

ZOHIO Creator



America Ship
THE ENDLESS FRONTIER

Energizing shipping with low-code



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The company



America Ship is a logistics and shipping company located in Brownsville, Texas, USA. Strategically situated on the border with Mexico, the company serves as a bridge for international ecommerce. When people from Mexico want to buy products online from stores like Amazon or eBay, they face high international shipping costs. But America Ship provides them with a free mailing address in Texas, allowing the buyers to ship to this address and have it forwarded to them from there. The company also takes care of customs duties and other related specifications.

Compared to other carriers, like the USPS, FedEx or UPS, who charge a hefty sum, America Ship charges only two dollars per kilogram. The company also handles shipping from Mexico to the US. Buyers can ship products to America Ship's warehouse in Marmoros, Mexico, and the company then ships the products to the buyers' US address.



The challenge

The company originally conducted its operations on spreadsheets and used email to communicate with different stakeholders. As the business grew, those spreadsheets weren't able to handle the ever-increasing troves of data, which made it quite challenging for employees to make changes and work collaboratively. Emails were also difficult to track, and orders got lost in the email chains. Founder Jet Lee realized the need for an efficient and sophisticated alternative and started evaluating different solutions available on the market.

Initially, they thought that a customer relationship management (CRM) solution would be sufficient to run their operations. After searching the internet, they were

able to find a lot of different options. Most of them offered varying degrees of customization, but they just weren't enough.

Finally, they narrowed it down to two choices: Salesforce and Zoho. They tried Salesforce initially but eventually gave up, finding the platform hard to get started, complicated, and expensive to boot. Then they tried Zoho CRM, and it led them to Zoho Creator. User-friendly, affordable, and feature-rich, they quickly realized that Zoho Creator was exactly what they needed.



The solution



The first thing I noticed from the get-go was that Zoho Creator allowed me to create fully functional applications easily and quickly! The drag-and-drop methodology of creating applications was a game-changer for me.

- Jet Lee

Founder, America Ship



Lee developed the America Ship app by modelling forms based on his requirements. By quickly iterating upon it, he was able to deploy a working prototype in hours.

America Ship needed an interface to view the status of all the packages in their inventory. They also needed a perspective into the payments to be made to all the stakeholders.

The America Ship dashboard was built to display the following information in one place:



Packages in inventory:

This is a counter indicating the total number of packages that reside in the company's warehouses.



Payments pending to Mexico:

This widget shows the payments to be paid to various stakeholders for shipping packages to Mexico.



Payments pending to the US:

This widget displays the payments that need to be made to various stakeholders for shipping packages to the US.



Shipments made:

This second counter shows the total number of shipments made for the current period.

The dashboard also grants access to the various other modules of the application.

Lee required insight into all shipments that are outbound from his warehouses in Brownsville and Marmoros. The requirements were to be able to see the total number of shipments for any chosen period, and a widget that displayed a list of all items that resided in the warehouse at any given time.

Lee created a module named Outbound shipments, and created forms per his requirements. This module contains:



A counter which displays an aggregate of outbound shipments for the chosen time period.



A report of the inventory displaying a list of all the items waiting to be shipped.

Lee wanted to visualize all the packages inbound to America Ship's warehouses. He wanted detailed in-depth statistics, and an ability to manually add inbound package orders if customers so required. He found Zoho Creator's dashboards a boon in translating the statistics aspect of this requirement to reality.

This module is comprised of:



Inbound packages view:

A comprehensive report that provides an overview of all packages expected to be received.



"Add inbound packages" form:

A form to add packages that are inbound to the Brownsville and Maramoros warehouses.



Statistics:

A widget that provides a complete breakdown of all statistics related to inbound packages, such as their place of origin, weight, and cost.

Customers are the lifeblood of any enterprise. Cognizant of this, Lee sought out a module which would allow him to diligently manage his ever-growing user base. He envisioned a module which would grant him a view into all his customers, their addresses, whether they had active orders waiting to be shipped, and a list of customers who needed to furnish more information.

Lee leveraged Zoho Creator's form builder and reports features to develop the Customers module.

This module displays the following information about America Ship's customers:



Customers view:

A report displaying details for all customers.



Address book:

A list of the shipping addresses provided by customers.



Active customers view:

An in-depth report displaying the details of customers whose packages are being shipped.



Incomplete customers view:

This feature allows America Ship to avoid unsuccessful deliveries. The view presents a list of customers who have not provided all the mandatory details necessary to process shipments. Using this, the administrator can request that customers provide any missing information.

In addition to the above reports, the Customers module also contains two forms:



Add customer:

A form to manually add a new customer to the database.



Add/edit address:

The administrator can use this to add and edit the address of a customer.

Lee wanted a way to consolidate all of the company's shipment requests originating from Mexico or the USA. He envisioned this module to provide him with a perspective into all shipment requests made, both online and manually, by his customers.

To address the above requirements, Lee developed this module which contains the following reports:

i) Shipment to Mexico requests: This report displays all requests raised by customers for shipping products to Mexico.

ii) Shipment to USA requests: This view grants insights into all requests raised by customers for shipping products to the US.

This module also contains two forms for the admin to manually create shipment requests:

i) Submit shipment request to Mexico

ii) Submit shipment request to the US

The America Ship website is the prime source of customers for the company. Using the signup form on the website, new customers can register themselves. Lee needed a solution to help act upon the registrations on the website, and to make effective use of the data gathered when users submitted the registration form.

Lee created a signup module using Creator's form publish feature. The form in this signup module is integrated with America Ship's website: <https://www.america-ship.com/>. Whenever a customer signs up from the website, their data is captured and displayed in this form's report. The administrator can also manually use the signup form in this module to add a new customer.

Customers can face delays in shipping due to several factors. Initially, all customer support and issue addressal was carried out over the phone, and reports were created using spreadsheets. This was cumbersome, though, and an alternative was needed.

America Ship developed their Help Ticket module for customer support. When any customer encounters a problem with their shipment, this module comes to their rescue. It's also integrated with the website, so when a customer opens a help ticket, the information gets captured in this module's report. The administrator of the application can access this module's report to get an overview of the help tickets raised and can act upon them to drive issues to resolution.

Using the Add ticket form, the application's administrator can also manually open a help ticket to assist a customer.

Initially, customers had to manually call up America Ship's customer care division to get an estimate for their shipping needs. This was inefficient, and Lee had to employ customer care executives separately for this. A cheaper and more effective alternative was required.

America Ship developed their Cost Calculator module using Zoho Creator. This module is integrated with a Creator form published on the website. Its report contains a list of all cost calculation questions asked by prospective customers.

This module provides information such as:



Email of the customer who raised the cost calculation request



Billable weight of the shipment



Shipping type



From: This can be the USA or Mexico



To: This can be the USA or Mexico



Query added time

This module encapsulates the payments report, which provides detailed information on all the payments made by customers for their shipments.

Benefits & ROI



The America Ship application built on Zoho Creator is essentially the operating system of our company.

- Jet Lee
Founder, America Ship



Lee says that whenever America Ship encounters a new functional requirement in their day-to-day operations, they leverage Zoho Creator to translate that requirement into a module which contains the necessary reports and forms that can be harnessed to attain the desired functionality.



If it were not for Zoho, we would have had to rely on programmers, and the cost would have been prohibitive for us. We would have had to pay upwards of \$3,000 per month for the programmers we would have hired.

- Jet Lee
Founder, America Ship



The thing I like best about Zoho Creator is that it allows business stakeholders like me, who do not have any programming experience, to create apps when I want, the way I want. It's reliable, affordable, and feature-rich.

- Jet Lee
Founder, America Ship



Zoho Creator has allowed America Ship to create applications for their use, all by their own staff. It has allowed them to focus on providing services instead of developing applications and programming. Zoho Creator has facilitated America Ship to grow exponentially since its inception.

A close-up photograph of a hand in a blue shirt pointing upwards. A bright, glowing white arrow starts from the tip of the index finger and extends diagonally upwards and to the right, ending in a bright yellow and white light. The background is dark and out of focus.

Looking forward

Jet Lee is building a second flagship app for America Ship on the Zoho Creator platform, called the **"America Ship Fulfilment System."** He intends to take his shipping business worldwide by leveraging this Zoho Creator app some time this year.

About us

Running a business is no mean feat, and we believe we can help. At Zoho Creator, we've always worked towards a single purpose—enabling the citizen developer to build functional apps without having to learn to code. Rapidly build custom applications that are a perfect fit for your business, or choose from our extensive range of prebuilt apps and modify them. Just sign up, pick a plan, and start building!





www.zoho.com/creator

We'd love to talk! Reach out to us:
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