



# The Rise of a Specialist Bank

Pioneers of a new [digital] approach to support expansion goals. They use low-code technology to build the systems they need and manage process improvement, internally.

Solution: Liberty Create



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

Project delivered four months earlier than planned

Less than one third of anticipated cost

Integrated tech stack

Replaced manual processes

Improved workflow

Drove cost efficiencies

Enabled growth without raising headcount

Increased consistency in process

Gained additional dev time.

## Reimagining a specialist bank

Hampshire Trust Bank (HTB) is a specialist bank staffed by experts, they focus on helping UK businesses realise their ambitions. Primary operations are development finance and specialist mortgages, and specialist business finance (wholesale, block-discounting, structured asset finance, classic cars and other asset finance categories). HTB also provides award-winning savings accounts to individuals and businesses. With an impressive growth trajectory in terms of staff and revenue, the bank targeted digital as key to its expansion.

Today, the bank sees itself as a 5-year start-up. With investment, a new leadership team and many specialist hires they have experienced exceptional growth and developed thriving specialist lending propositions for SMEs.

## A fresh approach to change

Like many businesses, HTB was frustrated with relying on external resources, for technical developments on tasks which they didn't deem to be particularly challenging. Results were slower than they liked and often didn't even match their business requirements. And the associated price tags were unreasonable. They knew they could do it better themselves, and began searching for a way to utilise the knowledge within the business, without hiring an army of developers. They had the ideas of what they needed and how it should work. Low-code was the answer.

That's where Liberty Create came in. Our low-code platform enabled HTB to form a small team who can now build the systems they need and manage process improvement.

“ We can definitely say we've seen time and cost savings by using low-code to solve business challenges.

Russ Fitzgerald, CIO

# Modernising the front office



Our journey with low-code started because we needed to modernise the front office application suite, across the business, and across all of our products. We invested in Liberty Create initially for our specialist mortgage division to replace manual processes, improve workflow to drive cost efficiencies and increase consistency in process execution across the team. As an emerging but growing business we didn't want to raise the headcount more than necessary.

David Patterson, Head of Solutions & Delivery

## Improve customer experience

The mortgage division project was successful and Create continues to drive cost efficiency and business improvement throughout the organisation. The platforms they've built using low-code have become core assets, assisting with vital areas like linking their API infrastructure to data services, fraud prevention, credit risk and Companies House data.

HTB's latest development, a finance business system, has replaced a host of

manual and spreadsheet based processes that handle client, customer and credit rating data.

Low-code lends itself to an agile continuous improvement approach, so the system can be continually enhanced and added to.

The use of Create has enabled HTB to focus on the time it takes to serve the customer (and serve the customer well) and as a result it has positioned the bank for exceptional growth.

## Deliver. And, deliver faster.



This project has come in at less than one third of the anticipated cost. Plus, it will be delivered four months earlier than planned. These very short timeframes are enabling us to move towards weekly deliveries of capability enhancement, and with confidence in the quality of delivery.

David Patterson

During their low-code journey, HTB has invested heavily in testing capabilities, providing value in improved turnaround time for any defects. The delivery model of Create suits HTB's agile project

methodology. Without getting bogged down in process, they utilise the elements of agile that work best for a small bank. Create lends itself really well to that capability.

Here's an example. Previously, Developers would publish a change, having finished in the evening, then the Test Team arrived the next morning and started the test pack, which could run for 3-4 hours ensuring everything worked correctly and highlighting any regressions. The Developers wouldn't get feedback until lunchtime, therefore losing half a day of dev time. Since introducing 'Continuous Testing Integration' the

## Gain development time

Developers now publish an update and leave for the evening, Liberty Create takes 30mins to package the release and push it to the test environment, waking up the testing platform automatically once complete and running the series of tests.

9am, the Test Team start their day with the test results and the Developers work on fixes immediately. An extra half a day per Developer is gained from every push. HTB is progressing rapidly progressing on their journey to seamless integrated testing and DevOps, this has been the first step in that journey.

# Changing the relationship

with off-the-shelf tech for good

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With hindsight, we would come to the Create team at the start, explain our long-term ambitions. With their help, we'd probably be further along. But, it was well worth the exploration! The technology has grown with us. It's been a very positive story for us.

Russ Fitzgerald



## Build or buy

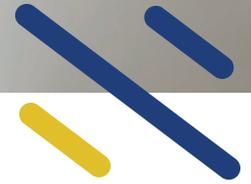
Such is their confidence in their front end building capabilities, HTB now approach new potential suppliers with a clear strategy that needs to work with low-code. By tailoring their own front end capabilities and utilising API services, they can pick the best out of the industry suppliers, using it to create USPs for themselves with their customers.

Low-code has changed the HTB attitude towards buying tech – no more front to back service where it is not required or delivering value or being stuck behind half year releases and slow legacy systems. Now, they encapsulate those and build out. They commoditise their back-end systems suppliers based on their 'best in breed approach' to build or buy.

It has become the cornerstone of their technology strategy and increased innovation, flexibility and creativity in areas where they need it.

HTB started to notice that third parties they were engaged with often commented that they were at the top end of technology maturity amongst their peers.

A core component of that is their use of low-code technology. It has honed their ability to develop things quickly, to change direction when needed and to react to an industry position or an operational challenge and deal with it.



## Building out on their own capabilities



Initially, we worked alongside the Netcall team, who started our delivery and then worked extremely well with us to handover to our small but very talented internal team. We've had very strong engagement with Netcall, from the CTO all the way down - we value this support and attention greatly.

For us, it is amongst the highest criteria we look for in a supplier – and there are only a handful of suppliers where we genuinely feel we get that top level of support, plus the ability to feedback, request and input on Create product road mapping. We've really appreciated the agility of the Create team.

David Patterson

## More ideas than resources

With the introduction of low-code, HTB have moved from being a user of a legacy core banking platform into building out their own capabilities. Despite their outstanding outcomes within year one, they still feel they could've gone faster.

This is down to the confidence in their own abilities and in Create to achieve. Plus, all the supporting functions and departments need to have the ability to move at a similar pace.

The HTB Development Team are building a portfolio for the next year. Like any innovative business, they have more ideas than they have resources for. Reflecting their confidence in using low-code as a front end tool, they are considering using it for internet facing services and a number of digital services to improve internal workflow and processes. A number of 'micro services' are also on their agenda.

They will utilise the workflow capabilities in a wider element across the bank to improve back office efficiency, data governance, data quality and control. And all the while, also improving the operational efficiency of the bank.

Create allows a deeper understanding of how long processes take and how they can be streamlined.



Liberty Create and its data gathered are driving factors in determining operational efficiency. It's changed the behaviour of the bank – from operating predominantly manual processes, into being digitally orientated and process efficient. We offer a fantastic proposition – and low-code tech sits firmly behind that.

Russ Fitzgerald

### About Netcall

Netcall helps organisations radically improve customer experience through collaborative CX.

A leading provider of low-code and customer engagement solutions, we enable customer-facing and IT talent to collaborate. By taking the pain out of big change projects, we help businesses to dramatically improve customer experience, while lowering costs.

Over 600 organisations in financial services, insurance, local government and healthcare use the Netcall Liberty platform to make life easier for the people they serve.

t: 0330 363 0300 | netcall.com