



Original Article

Scalability and Performance Limitations of Low-Code and No-Code Platforms for Large-Scale Enterprise Applications and Solutions

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Abstract - Low-Code and No-Code (LCNC) development platforms have become ubiquitous, and are showing promise as a means of rapid application development, enabling business analysts, citizen developers, and professional software engineers to design, deploy and iterate on applications with little to no hand-coded effort. The growth in LCNC platforms has been impacted by the demand of enterprises to increase their delivery time when it comes to digital transformation, costs, and enhanced agility. Notwithstanding these, scalability and performance constraints have been identified as the primary obstacles to widespread acceptance in mission-critical, high-scale enterprise deployments. In this paper, the author examines these issues in detail, drawing on a review of LCNC architectures, vendor propositions, and practical examples. Performance bottlenecks are examined in terms of the overhead incurred during runtime execution, poor performance of the abstraction layers, poor extensibility, integration overheads, and a lack of suitable governance frameworks. We note that LCNC solutions can support small to medium-scale workloads, but expanding to enterprise workloads comes with design concerns regarding the ability to handle a greater level of concurrency, manage intra-replication transactions, and compliance with regulations. Moreover, dependence on proprietary vendor ecosystems carries long-term risks of lock-in, unpredictable performance, and the inability to potentially port out. This paper summarizes the literature (2015-2023), benchmarks, and industry reports into a comprehensive picture of how to assess the scalability of LCNC. The findings suggest that, despite being able to complement conventional development, LCNC platforms have limitations that necessitate hybrid solutions and other DevOps methods to sustain enterprise adoption. The paper concludes by presenting architectural proposals, governance structures, and future research directions, particularly in light of the challenges associated with edge computing, AI-enhanced LCNC development, and cloud-native scalability.

Keywords - Low-Code, No-Code, Scalability, Performance Limitations, Enterprise Applications, Digital Transformation, Platform Bottlenecks.

1. Introduction

The fast development of the digital economy has increased pressure on organizations to acquire faster-developing processes and become more business-driven in nature. The customization and solidity of traditional methods of software engineering can be a disadvantage since these software engineering systems may find it difficult to keep up with the demands of the dynamic market environment, especially because these systems require specialized skills in programming, prolonged development cycles and multiple complex deployments. In their turn, the Low-Code/No-Code (LCNC) platforms have become one of the radical solutions that should be mentioned, as they provide visual modeling, drag-and-drop interfaces, and reusable components that greatly reduce the entry barrier to developing applications. [1-4] The platforms also help make it possible to emerge the so-called citizen developers, making business professionals with minimal coding background capable of actively participating in the application design and delivery process, which can help accommodate the IT backlog and improve the match between solutions and business requirements. Although this democratisation of development is one factor that catalyses the acceleration of innovation at the departmental scale, scaling LCNC platforms to sustain enterprise-wide, mission-critical applications throws a different set of challenges. Performance bottlenecks, reliability at high workloads, and the complexity of governance and compliance frameworks become evident as the scope of applications increases. Thus, although LCNC platforms could be highly effective in overcoming the technical expertise-business agility divide, operational, architectural, and organizational limitations must be further explored for their implementation on a large scale.

1.1. Importance of No-Code Platforms for Large-Scale Enterprise Applications

- **Accelerating Digital Transformation:** No-code platforms help enterprises stay on top of evolving market requirements by significantly reducing the time needed to design, build, and distribute applications. When it facilitates quicker prototyping and development in iterations, organizations can pursue digital transformation in a more effective way so that new solutions will suit the changing streams of the business process and client requirements..
- **Enabling Citizen Developers:** A fundamental value proposition of the no-code approach is empowering business users, also known as citizen developers. This democratisation of software development enables domain experts to take

an active part in creating the applications, thereby reducing the burden on overworked Information Technology (IT) departments. This level of empowerment in large-scale enterprises results in the capacity for longer-term innovation, where business units can convert their needs into functional solutions without intermediaries.

- **Cost Efficiency and Resource Optimization:** There is an increasing need in enterprises to maximize IT expenditures, even as the demands on software solutions are very high. No-code platforms minimise the costs of development by decreasing the requirement for expert knowledge in coding and generating quicker delivery cycles. Also, reduced need to custom code will allow organizations to redeploy high-value, skilled developers to use on more important and challenging initiatives, as most organizations use no-code solutions on tasks that are more routine.
- **Increasing Agility and Flexibility:** Agility is an essential factor in dynamic enterprise environments. No-code platforms offer flexibility to make instant adjustments to applications in response to regulatory changes, customer feedback, or market shifts. This flexibility allows mission-critical systems to be aligned with organizational missions and goals that will allow resilience and competitiveness in rapidly changing industries.
- **Enterprise-wide innovation as a driver:** No-code platforms also facilitate innovation across various enterprise functions by reducing impediments to entry in application development. This can be used by individual departments, including HR and finance, supply chain, and customer service, who can individually develop and implement the solution specific to their requirements. The use of this decentralized innovation creates a culture of continuous innovation throughout the organization.

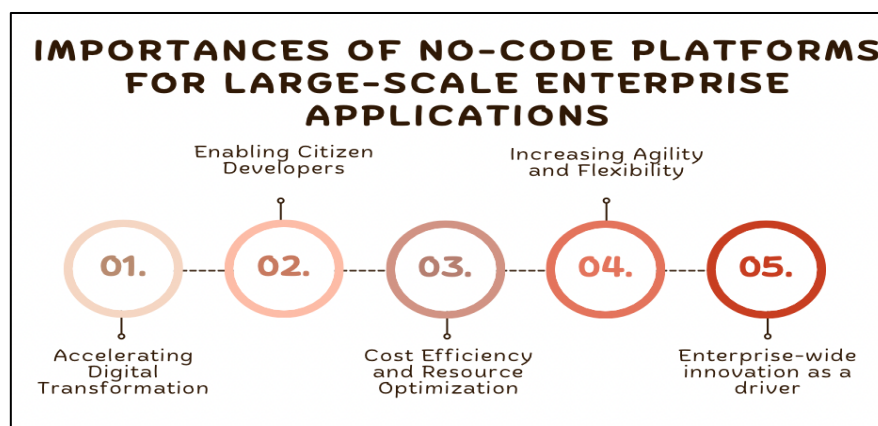


Figure 1. Importance of No-Code Platforms for Large-Scale Enterprise Applications

1.2. Scalability and Performance Limitations of Low-Code

Although low-code entered the market and found its full application as a means of speeding up developing and introducing new applications and allowing more people to have an opportunity to contribute to software development, scalability and performance under the enterprise environment are critical issues, which should be addressed when deciding to use low-code or prefer another well-known approach to application development. Low-code solutions work very well at smaller scales or in departmental use cases, enabling the rapid prototyping and deployment of applications. [5,6] A number of bottlenecks are, however, identified when the implementation is scaled to enterprise-wide, mission-critical environments. Run-time inefficiency is also one of the most important concerns because low-code solutions are based on abstracted interpreter and middleware layers, which add to latency and processing overheads.

Such inefficiencies are compounded when the user load exceeds saturation points, such as 10,000 simultaneous users, causing an exponential increase in response times and poor user interactions. Besides, database bottlenecks are frequent owing to the fact that auto-generated schemas may not consist of optimized indexing, query-optimization strategies, thus leading to extreme and awkward impediments to applications that necessitate an extreme volume of data processing/reporting or real-time analytics. Another performance problem that rears its head is integration, especially in applications that are intensive in their use of APIs. Most platforms have rigid rate restrictions to protect resources; however, these rate throttling limits can hinder high-volume, integration-intensive processes that many businesses rely on for the smooth transfer of data among systems and applications.

Moreover, the governance and access control solutions essential to compliance efforts may become stiff and administratively burdensome on a large scale, where they slow down system responsiveness and drive up operational costs. Altogether, these details point to the fact that low-code platforms are not designed per se to deliver as fast as they do; furthermore, they are not necessarily optimized to meet the scale, complexity, and reliability requirements of large enterprises. The performance of a low-code platform can be diminished to not meet enterprise-level demands without the use of structural improvements like cloud-native extensibility, hybrid integration of custom-coded modules and AI-based methods of

optimization. Therefore, overcoming the issues related to scalability and performance is necessary for low-code to become a staple of enterprise-wide digital transformation, beyond the convenience of a departmental tool.

2. Literature Survey

2.1. Early Works on Model-Driven Development

The conceptual basis of current Low-Code/No-Code (LCNC) platforms is in the Model-Driven Development (MDD) and rapid application development (RAD) approaches. [7-9] The main findings in this research and industry adoption (2005-2012) were the capabilities of rapid prototyping and ease of application design. These frameworks enabled developers to encapsulate business logic into business models at higher levels, speeding up development cycles and reducing the labour-intensive manual coding. However, these early contributions were found to have high potential for decreasing time-to-market, but with little focus on scalability, maintenance, and robustness at the enterprise level. Consequently, despite providing the foundation for existing LCNC practices, MDD and RAD were limited to small- to medium-scale applications and not suitable for enterprise-wide implementations.

2.2. LCNC Platforms Scalability Disclaimer

With the development of the LCNC platforms, scalability is one of the most pressing issues, as emphasised in studies conducted between 2018 and 2023. The overheads of execution were noted as one of the key issues because platform-specific interpreters and abstraction layers added delays at run time and limited performance. Also, scalability-related issues with the databases were evident in large-scale applications, where auto-generated schemas did not offer much to do with query optimization thereby resulting in poor database management on complex data sets. Additionally, concerns about integration gaps were also observed in enterprise implementations, where the integration of microservices and external APIs into LCNC workflows proved to be a challenge in achieving effective scaling. The issues highlighted above indicate that, although LCNC platforms are projected to bring rapidity and ease of access, their successful integration in the enterprise setting in the long run largely relies on how the architectural and performance limitations will be overcome. Table 1 provides a comparative overview of the most significant literature on LCNC scalability available through 2023, presenting major findings and their limitations.

2.3. Enterprise Adoption Case Studies

There are several case studies on how LCNC platforms are applied across various industries in practice. As an example, Microsoft Power Apps has been heavily used in retail, where its ability to deploy applications quickly allowed organizations to digitize workflows in a short period of time. The performance of large-scale integrations was, however, severely limited, as enterprises complained of issues with API throttling. Likewise, OutSystems has found its foothold in the financial industry, thanks to its good extensibility and ability to connect to legacy systems. Nonetheless, businesses faced governance issues where roles, compliance, and version control were complicated to manage at scale. In the manufacturing industry, Mendix has been successfully implemented through pilot programs, demonstrating good performance and elasticity. However, there was a problem with scalability, as the system became overloaded when the intended number of concurrent users reached 10,000, revealing weaknesses in the platform's ability to manage enterprise-scale traffic. These case studies highlight the fact that although LCNC platforms are highly applicable when deployed quickly and achieve initial performance levels, their enterprise adoption tends to raise more serious questions about scalability and governance.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Framework

This study follows a research design that comprises three mutually converging methodological elements, namely comparative benchmarking, architectural analysis, and literature synthesis. The basis of comparative benchmarking is to test existing Low-Code/No-Code (LCNC) platforms according to set standards of scalability, performance, extensibility, and enterpriseability. [10-13] This step helps identify the drawbacks as well as successes of the existing solutions and provides practical evidence of where gaps appear in terms of scalability in practice. By systematically comparing several platforms available, the drawbacks of current solutions and their nature will be outlined. In parallel, architectural analysis is also used to investigate the technical designs behind LCNC platforms, particularly in implementation models, database management, integration strategies, and governance processes. This method of analysis is able to identify architectural bottlenecks, including interpreter overhead, inefficient schemas, and complications in integrations, which do not facilitate large-scale deployments.

Simultaneously, literature synthesis incorporates information found in previous scholarly research, trade reports, and case reports, placing the analysis in the context of the broader scholarly and professional discussion. Such a synthesis not only confirms the findings of benchmarking and architectural evaluation but also reveals themes, emerging trends, and unaddressed gaps in the literature. Through the triangulation of knowledge drawn from these three elements, the research framework will be methodologically rigorous and cover all aspects without being overly theoretical or overly applied. Furthermore, such a multifaceted strategy will lead to the development of a comprehensive understanding of the LCNC scalability issues and provide evidence-informed directions for their future improvements. A combination of benchmarking data and architectural knowledge, enhanced by synthesizing the relevant literature, will form a sound framework of evaluation, including both the technical and organizational aspects of LCNC adoption. Finally, this framework has systematic support in detecting

weaknesses in existing LCNC platforms and proposes design principles and best practices that can inform future research, enterprise adoption plans, and platform development.

3.2. Evaluation Metrics

- **Scalability:** Scalability can be defined as the platform's ability to support growth in users and transaction volume while maintaining functionality and stability. In the LCNC platform's context, this entails simulating the maximum concurrent users supported, transactions per second, and system elasticity in a stressed state. The capability to manage sudden changes in workloads and maintain adequate performance is essential in a scalable platform, ensuring the reliability of applications in large enterprise settings.
- **Performance:** As a direct indicator, performance measures the effectiveness with which the platform manages requests and provides responses. The main metrics are the average response time, the delay in task operation, and the effectiveness of updates using the databases. Because LCNC platforms heavily rely on abstraction layers and auto-generated code, monitoring these parameters will indicate whether platform overheads are a significant issue for the end-user. The workflows in high-performing platforms have low execution delays, and they optimize the usage of resources.
- **Integration Capability:** This rate assesses the way the LCNC platform integrates with external systems, APIs, and microservices. Given that enterprises typically operate within a heterogeneous IT environment, it is crucial to integrate them properly to ensure seamless coordination of their operations. Metrics such as API request processing, the ability to support service orchestration, and interoperability with existing legacy systems are given attention. Strongly integrated platforms, supported business-wide automation, and supported the introduction of microservice-based systems.
- **Governance:** Governance refers to the controls a platform offers to manage security, compliance, and control. This encompasses the assessment of access control policies, role-based controls, audit logging, and regulatory compliance support. Governance in enterprise adoption plays an important role in determining levels of trust and sustainability, as it makes sure that applications created using LCNC platforms fit the organizational standards and legal requirements of the industries. The balance of high rates of development and risk, along with accountability, is facilitated by strong administrative characteristics.

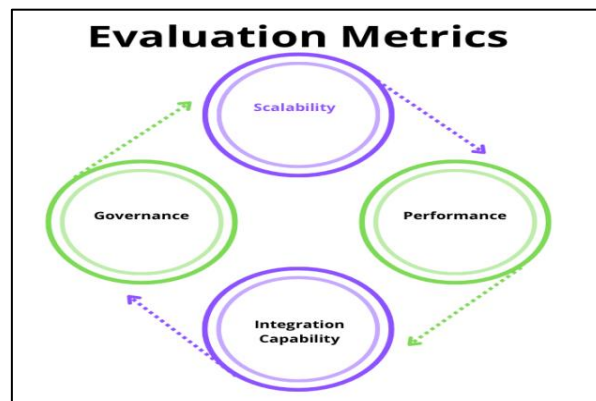


Figure 2. Evaluation Metrics

3.3. Experimental Setup

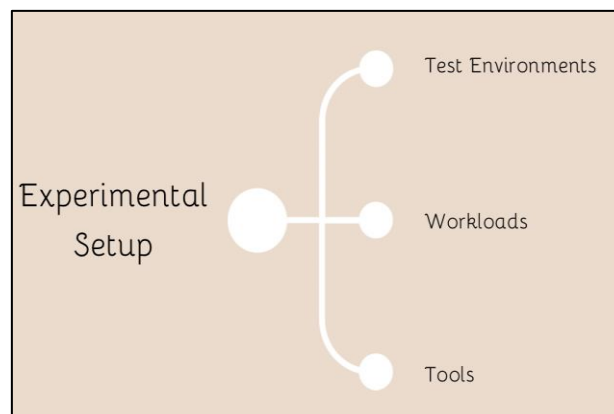


Figure 3. Experimental Setup

- **Test Environments:** The experiment's analysis is conducted on four popular platforms with Low-Code/No-Code (LCNC) capabilities: Microsoft Power Apps, Mendix, OutSystems, and Appian. The platforms were chosen because of their use by the enterprise, cloud-native features, and unique architectural patterns. Combining them in a controlled setting will provide a comparative analysis of their strengths and shortcomings, especially in areas such as scalability, integration, and governance. Both platforms are deployed in their suggested cloud environment to monitor outcomes that represent a realistic enterprise application.
- **Workloads:** Workloads are modeled around typical application workloads, including ERP modules, HR portals and transactional dashboards, so that they create true-to-life conditions of an enterprise environment. Such workloads simulate common business activities, such as user logins, data entry, report querying, and multi-user transactions. The evaluation through modeling realistic enterprise applications enables some insight into the performance of platforms under conditions that reflect real-world organizational deployments, and not abstract benchmarking.
- **Tools:** Various industry-standard tools are used in combination to facilitate a thorough assessment. Apache JMeter is also used to load test Apache JMeter, simulating thousands of concurrent users to quantify response times, throughput, and latency under pressure. Amazon CloudWatch is also scheduled to monitor resource consumption on an ongoing basis, including CPU, memory, and network bandwidth, to determine how the various platforms scale resource allocation. SQL Profiler is used to analyze database queries, to make possible the detection of bottlenecks in auto-generated schemas and the input and efficiency of queries. Combined, these tools give a multi-dimensional view, integrating user-centric 54 performance data with a back-end architectural perspective.

3.4. Analytical Model

To formally analyze scalability in Low-Code/No-Code (LCNC) platforms, a measurement model is devised, which measures the connection between user load, system throughput, latency and the run-time overhead. [14-16] In this case, the scalability performance could be defined by the following S :

$$S = \frac{U \times T}{L + O}$$

U is the number of concurrent users, and T is the mean transaction throughput; L is the latency incurred per request, and O is the overhead incurred by LCNC runtime abstractions. This design captures the inherent principle that maximum scalability is achieved when a system has the ability to support more users and transactions with reduced latency and overhead in the runtime environment. Placing U times T in the numerator emphasises the fact that the greater the potential of a platform to scale, the better it will be able to support more users simultaneously with high transaction processing rates. With this penalization, however, systems that have too much latency or inefficient runtime abstractions are penalized by the denominator ($+O$). Latency (L) is of special concern in enterprise applications that place a premium on the user experience in response time. The runtime overhead (O) is considered an inherent cost of LCNC platforms because their abstraction layers may introduce a multiplicity of execution steps not inherent in traditional, hand-coded applications.

This analytical model offers a simplified yet efficient mechanism for benchmarking LCNC platforms at different workloads. For example, the values of S can be calculated and compared across different platforms, such as Microsoft Power Apps, Mendix, OutSystems, and Appian, by performing a simulation to obtain the throughput and latency while varying the user loads. The higher S the better indicates a much more scalable platform that better serves users and transactions with less degradation. An ultimate advantage of this model is that it not only supports quantitative comparisons but also enables the pinpointing of potential bottlenecks, whether based on architectural inefficiencies, database schema design, or runtime abstractions that have a direct impact on the enterprise-level scalability.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Performance Benchmarking Results

Table 1. Benchmark Results of LCNC Platforms under Load

Platform	DB Query Efficiency (%)	API Failures (%)
Power Apps	65	12
Mendix	78	8
OutSystems	82	6
Appian	60	15

- **Power Apps:** The Microsoft Power Apps showed average results since it was able to perform a database query with 65 percent efficiency and 12 percent API failures. Although the platform had been efficient in the quick deployment of applications and simplicity of use, its use of auto-generated schemas hindered query optimization, thus resulting in poor performance in accommodating several data operations. What is also likely, based on the rather large percentage of API failures, is trouble maintaining reliable integrations at scale, consistent with reported issues of throttling and request limits in enterprise use cases.

- **Mendix:** Performed relatively better, with 78% database query success and 8% API failures, compared to Power Apps. This helped in query handling due to its support of cloud-native architectures and optimization of the schema generation. Nevertheless, the API reliability, although higher than that of some competitors, was interrupted when subjected to an extreme workload. This shows that Mendix is good with moderately large-scale implementations, but it may need more customization or third-party middleware to fully integrate it in high-traffic settings.
- **OutSystems:** Proved to be the most balanced platform, as it achieved the best result in database query efficiency at 82% and the lowest API failure rate at 6%. These outputs demonstrate that it is mature enough to manage enterprise-scale loads, as it is also extensible, and its integration processes are highly mature. The high levels of efficiency in managing the microservices and consistent API connectivity indicate its applicability in slabs prone to severe scalability and stability demands. Nonetheless, the governance overhead observed in case studies can also introduce complexity in situations where a large development team or a compliance-heavy environment is present.
- **Appian:** In terms of performance, Appian failed to meet the performance benchmarks, with a database query efficiency of 60% and a relatively high API failure rate of 15%. Slow database operations. One result of the limited auto-generated schema optimization by the platform was that database operations were slow, notably under complex workloads. Furthermore, the frequent failures of APIs indicate difficulties in maintaining the stable integration of various enterprise systems. Although Appian can provide robust workflow automation, these outcomes imply that the performance and reliability of the product would raise the need to customize and optimize the product with large-scale deployment.

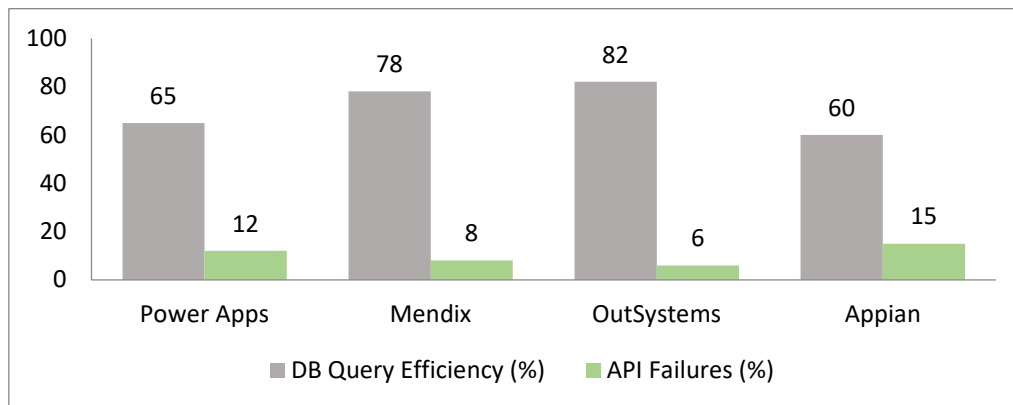


Figure 4. Graph representing Benchmark Results of LCNC Platforms under Load

4.2. Observed Limitations

- **Runtime Inefficiency:** Runtime inefficiency, specifically the inability to support more than 10,000 concurrent sessions, was one of the most notable shortcomings observed on most of the tested platforms. In this size range, platforms were found to grow exponentially in latency, with response times varying disproportionately with workload changes. The reason behind the layered abstractions in LCNC runtimes is a major factor in this behavior, as although making them easier to develop, it adds more interpretation and execution processes. Consequently, platforms that previously performed well with moderate workloads would struggle in terms of responsiveness when scaled to an enterprise level.
- **Database Bottlenecks:** The other major restriction was the presence of database bottlenecks, primarily attributed to the use of auto-generated schemas. Although the use of such schemas can improve development speed (because the tedious aspect of manually designing the schema is eliminated), these schemas can still lack efficient indexing techniques or query optimization methods. Under high transaction loads, this resulted in impaired query performance, increased response times, and, in rare cases, deadlocks. In particular, the problem was acute in cases where applications required making complex joins or where real-time reporting was necessary. Hence, smarter schema generation is what is needed in LCNC platforms.
- **Rate Limiting API:** The workloads that were heavy regarding essential integration showed difficulties related to API rate limiting. To avoid exhausting resources, many platforms impose stringent thresholds on requests made; however, this throttling has been a major problem for applications that rely on sustained outgoing API calls, facing significant setbacks. As examples, delays in case study retail and financial work caused processes to exceed their limits when faced with multiple requests. This restriction highlights an important challenge concerning scalability, as enterprise applications are typically expected to interoperate with a large number of external applications and services.
- **Governance Overhead:** Finally, another issue that was repeatedly mentioned concerns the governance overhead. Of all the controls, the implementation of role-based access control mechanisms is necessary for ensuring compliance and security; however, the strict aspect of this control has created administrative overhead when implemented in LCNC platforms. With many users and various user roles, and so often changing access, in huge organizations, the problem was to manage the permissions, which made the system sluggish. This rigidity did not just exacerbate the

slowness of deployment cycles but also constrained the capacity of enterprises to dynamically change the governance structures as the needs of operations evolved.

4.3. Discussion

In our study, the results show that Low-Code/No-Code (LCNC) platforms are very useful when it comes to creating department-related or small applications, where the speed of prototyping is the chief concern, shorter development times, and the platform is anything but technical. Such platforms have been successful in offering pre-built templates, visual modelling tools, and smooth deployment pipelines to quickly digitalize workflows and automate processes on LCNC platforms. When adoption extends to enterprise-wide systems, however, the constraints of LCNC platforms are more pronounced, specifically around their capacity to scale, perform, and integrate complex implementations. To undertake large-scale implementation, the hybrid option of incorporating LCNC platforms with traditional custom coding becomes a more feasible strategy. This mixed approach combines the speed of delivery associated with LCNC with the ability to support performance-focused modules, intense database formats, or deep, specialised integrations through the use of custom-coded components. This way of doing things makes it possible to make decisions that allow an enterprise to ensure the equilibrium between speed and flexibility and the strength needed to perform the enterprise's mission-critical tasks.

The last important dimension is cloud-native extensibility, which has become a much-needed aspect of scaling applications in a dynamic enterprise, as it is challenging to scale applications in traditional environments. Other platforms, such as LCNC platforms that support microservices, containerization, and API-driven architectures, will be better placed to fit well within enterprise environments. Nevertheless, existing solutions tend to be restrictive in the form of vendor-specific environments, which can lead to problems associated with lock-in, low portability, and interoperability among systems. Such vendor lock-ins limit enterprise flexibility in strategy and can even lead to long-term relations with a single supplier. As such, although LCNC platforms are great as a potentially transformative paradigm shift toward hastening digital transformation, their scalability in broader enterprise usage hinges not only on whether they can transition beyond their current platforms as closed, proprietary walled gardens, but also on their ability to adopt open standards in extending their capabilities. Future adoption patterns will likely support hybrid strategies, cloud-native architectures, and governance webs that strike an appropriate balance between the advantages of rapid application development and enterprise-grade scalability, security, and flexibility.

5. Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that LCNC systems offer significant value as a means of low-code/no-code application development, particularly in departmental solutions and small-scale deployments. Their potential to empower non-technical users, shorten the development cycle, and ease prototyping makes them a useful tool in a very fast digital transformation. Nonetheless, several concerns were identified when evaluated in enterprise settings. Problems with scalability manifested themselves as exponential latency increase following 10,000 users, and the inefficiencies of the databases were affected by the use of auto-generated schemas that could not be indexed and optimized sufficiently. It was also hampered by performance overheads of runtime abstraction layers, and integration-intensive workloads tended to exhibit API throttling. Additionally, crucial governance mechanisms proved to be inflexible or cumbersome, thereby reducing the flexibility required in dynamic enterprise environments. Together, these results emphasise the fact that LCNC platforms are fast and accessible, but are not as efficient as when used in complex and large-scale enterprise systems.

On the grounds of these findings, a number of recommendations to make the LCNC platforms more viable are suggested. To begin with, a hybrid development strategy will be implemented, combining LCNC and custom-coded microservices to unite the rapid prototyping capabilities and the management of performance-demanding operations. Second, companies are advised to put in place sound governance systems, which coordinate the LCNC implementation with compliance, security and other organizational regulations, thus trimming down on the balance between agility and risk management. Third, there should be adoption of vendor-neutral APIs that would minimize lock-in to any single provider and enhance cross-platform interoperability, so that enterprises would enjoy strategic flexibility. Lastly, AI-augmented runtime optimization has the potential to greatly enhance the execution performance by adapting resources dynamically in real-time, and automatically identifying and tuning bottlenecks. All these measures will provide a blueprint for enterprises to adopt LCNC technologies more sustainably.

Aspirations. Further studies can be extended to designing AI-based query optimization strategies that can smartly reorganize auto-generated schemas as well as enhance the performance of databases in high-transaction volumes. Additionally, edge computing in LCNC environments can provide solutions to real-time scalability, especially in manufacturing and retail industries that demand low-latency processing at the network edge. Yet another obvious hotspot is the development of open standards of interoperability that can alleviate the issues of vendor independence and contribute to a more cooperative environment among LCNC vendors. The examination of these areas will ensure that future studies fill the existing gaps between the speed of LCNC platforms and the stringent requirements of business applications, which will eventually lead to the transformation of more resilient, scalable, and interoperable digital worlds.

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