ITV STUDIOS

ITV Studios

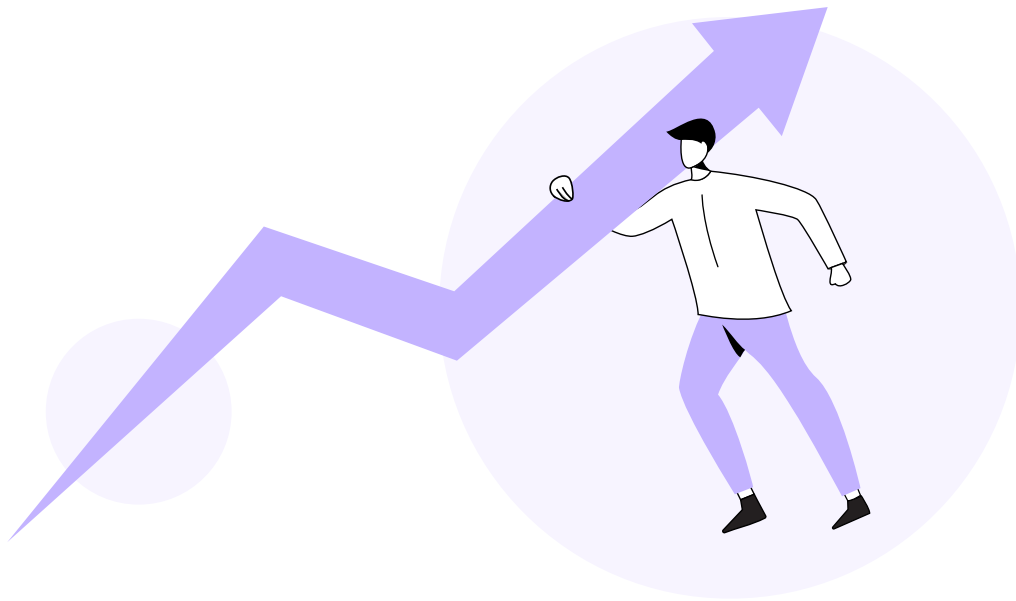# Consolidating data to escape spreadsheet nightmares

The Company

ITV Studios' function as part of ITV PLC is to create, produce and distribute world-leading programmes. For years they have been bringing you classic shows like 'Coronation Street' and 'Vera', and continue to bring us exciting new shows like 'The Masked Singer' and 'The Walk In'.

To constantly produce such brilliant content for our screens, ITV Studios houses some of the best creative minds from across the globe who craft over 7,000 hours of original programming every year. By partnering with networks, streamers and broadcasters, they bring their vast catalogue of programs to people worldwide.
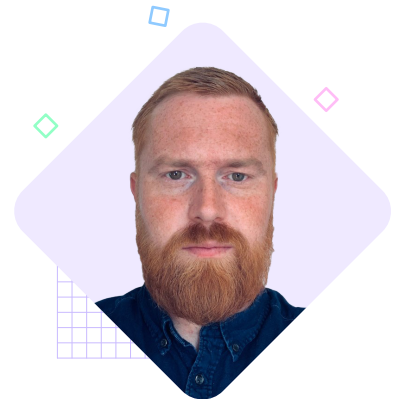
We spoke to James Hirst, Vice President of Development at ITV Studios' Creative Network. The Creative Network department manages the pipeline of ideas coming through the business, from idea creation to post-production. So, we have them to thank for bringing us the best possible quality in new shows. But their systems weren't working for them. That's where Zoho comes in.

The Challenge

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Prior to using Creator we had data everywhere, thousands of spreadsheets and multiple potential points of failure.

James Hirst

Vice President of Development at ITV Studios' Creative Network

Even though ITV Studios build their success on being innovative, creative and forward-thinking, their data management processes and software systems were slowing them down.
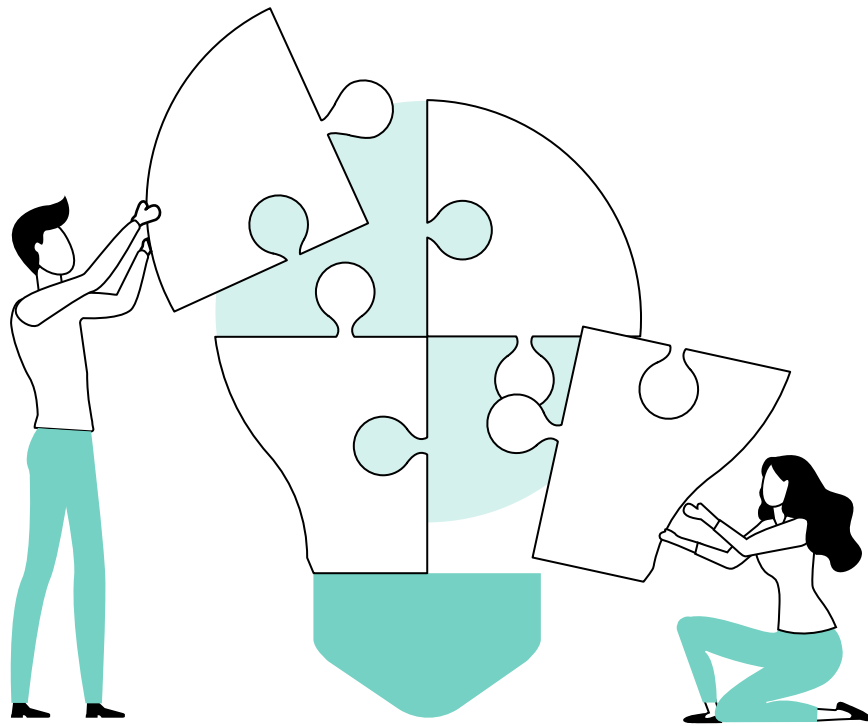
They found themselves managing their pipeline of ideas from thousands of different spreadsheets across different departments, each taking their own approach to how they presented the data. Which sounds like a living nightmare! This opened up multiple potential points of failure within their system. Each aspect of the business worked well with its own "cobbled together" systems, but they weren't able to collaborate or even understand each other's data sheets.

They knew they needed to consolidate this data if they were going to make their pipeline more efficient and gain visibility across departments. So, they started exploring how to do more with their spreadsheets, which ultimately led to more spreadsheets, confusion, and very little progress.

After initially trying to fix these issues internally, they looked for an external platform. ITV Studios needed a bespoke, scalable system tailored to their pipeline. They also needed to see initial results quickly. However, they don't have a huge team of developers or a massive budget for the project.

ITV Studios needed a platform that could:

- Bring all the systems across the business into one place to consolidate the data

- Give them visibility and understanding of each other's data

- Be easily adapted and scaled up

- Deliver results quickly after implementation

The Solution

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Having a partner (A2Z Cloud) with real expertise on zoho products, that could be flexible and think creatively with us, has really helped.

James Hirst

Vice President of Development at ITV Studios' Creative Network

Zoho Creator allows ITV Studios to achieve this by combining impressive capabilities, low-code software and competitive pricing. However, what made Zoho stand out was the availability of our partner and brilliant systems integrator, A2Z Cloud. With such expertise in using and implementing Zoho products, A2Z Cloud could sit down with ITV Studios and produce the ideal solution using Zoho Creator.
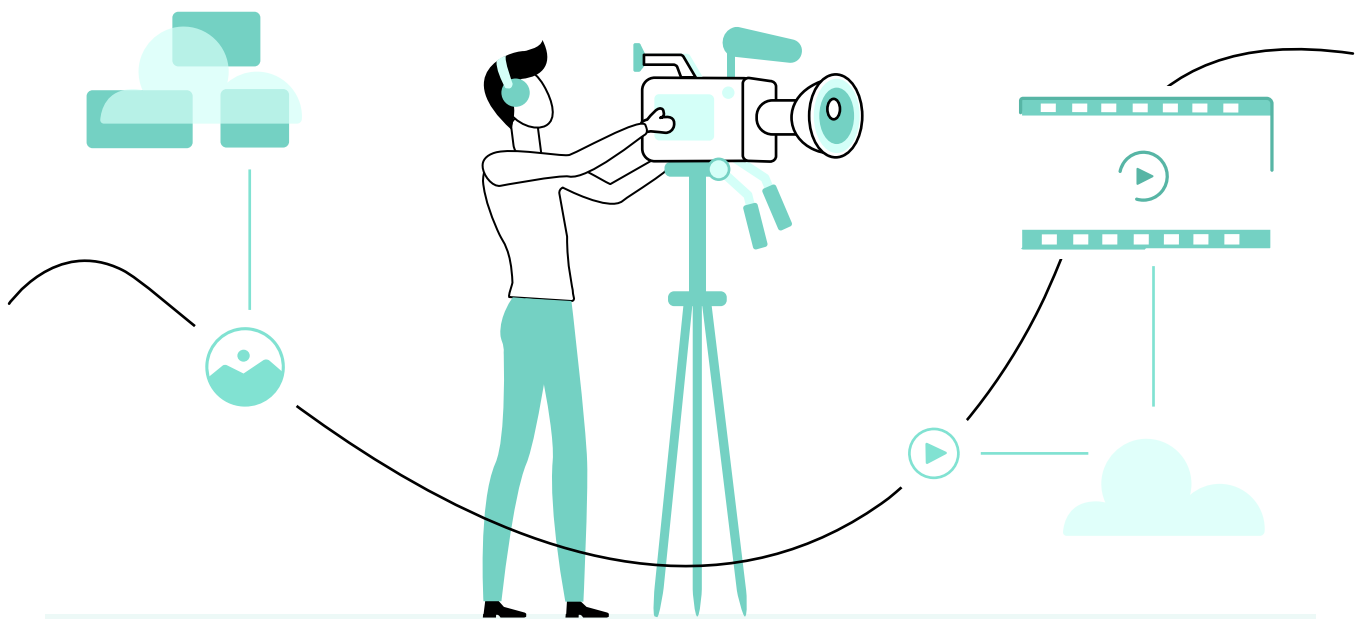
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We chose zoho because it's a low-code platform, and we can quickly build additional aspects in Creator.

James Hirst

Vice President of Development at ITV Studios' Creative Network

After learning about the capabilities of Zoho Creator to produce the platform they needed, and the ease of customisation and adaption through the low-code nature of the app. It was time to see some results, and see them quickly. ITV set a target to have a dashboard produced and functional within seven weeks.
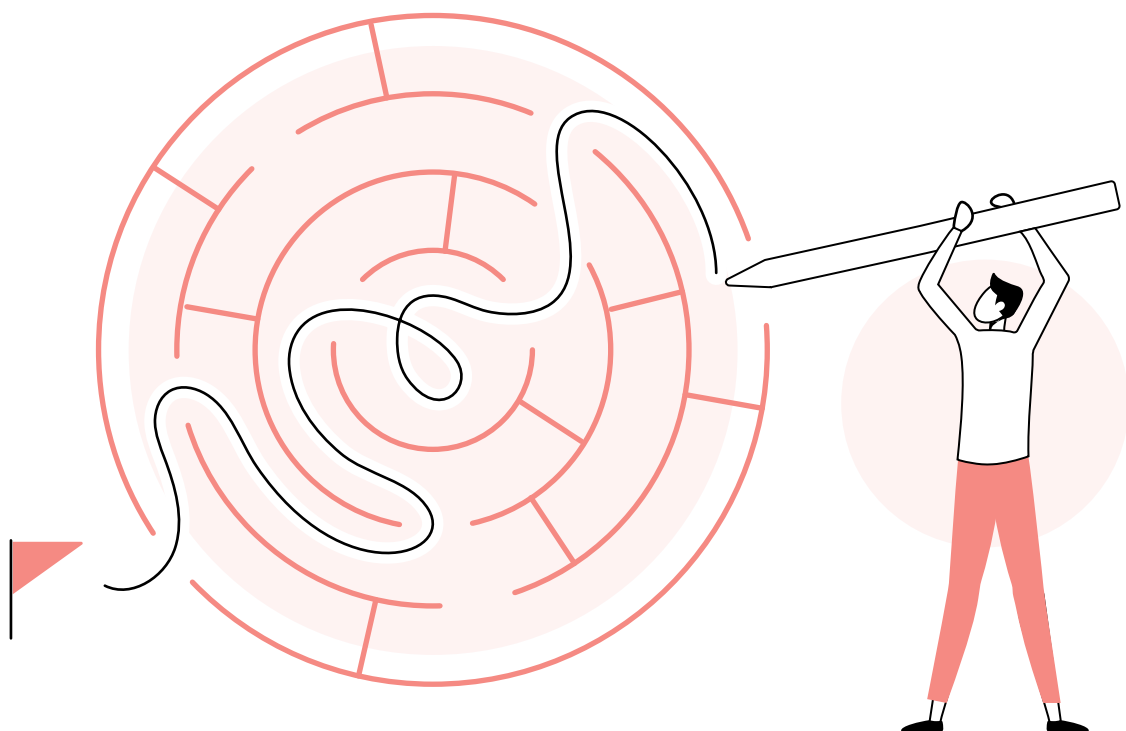
The Outcome

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The platform is now a one-stop-shop to find all the information you need.

James Hirst

Vice President of Development at ITV Studios' Creative Network

Alongside A2Z Cloud, they jumped straight in and hit their target, producing the platform in just six weeks.

They now had a shared dashboard containing all the data for every show under development, with a common dataset. Within the next two months, A2Z Cloud were able to train all of the relevant staff on how to use the new system and work in the standardised data format.

Since then, ITV Studios have been using the low-code software to make minor changes themselves. In the background, A2Z Cloud have developed version 2 of the system. They now have over four-hundred users drawing in data from multiple departments and production labels across the globe. Further streamlining the development of new shows.

With the new platform, ITV Studios Creative Network have consolidated thousands of data sources from across their pipeline into one place. They spend much less time searching for the information they need, allowing them to run a more efficient pipeline.

By utilising the wider world of Zoho, and seamless integration into Zoho Analytics, they could set up automated reports for managers to keep tabs on the whole pipeline. The powerful insights and automation reduce the time spent manually producing reports while still giving managers visibility.

Additionally, by consolidating the data they have aligned their reporting systems across departments and their 60 different production labels worldwide. This means Mammoth Studio (UK) can easily understand and work with Apple Tree Productions (Denmark) and Gedesel (France). This gives them visibility across their whole pipeline to see what ideas are being pitched and where.
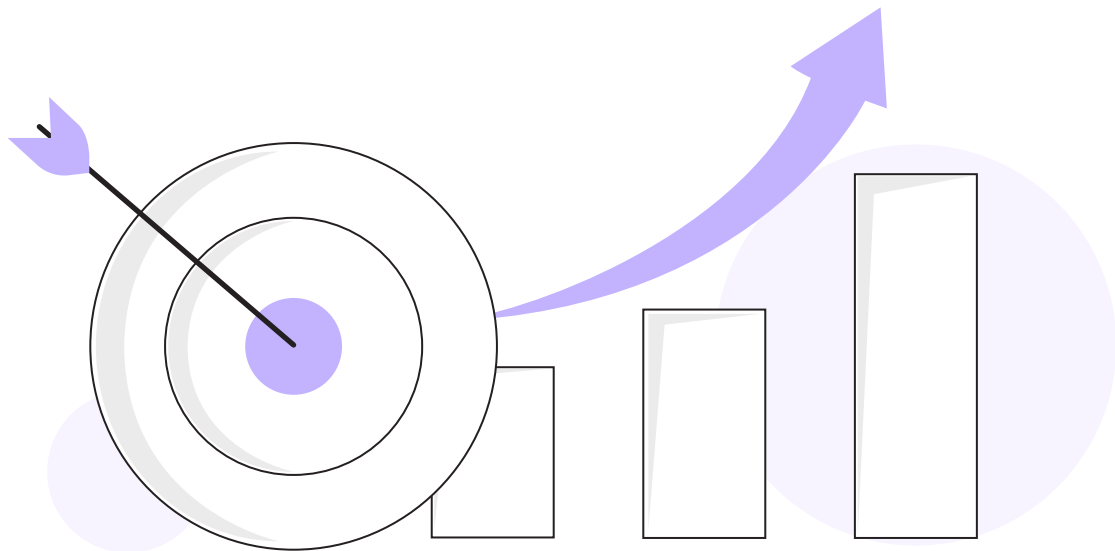
The Future

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> The more users we have coming onto the system, the more benefit we're all getting out of it.

James Hirst

Vice President of Development at ITV Studios' Creative Network

The current software from Zoho Creator delivers all the functionality ITV Studios need. So barring updates and minor tweaks, this step of the project is complete. However, they still want to bring more users onto the system, as with more users they are seeing greater benefits.

The one area of this platform left to work on are the aesthetic details. Now they have a truly bespoke system, they want it to look and feel that way. With ITV Studio style dashboards and personalised segments for departments and individuals Zoho Creator can provide this for them.

Find out More

About Zoho Creator

Running a business is no mean feat. Zoho Creator can help. Rapidly build custom applications that are a perfect fit for your business, or choose from our extensive range of pre-built apps and modify them. The best part? You don't have to be a programmer. Just sign up, pick a plan, and start building!

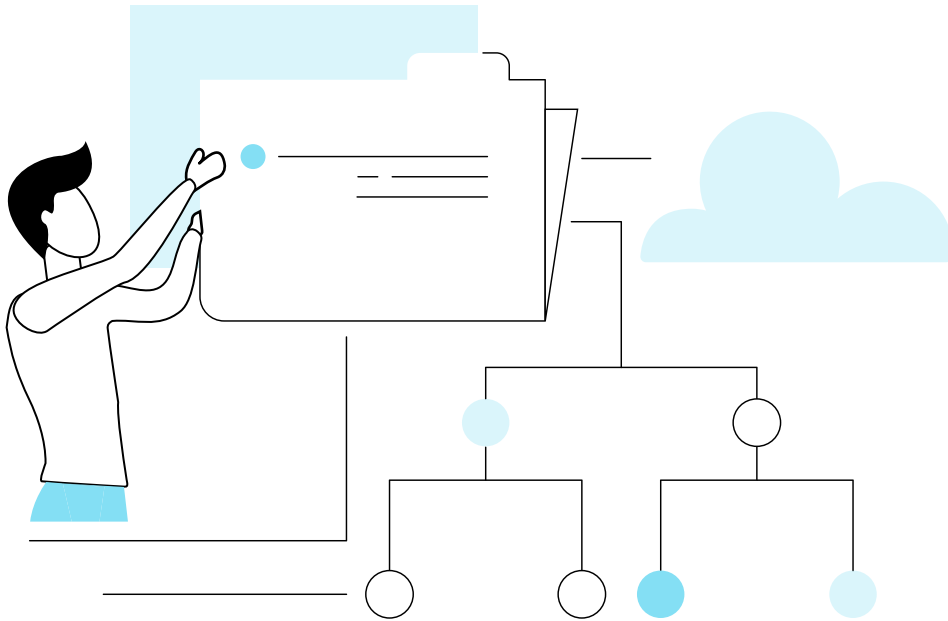Please find out more via our website: https://www.zoho.com/creator/

About our Partner Program

We have a vast network of partners across the globe who are all experts in Zoho products. All of them are there to identify, manage and implement the right set of Zoho tools to address the unique needs of your business. Once implemented, they can provide direct training and support to help you make the most of your technology investment.

Find and contact the right partner for you via our website: https://www.zoho.com/partners/find-partner.html

About A2Z Cloud

A2Z Cloud are a Premium Partner of Zoho, meaning they are one of the leading integrators of Zoho apps in the UK. They have a brilliant team of developers and business experts, enabling them to manage everything from concept creation to implementation and training.

As with ITV Studios, they can create bespoke systems using Zoho Creator. From start to finish, they can offer a truly personalised service to ensure your Zoho software supports and develops your business.

If you want to learn more about or contact A2Z, visit their website: https://a2zcloud.com/

ZOHO Creator

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ITV Studios website:
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