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Workday Extend: a Jump-Start Guide

Insights and tools to accelerate your start

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Hit the ground running

In an era of compressed digital transformation and relentless business change, IT teams often feel they're stuck between a rock and a hard place. No single application can deliver everything the business needs, exactly as it needs it. But managing an expanding portfolio of disparate applications can be a real liability, and managing interoperability between all those applications can be costly and time-consuming. In addition, closed application architectures can mean that any shift spurs a need for new application customisation and refactoring. And the security concerns that arise from moving data back and forth between these applications pulls IT teams into what feels like an endless game of whack-a-mole.

Pulling back on deploying new apps entirely is a non-starter. But there is a better way. Forward-looking IT leaders are embracing a fresh approach by building new apps and capabilities on extensible platforms. The platform provides a common architecture for the app, its data, processes and security, reducing the need for point-to-point integrations while keeping your data trusted and secure. Composing new apps and capabilities on an extensible platform, rather than deploying them stand-alone and creating one-off integrations between them, frees up IT resources from managing the underlying infrastructure, so they can deliver innovation faster.

Gartner notes, "As business needs change, organisations must be able to deliver innovation quickly and adapt applications dynamically – reassembling capabilities from inside and outside the enterprise."[1]

Workday Extend enables organisations to do just that. This isn't a general-purpose application development stack. It's a technology platform to develop apps by extending Workday. It provides a way to leverage the Workday native architecture, components and cloud delivery to build – rapidly and with confidence – tailored business capabilities for finance and people.

> " Building on Workday Extend gives us a way to harness the power of the Workday platform. Not only do we develop faster, we don't need additional resources or tools. We also avoided importing or exporting Workday data. Workday Extend really opens doors for customers to innovate.
>
> **Manager of Finance Applications, Netflix**

Teams build Workday Extend apps using no- and low-code tools. Developers extend the Workday object model with new data objects, tap into the Workday business process framework to build new business processes, create new experiences with UI components and secure the apps using the Workday trusted security model.

The ability to easily build apps tailored exactly to your business and its specific needs is reason enough to celebrate. But the impact is even more impressive. Enterprise apps built on an extensible platform with a trusted data source and common security model can supercharge agility and productivity. IT can nimbly build new apps or reconfigure existing ones as needed, without touching its digital core. Efficiencies are amplified, and innovation accelerated.

But how do you get started? What can you expect from deployment? How do you determine the best use cases? At Workday Rising, which took place in September 2023, customers using Workday Extend opened up about their experiences and lessons learned.

Making the business case for Workday Extend

The benefits of Workday Extend can be astounding. By leveraging core components and innovations within the Workday architecture to build new financial and people apps that are native to Workday, customers are able to:

- Consolidate systems within the IT environment, eliminating the pain and cost of replicating Workday data.

- Address unique needs and ways of operating, from simple to your most complex challenges.

- Protect sensitive data and maintain governance with new apps you build using the same Workday security model.

- Support innovative programmes that drive differentiation and competitive advantage.

- Improve the user experience with apps that use the same look and feel as Workday.

Rattling off the benefits might make the case at some organisations. But more often, IT leaders must overcome the inertia and resistance that can arise with any proposed change. These strategies may help:

Narrow the initial target

Workday Extend unlocks endless possibilities, but that doesn't mean you have to move mountains with your very first app. You might have an easier time building the business case by instead focusing on minor friction that could yield real benefits once solved. Think: an inefficient manual process that could be brought into Workday or replacing a clunky external tool that's not often used.

Crunch the numbers

If an app built with Workday Extend would eliminate the need for another system entirely, it's easy to tally the cost savings of licensing fees and maintenance costs. But you can quantify the benefits of other wins as well. If a new app would streamline a once-manual task, what are the time savings? If an app could solve a common frustration for workers, how might you put hard numbers around that improved experience?

Tie what's new to what's familiar

Highlight how much momentum already exists, as Workday customers. "We already know Workday, and our finance team members use it for their day-to-day," said Shawna Cartwright, SVP of Enterprise at Cushman & Wakefield, speaking at Workday Rising. "So talking to business partners, we can say, 'There's this new solution we can leverage, inside a system we're already familiar with, to fix this before it becomes an issue. Let's give it a shot.'"

Paint a long-term picture

If a business partner pushes for an ad hoc solution, Accuride Corporation CIO Paul Wright uses questions to underscore the value of extensibility. "The conversation becomes: 'Will this live on an island?' Well, no, they'll need this data or that data. 'Well, who's going to get that data? And who's going to maintain this over time?'" Wright asked at Workday Rising. With Workday Extend, questions around data governance, security and maintenance are a non-issue.

Assessing use cases for Workday Extend

The landscape of Workday Extend use cases is constantly expanding, as customers leverage the solution to solve their unique financial and people needs. But when the possibilities seem limitless, how should you set priorities?

Eric Chung, director of HR systems management at Sun Life, detailed the SPACE framework at Workday Rising. An early adopter of Workday Extend, the financial services company built and deployed more than 10 apps in less than two years, before formalising a framework to assess use cases. Here are the five components of the SPACE framework:

1 **Size of impact**

A wow-worthy app isn't worth much if it's only intended for a small handful of users, says Chung. To ensure Workday Extend apps deliver maximum impact, Chung considers both value (calculated as benefits over cost) and the scope size of end users.

2 **Proximity to users and data**

Where would users instinctively turn to address this use case? "If Workday is the first place they'd go, then that tells you from the gut that this would be a good fit for Workday Extend," Chung says. Likewise, the use case should leverage at least some data already in Workday in order to make sense there.

3 **Alignment to roadmaps**

"Roadmaps is definitely plural for a reason – it's not only your organisation's roadmap but also Workday's," says Chung. Before moving forward with building a new Workday Extend app, Chung is mindful to check if the functionality already exists in Workday and whether it's on the horizon for a future release.

4 **Complexity vs. criticality**

If an app would require lots of moving parts or integrations or new technology, Chung considers it high-complexity. Criticality signals something essential for the organisation's operations or affecting payroll. Chung encouraged new Workday Extend users to start with lower-complexity, low-criticality apps and pursue higher-complexity apps ahead of those with higher criticality.

5 **Engagement of stakeholders**

"We want to make sure that whoever we're working with is with us along the way," Chung says, meaning not only enthusiasm for the initial idea but also involvement during development and support for the app rollout and adoption.

Advice for organisations interested in Workday Extend:

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Start simple – learn to walk first. Have multiple use cases, prioritise them based on simplicity and value, and then pick the simplest one that delivers value.

Chief Technology Officer of the Workday practice, Kainos

kainos®

Deploying Workday Extend

With the business case made, and initial use cases identified, it's time to get going. Rest assured: you won't be starting from a standstill. Workday offers a rich toolbox of resources to help accelerate your time to value and amplify the ease of creating new apps. In addition to a diverse set of development tools for prototyping and building apps, Workday Extend is supported by a suite of lifecycle management and monitoring tools to collaboratively configure, deploy and manage them.

Workday Extend puts self-sufficiency front and centre – for developers and non-developers alike. But for those who want an expert at their side, we encourage you to lean on Workday Professional Services for additional support or to tap into a select group of Workday Extend-certified partners who offer services and solutions to accelerate Workday Extend app design and deployment.

Give yourself a springboard start

A trio of tools help make Workday Extend accessible for all.

App Builder

This is a no- and low-code browser-based tool for prototyping, previewing and building Workday Extend apps. The intuitive visual experience enables IT and business partners to build with clicks, not code, as they confidently build apps that incorporate new pages, tasks, orchestrations and processes.

App Catalogue

This curated library of prebuilt app templates and reference apps covers common financial, people and industry scenarios that can be quickly configured and deployed.

Packaged solutions

Built with Workday Extend by Workday and certified partners, packaged solutions use content, configurations and templates to help customers navigate trends and meet their unique organisation and industry needs.

Vibrant ecosystem

We have 23 certified partners and 600+ customers represented on Workday Extend, with more than 1,300 applications now in production.

Tracing the TELUS International journey

At fast-growing global technology company TELUS International, engineers – eager for new ways to extend Workday functionality – first made the case for Workday Extend. But Ricardo Medrano, senior manager of ERP, was sold after diving into the research. At Workday Rising, Medrano shared the team's path from sponsorship approval to first live app.

TELUS International

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Workday Extend gave our team more room to grow. Some members were really close to leaving the organisation and looking for other adventures. Workday Extend helped us retain that talent.

Senior Manager, TELUS International

Tapped into targeted trainings

The IT team was well acquainted with the Workday learning centre, so developers wasted no time enrolling in a Workday Extend curricula. But non-developers also took training courses, tailored to them. "They still need to understand the product, because they will be articulating needs to the business," says Medrano.

Explored prebuilt apps

Within the development tenant – distinct from the implementation sandbox and preview tenant that TELUS International already used – was a set of prebuilt Workday Extend apps. The team used that space to safely explore the apps. "It helped us to understand the architecture, the coding, and how we could use them to call existing services," Medrano says.

Developed a framework

What kinds of apps would TELUS International build with Workday Extend? To answer that, the team developed a yes/no framework with ranked priorities.

Settled on an app

With so much potential unlocked by Workday Extend, "it was hard for us to choose which app to work on first, to be honest," says Medrano. "We wanted something that would be impactful across the organisation but wouldn't be so complex to develop as our first app." Ultimately, they decided to build a new risk-attrition app to replace a legacy tool nearing the end of its use.

Rolled up their sleeves

"Then, we got to the really fun part – the coding, the architecture, the UI design," Medrano told attendees. The app took 99 days from development to deployment. Two learnings from that first app have accelerated the process: developers now share proof-of-concept with business partners earlier to help speed buy-in, and they're mindful of the weekly deployment schedule for apps moved from the development tenant to the implementation tenant (a learning that removed delays that impacted the delivery of their first app by two weeks).

Ready when you are

A cluttered technology landscape. Brittle integrations bolted onto legacy systems. Fragmented data that requires manual interventions. You probably don't need convincing that the status quo for many IT departments is far from ideal.

Workday Extend offers a better way. By taking the same technology, security, logic and application components that power Workday into your own hands, you can design and deploy purpose-built apps directly within Workday. That means meeting your organisation's unique finance and people needs, while also reducing complexity, resourcing and risk.

Getting started is easier than you might think. Because, like all things Workday, Workday Extend isn't simply a product. It's part of the same true-cloud platform that you already leverage as a Workday customer.

We're here to help you extend the power of your Workday data and processes. Let's get started.

With Workday Extend, you can:

- Build new capabilities directly within Workday.

- Take advantage of the close proximity to your financial and people data and processes.

- Maintain an engaging and consistent user experience across all devices, including mobile.

- Build confidently, knowing you protect sensitive data and maintain governance.

- Reduce technology complexity while you multiply your value with Workday.

- Leverage Workday Journeys and Workday Prism Analytics to enhance the user and data experience.

- Accelerate app development through a no-/low-code collaborative tool set.

- Find inspiration and support through our growing customer community, as well as our App Catalogue, packaged solutions and approved service providers.

- Take full advantage of the latest Workday releases, including innovations such as AI.

Select the offering that's right for your business

Workday Extend Essentials is the right offering to get customers jump-started. It provides core no- and low-code tooling and platform components for customers to build their first applications (up to three), or to deploy a Workday Extend packaged solution from one of our certified partners.

Workday Extend Professional provides everything in the Essentials offering and goes further. It unlocks support for building and deploying more apps (up to 10) and opens up additional innovations for developers, including AI services through the Workday AI Gateway.

Ready for AI

Also available with Workday Extend Professional is the Workday AI Gateway, which opens up the power of responsible AI for developers, including AI services such as sentiment analysis, document intelligence, skills analysis and machine learning (ML) forecasting.

To learn more about Workday Extend, visit: workday.com/extend

Sources

[1] Gartner, "Future of Applications: Delivering the Composable Enterprise"; Gene Alvarez, Dennis Gaughan, Yefim Natis and Mark O'Neill; 11 February 2020.