

AgileApps Cloud

The Fast Path to
Agile Process-Driven Applications



Get There Faster

Choosing a **Development Approach** in the AgileApps Cloud™

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Overview

This paper describes the different approaches you can use to build an application in the AgileApps Cloud™, and helps you choose the one that is most appropriate for the application you have in mind.

If you haven't already done so, you should start by reading the [Introduction to Dynamic Case Management and the AgileApps Cloud](#). (Links to that article and other useful pages can be found in the support wiki's Article Index at http://agileappslive.info/wiki/Article_Index.)

Choosing Your Development Approach

In AgileApps, there are several ways to build an application. Choosing the best way for your application depends on the goals you need to achieve.

The options are:

- **Customize the ServiceDesk Application**
- **Customize a Template Application**
- **Import Spreadsheet Data**
- **Build a Database Application**
- **Build a Dynamic Case Management Application**

First, though, let's examine some characteristics that are common to all platform applications, regardless of how they are constructed.

Common Application Characteristics

All applications come with integrated Email, the ability to configure external Web Forms for data input, and mobile access. And they can be integrated with other applications using a variety of strategies.

All applications can define Processes and Rules in objects, and allow email messages to be sent from a given record. All applications can take advantage of Email Templates and Document Templates to communicate clearly, using data taken from the original record and from related records. And macros can be created to take multiple actions on a record at the click of a mouse.

All applications allow for collaboration, by assigning Tasks to other users and recording completions in other actions in the history that is attached to each record.

In addition, applications can share objects. The Accounts and Contacts objects, for example, are part of ServiceDesk, where they are intended to help manage customer interactions. While they are not automatically included in other applications (which may have no need of them) those objects and others can be made available to an application, using [Resource Sharing](#).

There are many other application features that could be listed, as well. Those are just the highlights. But hopefully they give you an idea of the power the platform has to offer.

Customize the ServiceDesk Application

- *Advantage:* ServiceDesk provides a rich set of features for interacting with your customers.
- *Disadvantage:* While you can have as many database applications and dynamic case management applications running as you like, you can have only one ServiceDesk application running in your platform instance.

If you need multiple applications, then, you should use ServiceDesk for the application in which interactions with external users is critical, since ServiceDesk provides additional features in that area.

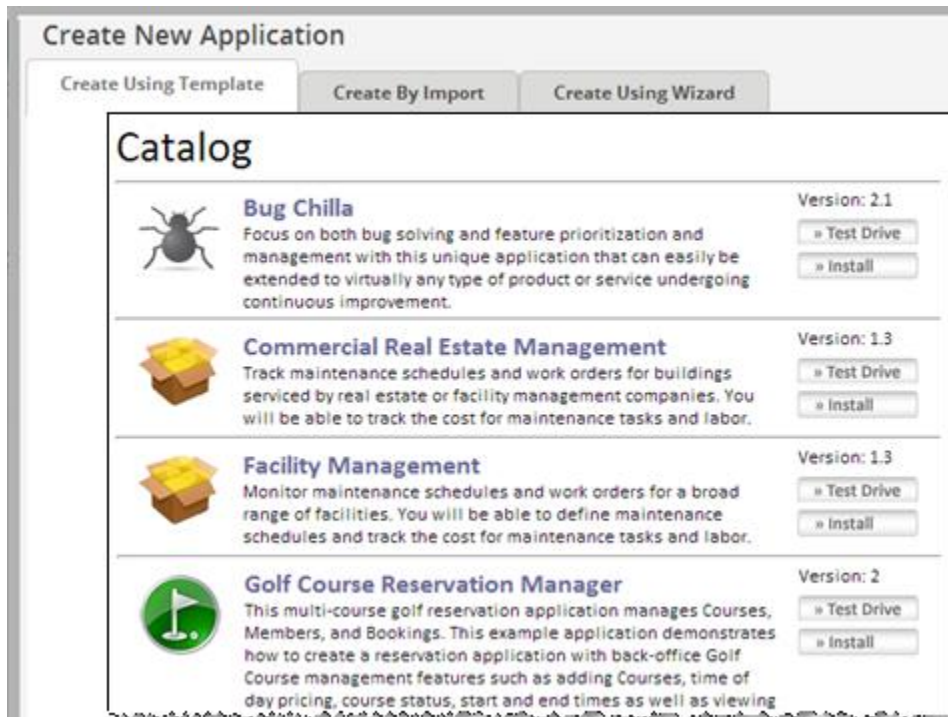
Here is a partial list of ServiceDesk features (for more, see [ServiceDesk Features](#) in the support wiki):

- **Account-specific Service Level Agreements**, to meet contractual obligations
- **Social Channel Integration**, including Facebook and Twitter
- **Service Portal** to let customers track cases, with Community & Knowledge Base options

(To get started with this option, see the companion article, [Customizing ServiceDesk.](#))

Customize a Template Application

In addition to ServiceDesk (a fully fledged application), there are other applications that can be installed and then customized to suit your purposes. The image below shows a few of them. (Note that you can try them out first, to see how they work.)



Import Spreadsheet Data

Using the [Application Construction Wizard](#) that appears when you create a new application, you can import spreadsheet data to build an application, either by pasting the data directly into the builder, or by importing the data from files exported from the spreadsheet.

With this choice, as with all of the others, the initial forms you need to interact with the platform are automatically generated, and the application is ready for mobile access, with no extra work. The result is a ready-to-use Database Application.

Build a Database Application

The Application Construction Wizard also lets you build a Database Application from scratch. (You can think of the AgileApps platform as a "spreadsheet on steroids", without some of the extraneous bells and whistles that would be part of a Dynamic Case Management app. With your E/R diagram in hand, you specify the objects you need, and define up to 10 initial fields for each. Then you specify the relationships among those objects, and press a button to create the application.

Build a Dynamic Case Management Application

Finally, you can use the Application Construction Wizard to create a Dynamic Case Management (DCM) application. In general, you need a Dynamic Case Management application when one or more of the following is true:

- **A Case can be in of one of several *states*** – for example: Open, Pending, or Closed.
- **A *Case Agent* is generally involved**, to manage a case to its conclusion.
- In general, **Process Models & Rules** can be set up to automate handling of a standard case.
- **Intelligent handling** is needed, at times, because not everything follows the standard model.

If you need one or more of those capabilities, Dynamic Case Management is probably what you need. Such an application also has the following items pre-created for you, to minimize the amount of additional customization you need to do:

- **Status and Priority fields** are predefined (the fields that are most commonly needed).
- **A variety of predefined Reports** that can be customized. (Add any others you need.)
- **An initial dashboard** to display case-handling statistics. (Customize it by rearranging and adding other widgets.)
- **Default Service Level Objectives** to help you keep things on track with reminder messages.

Tip:

When creating a DCM app, you can also create additional objects and define relationships among them, as with a Database app. The thing to do, then, is to create an initial DCM app with zero frills, just to see what it already has. Then you can identify the parts of the E/R diagram that you need to add.

Next Steps

If you're going to be starting from a template application or creating a database application (either by importing spreadsheet data or using the wizard) then, after creating the application, you'll want to consult the [Designers Index](#) in the support wiki for a guide to your customization options.

If you plan to use the ServiceDesk application, your next step is [Customizing ServiceDesk](#).

To develop a new DCM app, see [Building a Dynamic Case Management Application](#).

(Links to articles and other useful pages can be found in the support wiki's Article Index at http://agileappslive.info/wiki/Article_Index.)