software solutions
- ✔ Request references and recommendations
- ✔ View product demonstrations with input from end users
- ✔ Make your final decision

Form.com

THE 3rd
(AND WINNING)

OPTION

Your Process. Our Platform.

You've heard a lot about the pros and cons of buying and building a data collection platform. But at the end of the day, it's not how you implement a solution, but how well the solution works for your organization. It doesn't matter if you buy or build, provided the platform you select offers the most efficient way for you to collect and distribute data and evidence to the people who need it the most.

At Form.com, we're not about creating cookie-cutter platforms for individual industries. We're also not about starting from scratch with long and drawn out projects that blow by deadlines and drop important features to meet promised launch dates. What we are about is flexibility, efficiency, and providing enterprise corporations (across all industries) with a powerful platform that helps them drive continuous improvement by gathering evidence and insight on an ongoing basis.

Form.com Industry Expertise



**MOBILE
AUDITS**



**MOBILE
INSPECTIONS**



**FIELD
OPERATIONS**



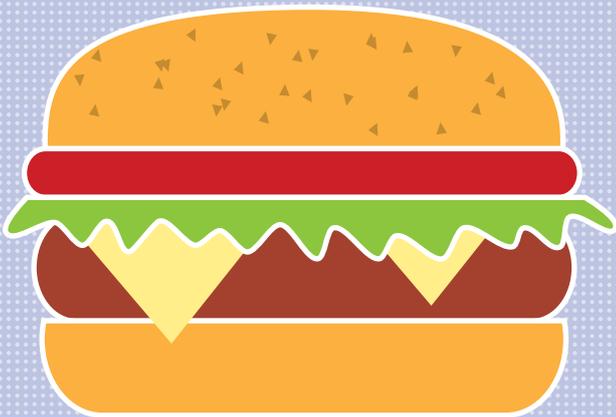
**FORMS
AUTOMATION**

- Franchise Management
- Construction
- Restaurants
- Transportation
- Manufacturing
- Facilities Management
- Oil & Gas
- Retail



The Form.com 80/20 Methodology

Form.com's unique mobile data collection applications give enterprise-level organizations the benefits of an off-the-shelf solution (stability, power, rapid deployment) with the added flexibility, control, and precise customization of a homegrown product. We do this by combining Form.com's flexible core with the brilliance of our professional services team. We call it the 80/20 Methodology.



The Core 80

The Form.com 80/20 Methodology starts with a preconfigured platform comprised of 80% off the shelf functionality. Our base platform is packed with all of the great features we've developed through 15 years of R&D. This is where we get the head start needed to deliver so quickly.



The Custom 20

Here is where we work directly with each customer to give them all the benefits of a "build" solution by customizing the remaining 20% of the application. We fine-tune individualized forms, workflows, design, etc. to meet their unique needs.



[Watch our video](#)

Form.com - The Platform
for a Mobile Enterprise



The Form.com Core 80: A foundation for success

Here's what you can expect from the foundational core of a Form.com solution.

User Experience Design and Development

Form.com's team of user experience experts have been testing and refining our core platform for the past 15 years. Their job is to ensure that every Form.com solution is built on an intuitive, flexible, and powerful foundation.

Even better, these platform experts are the same ones executing your customizations. This means no disconnects, no communication gaps, and no redundancies when it comes time to modify and adapt the solution to meet your needs.

Intelligent Forms

Form.com features intelligent forms that dynamically change for users as they move about locations based on who they are, where they are, and what they are doing. When a user logs in and performs a sync on their mobile device, all their approved forms are updated and tasks and notifications are instantly available to them.

Data is also pre-populated into forms so users don't have to repeatedly enter the same information. Just as helpful, employees are only asked questions that are relevant to the particular job they're performing.

Workflow Automation and Task Management

Form.com's powerful workflow automation and task management features are designed to automate manual business processes and streamline your operations.

The platform reacts to information and details included in submitted forms to automatically trigger actions, send out notifications, and schedule follow-up tasks for the appropriate people.

You can also:

- Define and schedule multiple task types
- Configure statuses and resolutions
- Specify deadlines for individuals or groups
- Require task completion before closing job
- View task history by individuals and/or departments



Form Scoring:

Create custom scoring and display results at the end of each completed form



Feedback:

Include feedback to correct failing or low-scoring areas



Action Plans:

Publish plans or tasks with deadlines and criticality levels after forms are submitted



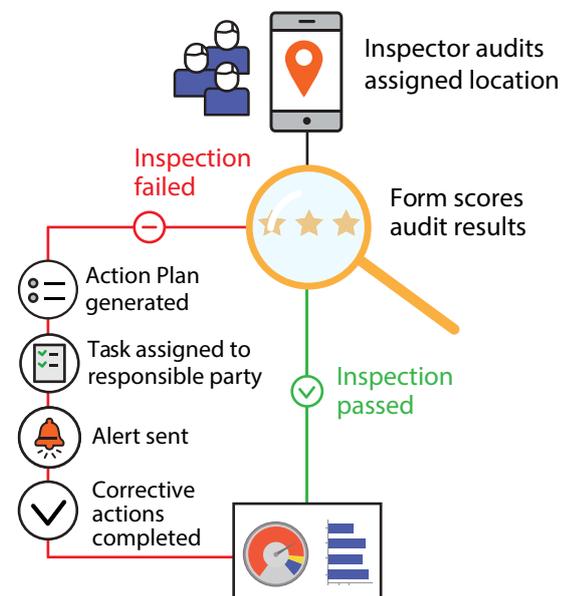
Data Mapping:

Visualize different locations on a map, view and compare data by region, sector, or job type



Follow-up:

Send email alerts and assign follow-up tasks based on results



Data that Makes a Difference

Form.com is perfect for managing and analyzing information, observations, and evidence collected between distributed operations. But it's not just the data you gather with Form.com that makes the difference. It's the speed, availability, depth, and reliability of that data that transforms your operation into a safer, more efficient and productive machine.



Watch our video
Data Collection VS.
Data Utilization



Whether users are performing audits or inspections for safety, quality, risk, or compliance, the information they gather with Form.com is quickly made available to all necessary stakeholders. This real-time data availability means problems can be fixed faster—before they turn into disasters.

Business Intelligence and Analytics

Form.com data can also be used to drive long-term improvements. Users, stakeholders, and management can access their custom business intelligence dashboards to get a comprehensive view of all the information gathered during audits and inspections. Here they can analyze trends and patterns to make strategic decisions and continuously improve.



They can also:

- Track, monitor, and manage statuses and task execution
- Drilldown to view trend lines by time and location
- Analyze real-time data to see what's happening at the ground level

Many reports (such as frequency tables, cross-tabulated reports, and statistical significance tests) can even be set to generate automatically, saving valuable time and ensuring ongoing reporting consistency.

WorldAPP Reporting

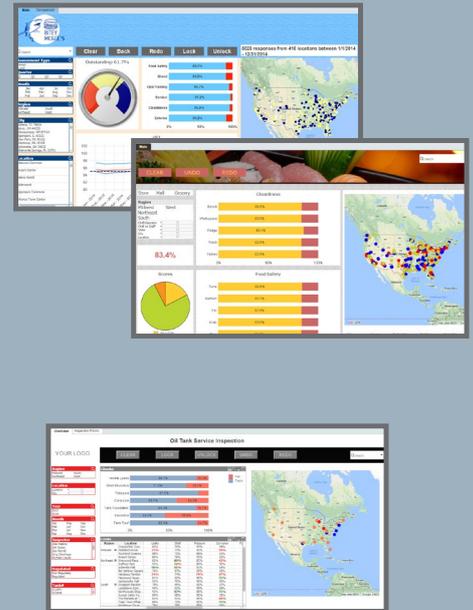
- Real time updates and tracking
- Monitor tasks and responses
- Form scoring and feedback
- Data mapping trend monitoring
- Exportable to 3rd party systems
- Dashboard and integration options

BI Dashboards

- Dynamic data visualization
- Hundreds chart types
- Build filtered reports
- Custom dashboards
- Drilldown charts and dashboards
- Connect to relational databases
- Support for iOS and Android devices
- No programming required

Form.com BI Dashboards let you:

- 
Analyze collected data
 in real-time to see what's happening right now, everywhere in your organization
- 
Track and compare
 performance and quality trends over time, location, or on a case-to-case basis
- 
Identify and remedy
 common local problems and make global adjustments
- 
Make data-driven decisions
 to fine-tune processes and procedures
- 
Oversee operations
 by tracking and monitoring task statuses and execution
- 
Improve field-to-office communication
 with advanced oversight of offsite employees



Support Multiple Departments

We often hear stories from clients about how other departments in their organization have displayed signs of “software envy” after seeing their new Form.com solution in action. They hear things like, “Why can’t we get tools like that?”

This is where the versatility of Form.com really comes in handy. Because our solutions are only 20% customized, it’s easy for clients to fulfill projects across multiple departments by re-using the core 80% of their Form.com platform over and over again.

Offline Capabilities

Form.com’s offline capabilities are great for companies working in remote locations or with limited internet access in warehouses, construction sites, stores, or kitchens. Because you can use Form.com while you’re offline, inspectors and auditors can complete forms, collect data, and schedule follow-up tasks from basically anywhere (regardless of connectivity) without ever losing access to any form intelligence.

Here’s how it works. The user collects the data they need,

“Fannie Mae engaged Form.com to provide a mobile platform to inspect our REO properties. We are currently working on a solution to offer this technology to our servicers to help with inspection form standardization.”

Jacob Williamson,
 VP of Single-Family Distressed Assets-Fannie Mae



[Watch our video](#)

Form.com Mobile - Forms Automation for quality, safety, and field optimization

makes a few notes, gathers evidence with a picture, and then either schedules a follow-up or one is automatically set in action for them.

The data is stored in the application, and once an internet connection is established, forms are synced to the server for further processing, reporting, or initiation of workflow and other automated events.

Gather Better Evidence with Your GPS and Camera

Since Form.com is made to enable inspections and audits on smartphones and tablets, we make sure that our applications take full advantage of all the features already built in to these devices.

Users can capture dates, timestamps, and GPS coordinates to prove that inspections or audits are completed at the appropriate place and time.

They can even take advantage of their device's camera to capture photos, mark them up with their finger, and upload them directly to the system. This can be a major time saver, eliminating 'the work after the work' for those companies who are still spending countless man hours manually validating photos and attaching them to spreadsheet or paper-based forms after the fact.

Form.com Difference: *Form.com is experienced in optimizing storage for clients who perform picture-heavy inspections. Our solution lets them fit all the photos they need on their device, and still have the ability to quickly sync-up without long uploading delays and timeouts.*



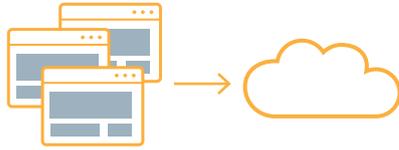
[Watch our video](#)

The WorldAPP Approach: Saving great companies from the Build or Buy dilemma



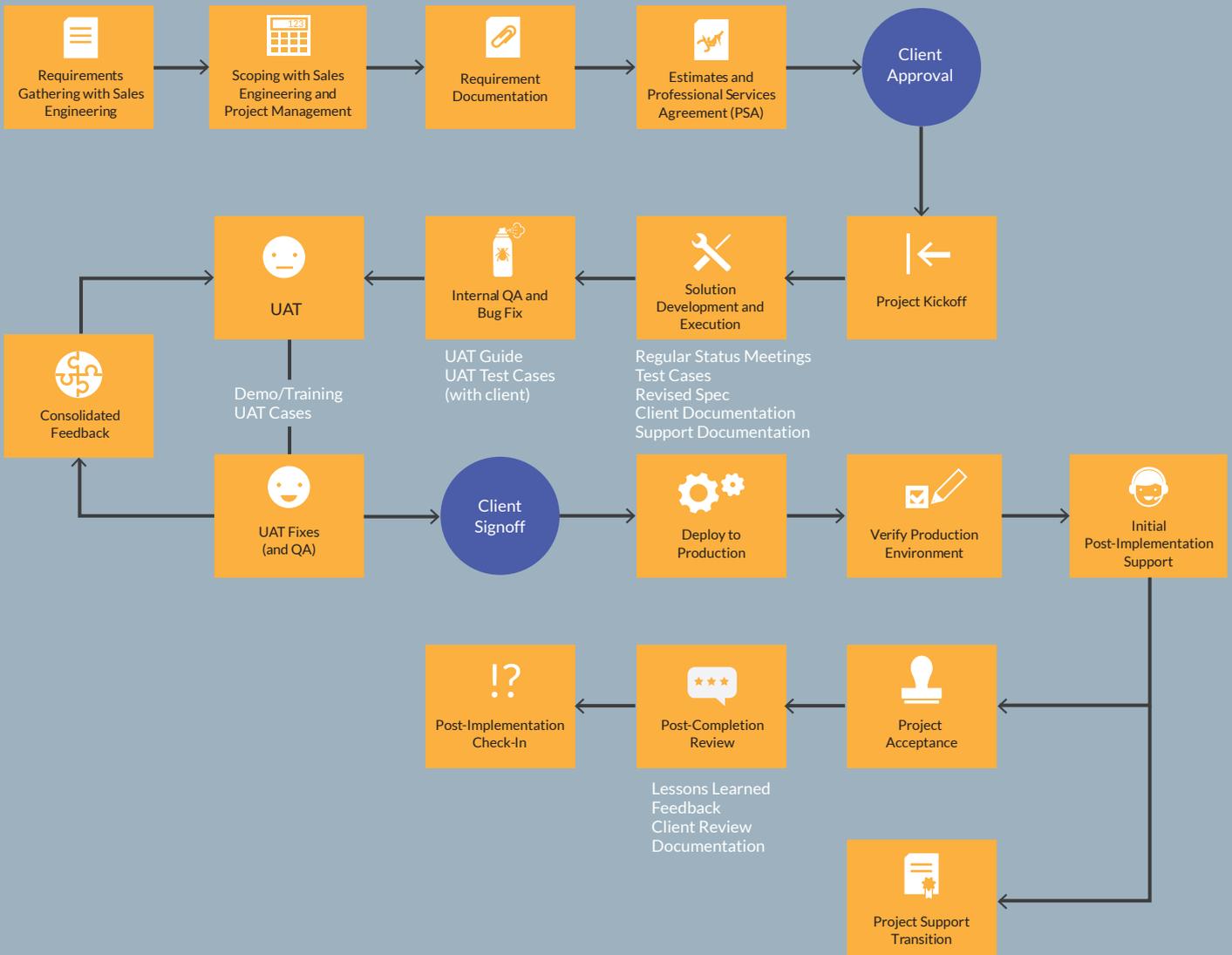
The Form.com Custom 20: It makes all the difference

The Custom 20 is our secret sauce, the part that really brings things to life with tailor-made design, usability, reporting, and processes. Here's how it works...



First, we re-create your existing forms and checklists (and anything else you're using paper or excel for) in our system. We then optimize the experience for mobile interaction before importing them into your skeleton instance of Form.com.

The remaining 20% of your solution is customized by our professional services team, who'll work with you to determine the best way for us to design and configure a custom solution with automated processes and workflows with corrective actions, notifications, and reports.



Form.com, WorldAPP, and the Professional Services Difference

WorldAPP is the parent company of Form.com and keeper of all the brilliant architects and developers that make up our professional services team. These are all the people behind the broad array of solutions we've implemented over the years. In fact, this close-knit group has spent the last decade-and-a-half honing and perfecting the Form.com Core 80 – constantly designing, building, testing, and refining every last detail of the application.

Perhaps most importantly, our professional services team works directly with our core development team to implement the Custom 20. These developers are the same people responsible for our Core 80, so they know how to customize it to look how clients want it to look, and work how clients expect it to work. Before wrapping up, they even make sure that the end solution seamlessly “bolts-on” to existing back-end systems and programs.



Front-end Customizations: A solution with a bad front-end or poor usability can quickly become frustrating to those who are ‘forced to use it’. That’s why our professional services team takes user experience into account with every decision they make. We customize everything (visual design, logic paths, data pre-filling, etc.) to ensure your new platform makes it as easy as possible for your employees to do their jobs.

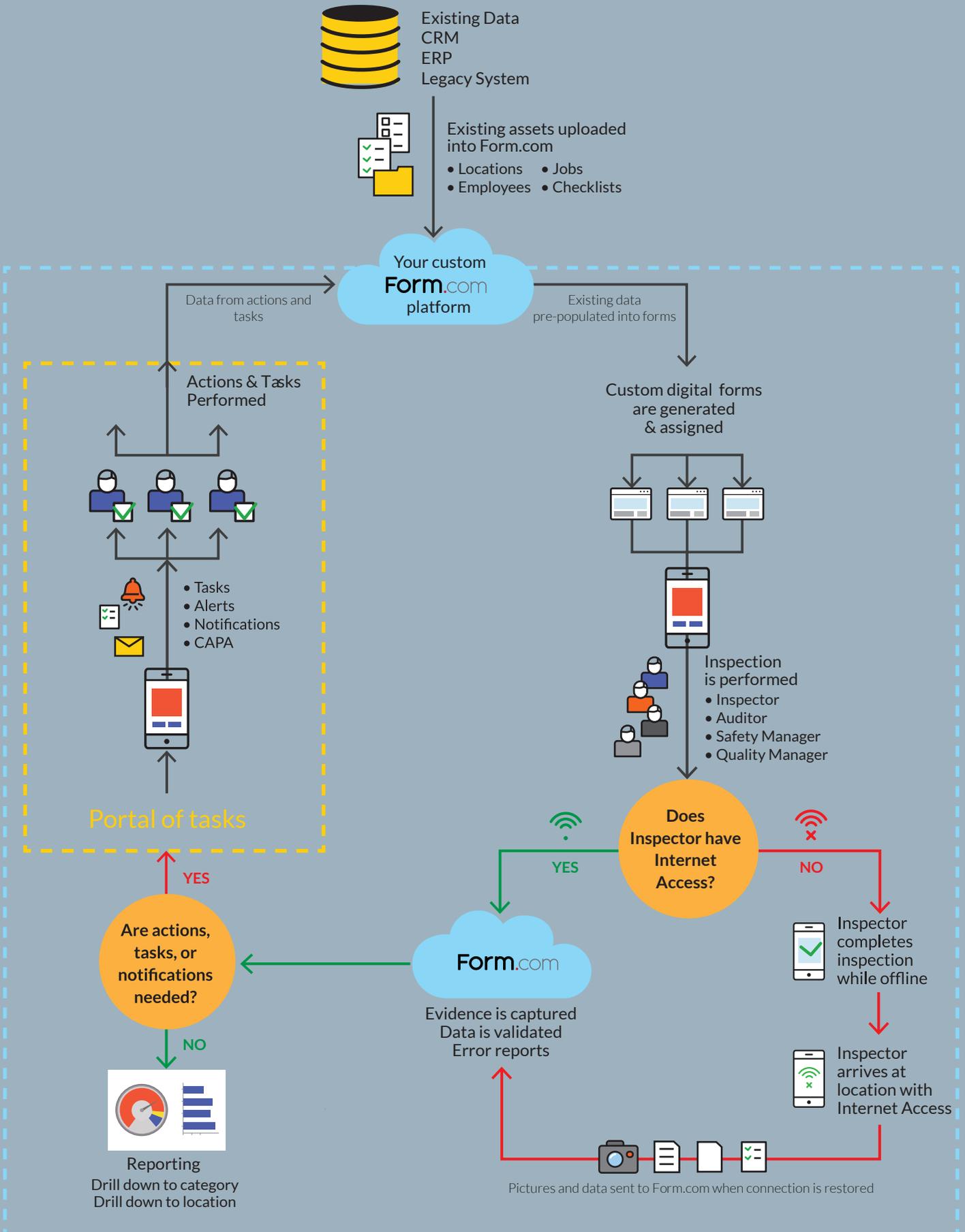


Back-end Customizations – On the back-end, we help you configure how your processes will work, and how automated triggers for workflows, tasks, and corrective actions will operate. We then work with you to integrate or ‘bolt’ the solution on to your existing systems. Finally, we fine-tune your reporting structure to make sure you can view and export data in a way that works for your business.



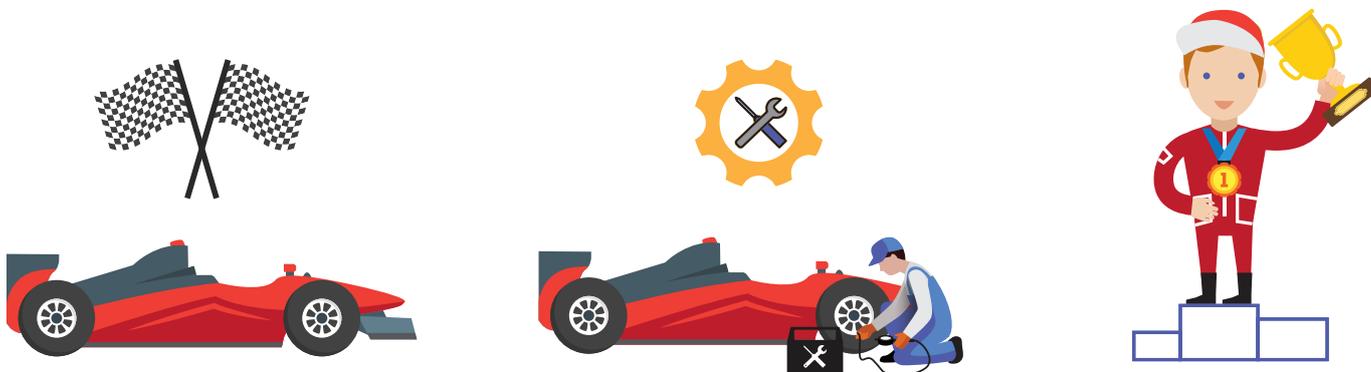
Operational Improvement – If you’re looking to ensure that your organization is operating as efficiently as possible, our professional services team work with you to use technology to streamline your operations. They’ll analyze your existing processes and workflows, find areas to tweak and improve, and work with you to implement automation into your business. This expert guidance will help you find innovative new ways to expedite the distribution of action plans, tasks, alerts, and CAPA (Corrective and Preventative Actions).

Form.com is in the business of helping great companies run better. So whatever the procedural need is, our professional services team will work with you to make sure you're heading down a path towards continuous improvement.



Build vs. Buy vs. Form.com: Comparison Chart

	Build	Buy	Form.com
Develop in-house expertise	Yes	No	Yes
Control over system	Complete	Partial	<i>Substantial</i>
Control over design	Complete	Minimal	<i>Substantial</i>
Respond quickly to problems	Yes	No	Yes
Internal resource drain	High	Low	<i>Low</i>
Implementation Time	Slow	Fast	<i>Fast</i>
Benefit from external R&D	No	Yes	Yes
Future-proofed	No	Yes	Yes
Cost	High	Low	<i>Medium</i>
Cost predictability	No	Yes	Yes



The Form.com Core 80 + Customization through Professional Services = Fast delivery of your unique solution

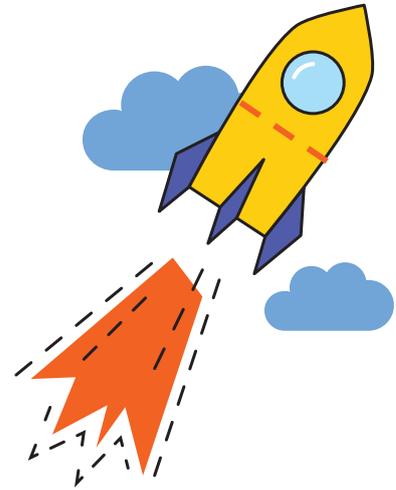
8 REASONS

Form.com Is The Right Solution for You

1 Improve speed to market

At Form.com, we're able to quickly design and deploy individualized solutions for our customers infinitely faster than a homegrown solution. This is thanks to our unique delivery approach.

The Form.com 80/20 Methodology is the rocket fuel that propels our custom solutions through delivery so quickly. Eighty percent of each solution we build starts as a pre-configured foundation of code, complete with all the bells and whistles that we've developed through a decade and a half of research and development. We then customize and fine tune the details to meet your needs.



2 Partner with experts in solution design & architecture

The right solution design and architecture can mean the difference between a user base that quickly takes to their new application (because it helps them do their job), and one that almost instantly rejects it (because it slows them down and they hate working with it).

When thinking about building, remember that most in-house tech teams aren't experienced in designing enterprise-level data collection solutions, let alone architecting complex mobile apps with automated processes and task management. But, why would they be? It takes time to nail the user experience for a new digital tool that people will use to do perform their jobs. In fact, if done right it can take years of research and development—years that you don't have to spare. So, instead of trying to re-invent the wheel, why not hitch your wagon to a fully functioning powerhouse that's already done the heavy lifting for you?

Some (if not most) off-the-shelf solutions provide a decent user experience and design. But before you decide on one, be sure to ask yourself:

Will this tool give me the user experience design and architecture I need? Will it fit my business and make work easier for my colleagues? Or will I be force feeding a dud to my end-users? And if so, how will they react when the fancy new tools I deliver start messing with the way they do things?

At Form.com, we know how tools like these work because we've been in the trenches with companies like yours for years, helping safety and quality professionals implement mobile applications and solutions with the exact features and functionality they need to hit the ground running at an efficient and productive clip.

3 Make data-driven decisions

When you take time to analyze the data you collect with Form.com, you start to get a good understanding of problems that may be happening at the ground level, while getting a constant pulse on how safety initiatives are working at your current jobsites.

As data starts to accumulate, you can start making smarter decisions based on historical information. You can use this information to identify trends, which in turn can help you implement preventative actions for each of your locations.

The right data and a willingness to learn from it can help you start generating thoughts and conversations where real learning can happen. Over time, this can spark better ideas, smarter decisions, and ultimately lead you down a path towards continuous improvement.



4 Get more for your money

The flexible nature of Form.com combines with its feature-rich core to provide our customers with more utility than they thought possible. Not only do our customizable products solve the data collection problems that prompted you to search for software in the first place, but they also provide cutting-edge features like forms automation, GPS tracking, and camera integration.

Got another department that needs something similar? Simply re-use the Core 80 of your existing platform and adjust the remaining 20% of the solution to meet their needs.

5 Enjoy impeccable engagement

At Form.com, we believe client engagement is one of the most important parts of any project. After all, without constant communication and transparency, a project quickly can go off the rails. That's why we empower our Account Managers to go beyond the normal range of client expectations to create truly effective and sustainable business relationships built on trust and mutual understanding.

It all starts with a custom demo: a working model that converts a client's existing forms into a functioning prototype, complete with custom branding. Our clients can then share this working demo with stakeholders to provide the team with a concrete example of what a final solution might look like. Next, we gather feedback, make adjustments, and deliver a proof of concept.

The proof of concept can then be used in a pilot program where users provide additional feedback before rolling the solution out to the masses. Not only does this level of client engagement make sure that vendor/client expectations are aligned throughout the process, but it helps get the most viable product out to the field as quickly as possible.

6 Embrace the added value

As mentioned above, Form.com lets you re-use your platform over and over again to fulfill of your company's data collection needs, so you can share the benefits of your new mobile application with other divisions and dramatically improve the value of your investment.

Also, while you may have heard the argument that building software in-house will pay for itself over time, the cost of the software you're developing will pale in comparison to the ongoing maintenance costs and fees involved in a homegrown solution. Any solution that doesn't require you to constantly update, tweak, and adjust it will almost always deliver at a lower total cost of ownership than a regularly maintained homegrown solution.

You also need to prepare for the inevitable scope creep that will happen when too many internal chefs are allowed in the kitchen. Without strict project management and constant transparency, your budget could be depleted before you know it.

7 Manage change without fear

If you've ever been involved in an internal software build, you know that change requests can quickly spiral out of control and derail even the most diligent project managers. In fact, unexpected changes are the primary reason why so many internal projects end up delayed and over budget. Not only is it next to impossible to manage a budget when you're constantly adjusting, it can also be very hard on your tech team. After all, nobody enjoys undoing two weeks of work just because a change wasn't planned or anticipated.

As for buying a solution, expect change management to be extremely difficult. Point solutions are designed for utility, not flexibility. In fact, many vertical solutions are so rigid that it can be nearly impossible to solve your largest internal problems without making a significant investment into professional services. And as we mentioned earlier, you're usually going to have to hire a third party to customize an off-the-shelf solution (if it's even possible).

According to a recent McKinsey survey, 45% of large IT projects run over budget, delivering 56% less value than expected. In fact, one in five internal projects fail so spectacularly (with overruns ranging from 200-400%) that they threaten the future of the company. Also known as "black swan" projects, these internal projects end up spiraling out of control to a point where either the project is abandoned or the company files for bankruptcy. Form.com eliminates the potential for a black swan.



Any time you bring a third-party into the fray, you're setting yourself up for additional work and the potential for confusion. You've already vetted your solution, and now you also have to vet your potential new partner, which could be a lot more complicated than it seems. Before you know it, you could end up paying multiple companies for the same solution – with licenses and subscription fees on one side and consulting and development fees on the other. Worst of all, once you start splitting up a project you no longer have one company or individual completely invested in the entire experience of your platform, which could come back to haunt you should something go seriously wrong.

When you invest in a solution like Form.com, however, you're getting a tool that's completely flexible and customizable. And our professional services are part of the package. That means you'll never have to worry about paying out the nose for things like change requests, additional license fees, and consulting invoices. It's the beauty of the 80/20 rule; you can always make changes if necessary without destroying your budget or derailing your entire program.



8

Prepare for tomorrow

Most internal development teams are so busy building and maintaining their data collection platforms that they have no time to stay on top of the latest industry tech trends or keep up with advancements by the competition. They're already having a hard enough time completing tasks fast enough to meet their aggressive deadlines.

The unique Form.com approach means that you never have to worry about investing in new innovations to keep up with competition, and you never have to worry about any surprises down the road. That's because all recurring costs for Form.com customers are pre-built into the contract, and updates come free of charge. Even our customers with self-hosted solutions gain immediate access to all of our new features and functionality whenever a new release is pushed out.

It's important to know that not all products work this way. In fact, many will make you pay for upgrades and enhancements. So before signing any contracts, make sure the solution you choose includes ongoing upkeep and technology advancements.

Also, remember the potential for internal software envy. Chances are, another internal department is going to see your solution and wonder how they can get one. And since it's unreasonable to expect an internal IT team to develop a homegrown solution for each and every data collection business case in your company, you'll need to find new and creative ways to re-use and re-purpose similar solutions over and over again.

An investment in the extensible Form.com platform can help you do just that. You'll rest assured knowing that if any internal requests pop-up in the future, you can re-use what you've already implemented and leave the minor tweaks and adjustments to the Form.com professional services team.

WORKING THROUGH YOUR DECISION

A few parting words

At the end of the day, Form.com is about finding the best way to manage the troves of data that your business produces, and optimize the way it's moved and shared across your organization. But what truly sets us apart from the build and buy models is our unique ability to give you full control over a customized platform without asking you to wait years for it to be developed from scratch by an in-house IT team.

At Form.com, our approach is 100% focused on the success of our enterprise customers. We're not a typical software company that outsources support and is never around when you need them. In fact, we consider ourselves more of a partner than a vendor to our customers, which is why we're always doing our best to build and nurture long-term relationships with each and every Form.com client.

Thank you for taking the time to review the Form.com buyer's guide. Hopefully it provided you with a clear idea of the functionality that our platform provides and how we're leveraging our 80/20 Methodology to become the third (and winning) option in the build vs buy debate.



l - <http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/delivering-large-scale-it-projects-on-time-on-budget-and-on-value>



Got questions? We can help!

Form.com is a flexible platform designed to take time-consuming procedures done on paper and spreadsheets and turn them into user-friendly forms. Our mobile and offline app allows you to access and complete forms from anywhere, even while offline, and our team of experts will work with you every step of the way to create your ideal solution.

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