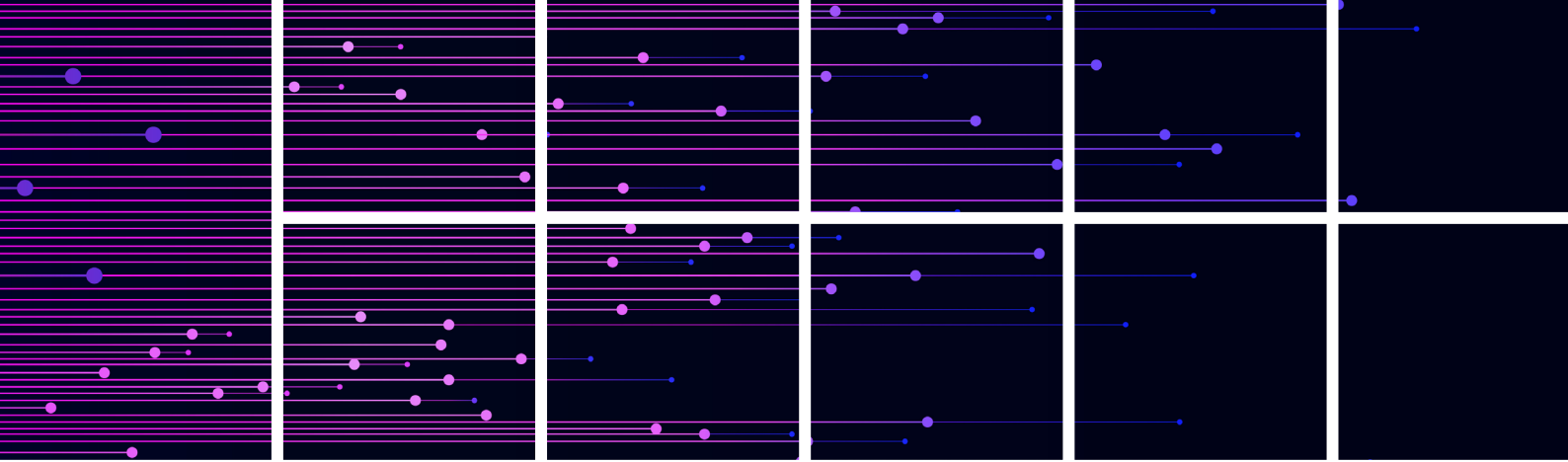




POWER APPS ADOPTION FRAMEWORK

A playbook to guide you through successfully developing a modernized culture with Microsoft Power Apps

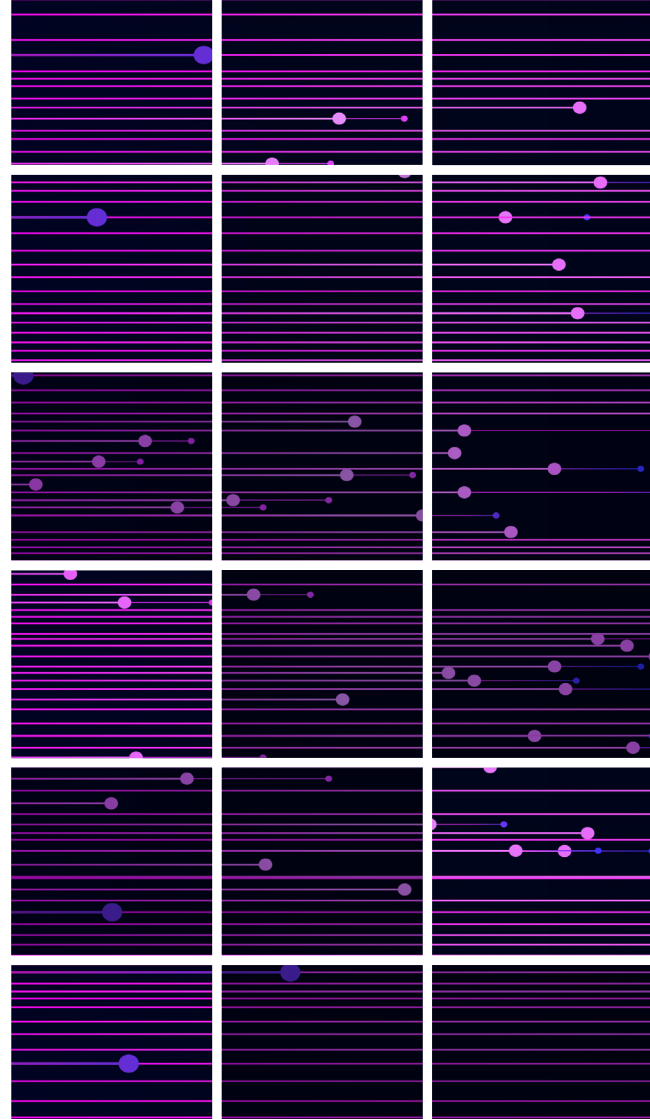


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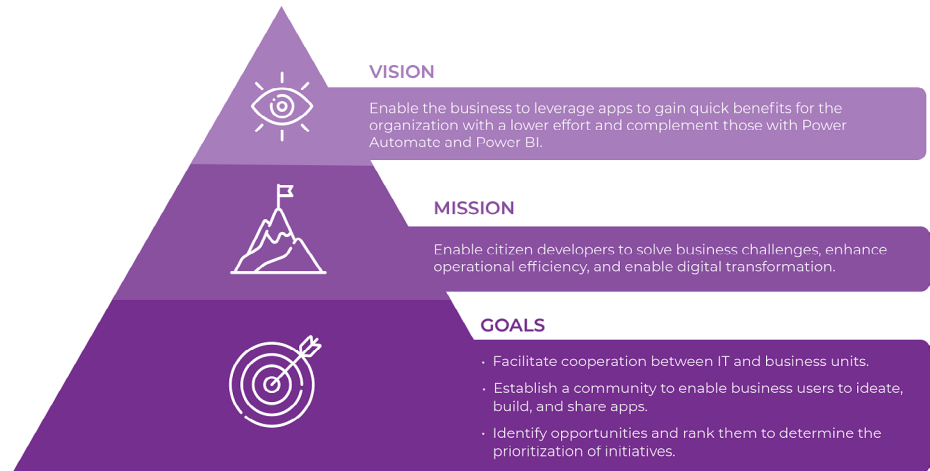
Starting Your Journey

Microsoft Power Apps provides a fast development environment to build custom apps to meet business needs, modernize processes, and create quick solutions.

It is an easy and economically savvy decision for organizations of any size to improve efficiency and agility through professional-grade, low-code development. However, succeeding at scale is not always easy and can be full of potential pitfalls.

The Smartbridge Power Apps Adoption Framework provides you with a detailed primer to initiate makers, champions, and admins into Power Apps, presenting a foundation for users, processes, and technology. It is a summarized, yet exhaustive, template that will help you identify the major decision points and steps along your journey and provides guidance based on best practices and lessons learned.

Our extensive, research-based framework is designed for the organic **skillset growth** of your people, **maturity** of your business processes, and **modernization** of your technology.



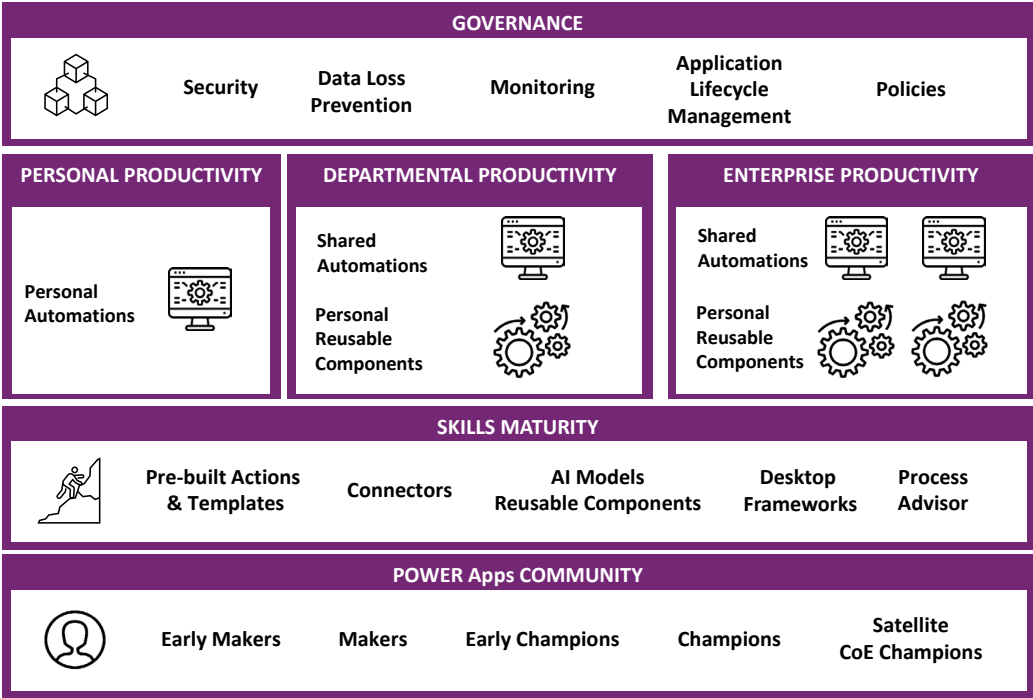
A strong Power Apps foundation will ensure that custom applications developed by the business are accessible in the organization.

The goal of this framework is to provide a robust foundation for makers, champions, and business stakeholders to help your organization mature from personal productivity custom apps to departmental or enterprise level. This playbook provides a detailed baseline to initiate users into makers and champions, and also build your internal Power Apps Community. This will enable your organization to grow its skills and to define the governance for any app.

Microsoft Terminology

Maker - builds solutions to simplify, automate, and transform tasks and processes for themselves and their team where they have deep expertise in the solution business domain.

Champion - recognized by their peers as the go-to expert. They continually build, share knowledge, influence, and help their colleagues.



The Smartbridge Power Apps Adoption Framework

The framework in its full glory consists of these areas:

Skills Maturity

Identify the target users and personas by level of interaction with Power Apps to better target their proficiency, level of support, and training needs.

Champions

Identify the leadership and team that will provide strategic review and direction of approved Power Apps initiatives.

Foundation and Governance

Establish a multi-step approach on security, monitoring, administrative management, and application life cycle management.

Operational Analytics

Monitor at the tenant level the actions created by makers and admins.

Best Practices and Guidance

Implement the strategies necessary for your organization to succeed with Power Apps.

Getting You Started on the Right Foot

Though we would love to cover all areas of the playbook in this eBook, we will spotlight just a few to get you started.

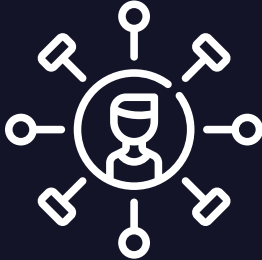
- Power Apps Skills Maturity
- Foundation and Governance
- Best Practices and Guidance
- BONUS! Copilot and AI Capabilities

If you would like to learn more about our full Power Apps adoption playbook and how it can be tailored for your organization, [please reach out to us](#).



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Power Apps Skills Maturity



Power Apps is a low-code app creation tool that anyone and everyone can use. Because of this, it's important to understand where your end-users are at in their skill levels and what training is needed. Identify your target users and personas by their level of interaction with Power Apps to better recognize their proficiency, level of support, and training needs.

People Skills Maturity



Organizational Skills Maturity

Efficient

- The organization has proven the capabilities of Power Apps to transform mission-critical capabilities.
- A well-established community of experts.

Capable

- Power Apps capabilities are being used to transform the business broadly and used for enterprise-critical apps and integrations.
- Platform Champions have established channels.

Defined

- Achieving measurable success to digitally transform their organization.
- Standardizing repeatable practices.
- Defined Center of Excellence team.

Repeatable

- Start to identify applications that are becoming broadly used in the organization.
- Initial Power Apps controls are implemented by a central team.

Initial

- Pockets of success and experimentation with Power Apps.
- No strategy or governance approach.
- Apps are team-based and supported by the makers.

Focus on people. Encourage success stories.

Organizational Technology Maturity

Create apps and find insights by leveraging the constantly growing tools from Microsoft.

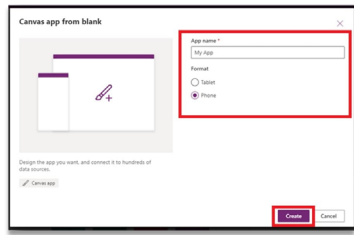
Basic

Environment and Data Import

Establish Power Apps environment and accounts. Makers build and run applications through data loaders.

Canvas App Concepts

Makers start experimenting and customizing layouts, galleries, forms, functions, and formulas.



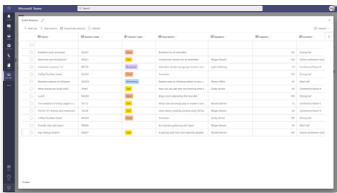
Intermediate

Intermediate Canvas App Concepts

Makers start building canvas apps knowledge such as: navigation, screens, variables, filter, lookup, data validation, multiple data sources, and call mobiles features.

Dataverse for Teams

Makers explore the ability to create, populate, and query data within Dataverse for Teams.



Advanced

Dataverse Integration

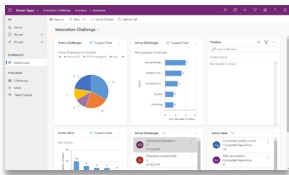


Makers explore integrating apps and Power Apps Flows with Microsoft Dataverse.

Model-Driven Apps

Suited to process-driven apps that are data-dense and make it easy for users to move between related records.

Note: *These apps need a data model housed within Microsoft Dataverse.*



Knowledge Base

The strategy to upskill and train makers, champions, and business units are fundamental to creating a strong community. Rewarding champions will provide recognition, motivation, and inspiration to your Power Apps community. These incentives can range from CoE direct input, sponsored specialized training, or company rewards.

Makers Training

- As champions are identified, design a training path for makers, and facilitate training materials tailored to the organization.
- If there are no defined training paths, the initial makers can access the basic training available on Microsoft Learn. [🔗](#)
- Encourage talent within the organization, share makers' initiatives, and invite sponsors to learn more about the benefits.

Event-Driven Training

- Events are helpful for organizations to rally and encourage people to try new frameworks or processes. Some of the events can be:
 - Build-Your-Apps Day(s)
 - Show and Tell Sessions
 - Hackathons
 - Q&A Sessions
- Engage your internal Power Platform community to do regular meet-ups to connect and discuss new success stories, updates, and best practices.

Certifications

- Microsoft provides multiple Power Apps certifications to allow makers to fully leverage the platform to its full potential.
- You can view the full list of certifications from Microsoft Learn. [🔗](#)

Power Apps Foundation and Governance



With Power Apps, users from every part of your organization can create solutions to solve their everyday challenges. However, without the proper foundation and guardrails in place, your organization's applications can get out of hand quickly. We'll provide a quick overview of things to consider when creating and maintaining your Power Apps environment.

Power Apps Application Lifecycle Management (ALM)

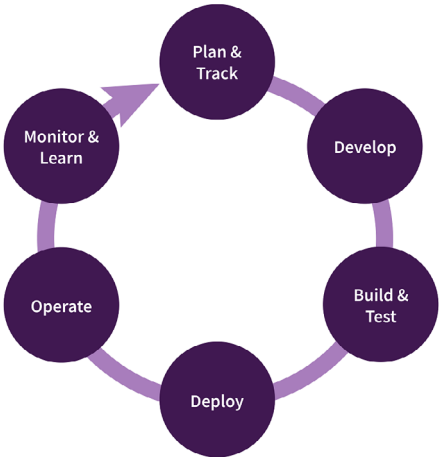
By understanding how applications are created and maintained, admins can ensure the proactive management of Power Apps development happens at every stage in the application lifecycle.

ALM is the lifecycle management of applications, this includes governance, development, and maintenance as well as testing and deployment. Governance is a critical component of ALM because it standardizes the approach.

ALM consists of a series of steps that together make a process intended to drive operational and technical efficiency through predictable and repeatable software delivery. The ALM process can also automate aspects of software development and delivery.

The ALM process includes the steps necessary to develop a standardized system of collaboration and bi-directional communication between software development teams and other related departments such as test and operations.

Power Apps Application Lifecycle



ALM Solutions Overview

Solutions are the mechanism for managing apps in Power Apps. Utilizing unmanaged and managed solutions will help standardize Power Apps Flows with proper deployment pipelines. Solutions address deployment needs by allowing makers to export and import a set of Flow(s). In addition, Flows can be organized within a single 'container' which simplifies Flow management.

Unmanaged

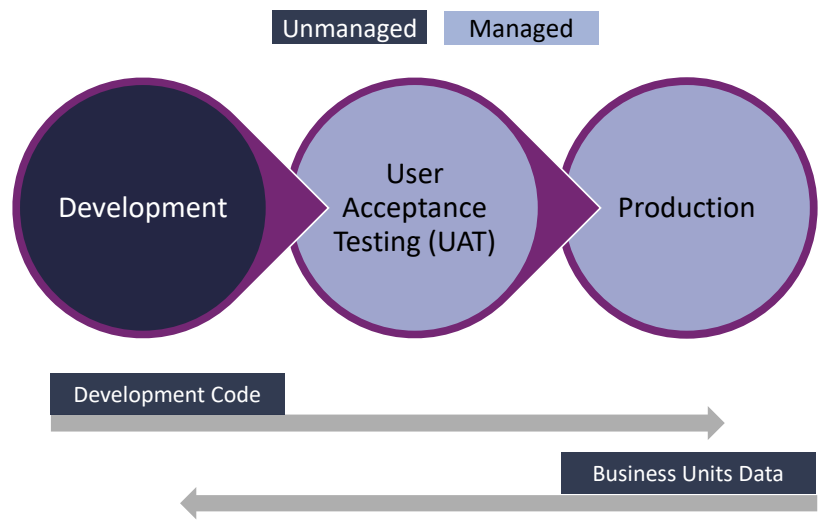
- Unmanaged solutions are used in development environments while you make changes to your application.
- Although, unmanaged solutions can be exported as either unmanaged or managed. It is advised that exported unmanaged solutions only be checked into your source control system and not promoted to lifecycle environments.
- When an unmanaged solution is deleted, only the solution container of any customizations included in it is deleted.
- Users are not allowed to import a managed solution into the same environment that contains the originating unmanaged solution.

Managed

- Managed solutions are used to deploy to any environment that isn't a development environment for that solution. This includes test, User Acceptance Testing (UAT), System Integration Testing (SIT), and production environments.
- Should be generated by exporting an unmanaged solution as managed and considered a build artifact.
- When a managed solution is deleted (uninstalled), all the customizations and extensions included with it are removed.
- Managed solutions cannot be exported.

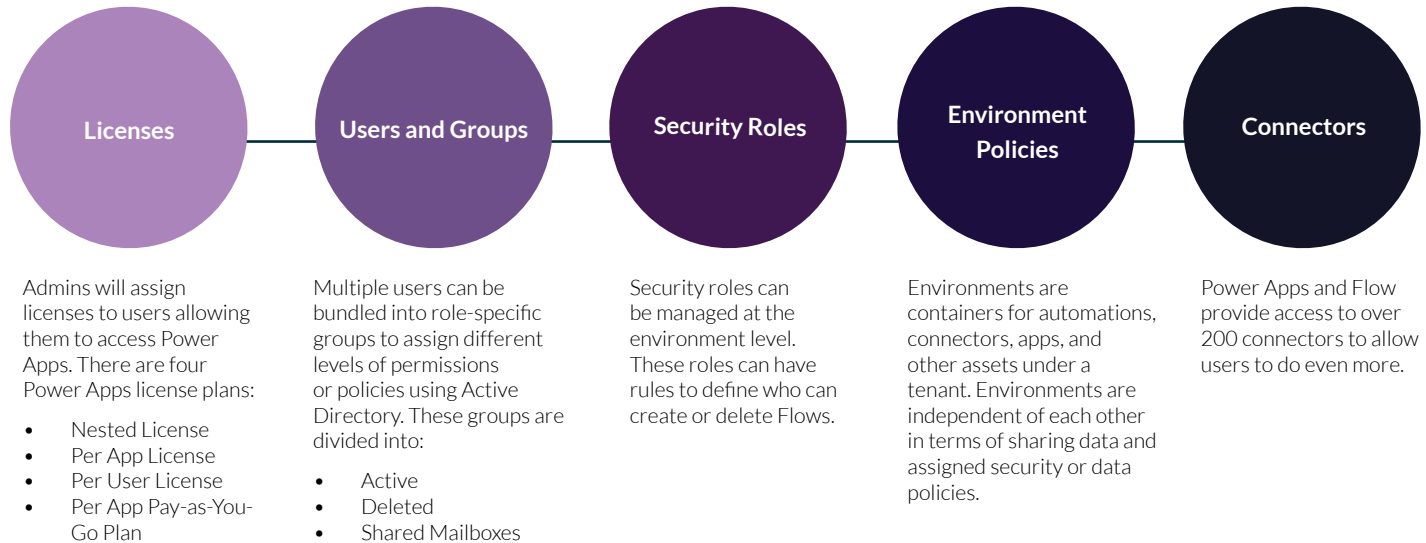
Environment Migration Cycle

By following a proper migration, you can ensure that a process went through the necessary testing channels before running in a live setting. The following diagram is used for an enterprise migration of one environment to another.

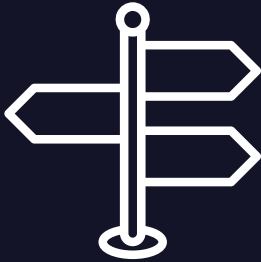


Power Apps Security and Governance

Well managed security is essential to safely scale the use of apps across the organization.



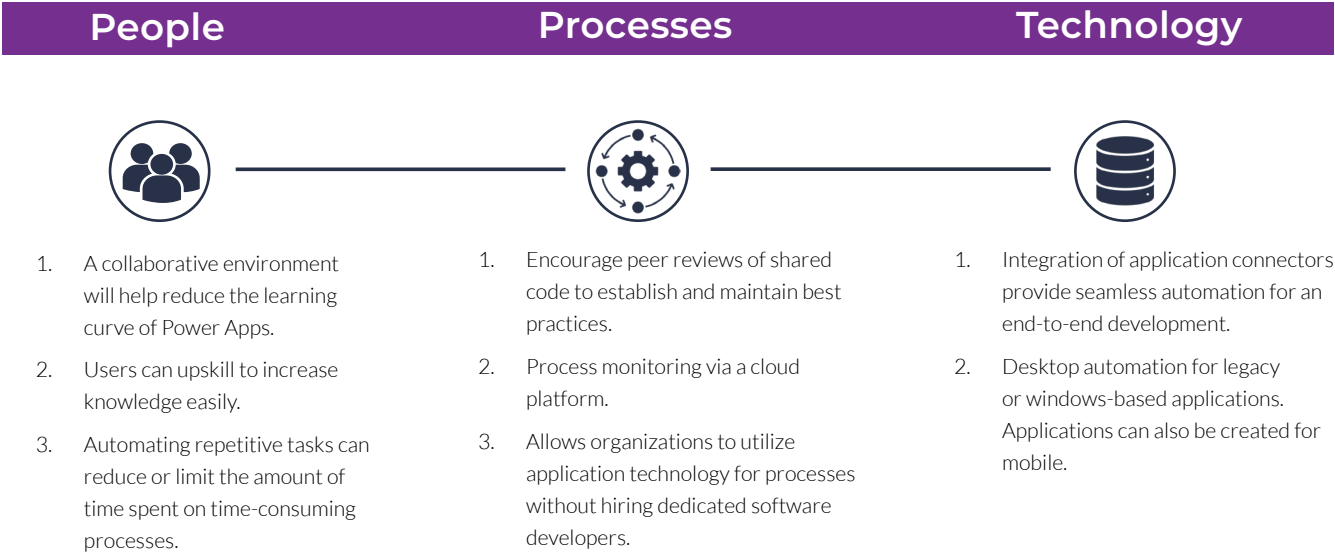
Best Practices and Guidance



As with any technology, there are best practices you can follow for a successful adoption. Here we will cover a few to help guide your organization with Power Apps.

Overview

Focusing on each of the below groups and following standard best practices will ultimately benefit everyone in the organization.



Development Best Practices

Benefits from a low-code tool like Power Apps have incredible potential with proper practice and the implementation of general guidelines. Repetition is key. Following each of these best practices while developing in Power Apps, no matter the type of canvas app, will ultimately help users produce and maintain efficient applications.



Low-code, no-code does not mean no practice required.



Ensure IT is involved during the development process to provide insight where needed.



Utilize scopes to better organize code segments.



Label/name applications, Flows, steps, selectors, actions, elements and/or variables using a consistent naming convention (camelCase) and have complete documentation to ensure maintainability.



Become familiar with components and component libraries and how they are used in the app development process.



Always save your work. Then save it again. Power Apps does not have integrated source control.

Continued...



Always phrase conditional statements in the affirmative.



Keep app development as simple as possible where complexity is not needed.



Use templates or components where possible. If no template is available, create one for future use.



Add notes to actions to understand the purpose of each for future reference.



Limit the amount of drilling down within code. Avoid nested IFs and try to create a sub flow for multi-step processes.



Test your application throughout development especially any mobile integration for overall responsiveness and remove controls where necessary.



Always have a diagrammed outline of the process being developed before doing any programming.



Always ensure you are using the right tool for the problem.

Reusable Components

Any components being used as a reusable component will need to be a part of the same solution. Reusable components are great for multiple reasons:

Improve Efficiency

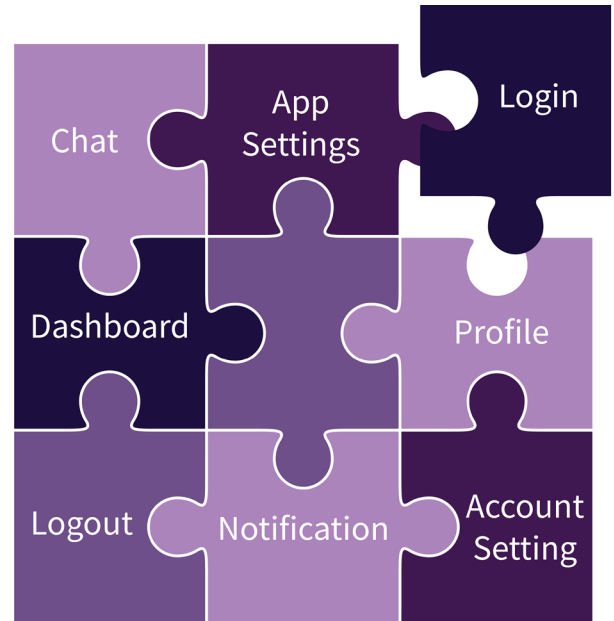
With 90% of the work done, the entirety of the project can be completed faster and more cost effectively. Having a shared database of components in a very large organization prevents duplicity across teams.

Improve Consistency

Multiple iterations of these components allow for the primary functions to be fully tested. This allows greater control and scalability for those building the apps and a more consistent experience for the users.

Easier to Test

Because the code is proven to work, the base functionality of features have already been tested. At this point, you are testing to make sure the application works as intended, especially if there is any mobile integration.



Reusable Components

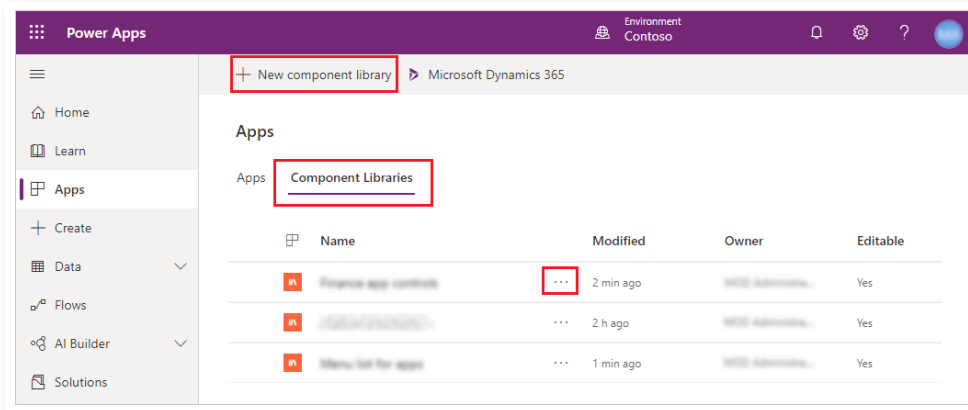
Power Apps has two options for creating reusable content:

Canvas App Components

- Low-code
- Can be used to create reusable controls
- Can be used for most UI components
- Component libraries can help package app components and make it easy to search components and make any necessary changes

Power App Component Framework

- Software developer method of creating controls that can be reused
- Provides framework APIs that are capable of being used in canvas apps, model-driven apps, and Power Apps portal
- Can use HTML, CSS, and Typescript to develop apps



Sharing

Sharing code between members of the development team allows for easier peer collaboration, review, and revision sessions, debugging assistance, and the ability to quickly update an application without software developers.

What to Know

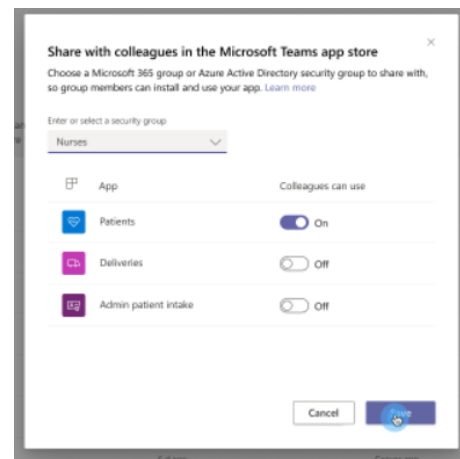
- One can share an application in development with other users in your organization, giving those users specific permissions to access your content
- System admins and system customizers are different roles that are required for maintaining or customizing app content in the Microsoft Dataverse
- When sharing, one can choose the permissions to give to the shared users – user or co-owner

Advantages

- Peer collaboration and apps can be shared with guest users of an Azure Active Directory Tenant with limited access
- Promotion of application development within the organization
- Easily reproducible content

Disadvantages

- Over-developed content is well managed
- Potential sharing of sensitive data
- Potential overuse of badly developed application methods



Microsoft Copilot

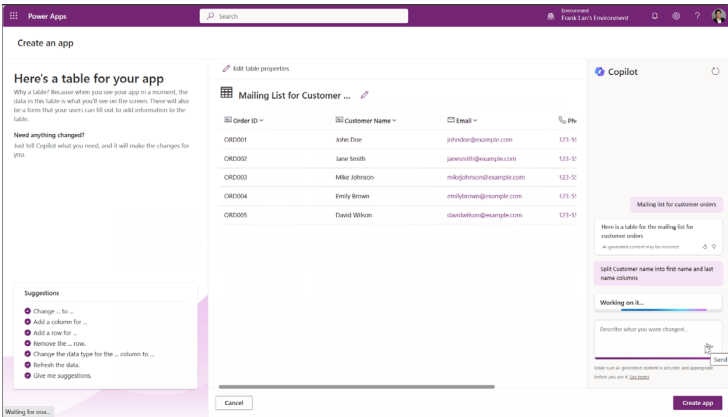


Smartbridge's full Power Apps Adoption Framework always takes major product enhancements into consideration when guiding organizations on best practices for optimized usage. Starting in 2023, Microsoft has invested heavily in the Power Platform by bringing artificial intelligence, automation and advanced data engineering features and integrations into the fold. While every version release requires re-tooling of your skills and processes, nothing has been more momentous in the history of the Power Platform than this infusion of AI-led capabilities. Here's an overview of these features that you should factor into your Adoption Framework ASAP.

What is Copilot?

With Microsoft Copilot, users can experience a whole new level of productivity and efficiency. Imagine having a virtual assistant by your side, ready to assist you with any task or challenge you may face. Whether it's writing code, troubleshooting issues, or even brainstorming

ideas, Copilot is there to provide valuable insights and suggestions. This tool takes collaboration to a whole new level, enabling users to work smarter and faster than ever before.



Copilot in Power Apps. Image courtesy of Microsoft

Copilot with Power Apps



Since the launch of Copilot, Microsoft has been gradually infusing it into every product available, including Power Apps! Copilot is here to walk you through the app creation process from beginning to end. Here are just a few of the features you can look forward to using (note some are still in preview):

- Build apps through conversation
- Continue editing your app through Copilot
- Add Chatbot control and Copilot control to a canvas app
- Take advantage of Azure OpenAI Service in AI Builder

Microsoft Copilot can guide you through creating and importing data tables, designing app screens, and publishing and sharing your app. With Copilot's app generation capabilities, you simply tell it what you need and your newest virtual assistant will get it done!

In conclusion, Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft Power Apps is an absolute game-changer in the world of app development. With its real-time code suggestions, machine learning capabilities, and built-in code snippets, it revolutionizes the way you write code. So buckle up and get ready to take your app development skills to new heights with this incredible tool.

What's Next?

While we dug deep into a few topics for a successful Power Apps adoption, we can dig even deeper still! Contact us to learn about our full framework and how we can customize it for your organization.

Curious as to what Smartbridge does to help you deploy this framework? Here's a quick overview:

- Define the right roles, responsibilities, and level of engagement for the steering committee to provide direction, mentorship, and support.
- Establish governance and environment management for data storage and consumption at the department level (Sales & Marketing, HR, Finance, Operations, CRM, etc.).
- Assess skills and setting upskill support plans with training and workshops at all levels. Plan for continued education on latest changes such as Copilot and AI features.
- Establish the right security levels and permissions by roles.
- Develop standards, templates, and reusable components.
- Establish and measure near and long-term goals and KPIs by the deployment phase.
- Evaluate how AI and Copilot can accelerate your usage and adoption.

Partner with us



Smartbridge focuses on simplifying business transformation. We apply thought leadership and innovation to bring our customer's digital agenda to reality.

Smartbridge partners with customers in their journey from vision to adoption, and with an empathetic approach, we work to understand their challenges and pain points to provide a solution fit for them. Smartbridge is committed to fueling your innovation with the Power Apps.

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