

Redefining real estate operations with low-code apps



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About Auction Caddy



Carter Texas Realty was founded in 2012, by Hunter Carter as a real estate brokerage firm based out of San Antonio, Texas. It's popularly known as a real estate firm that enables its agents to be their best by equipping them with the right tools to work more efficiently. They had more than 95 agents who passionately assist real estate occupiers, owners, and investors to make informed decisions regardless of whether they are buying or selling their homes or making a real-estate investment.

In 2018, they decided to develop a **due diligence software solution** called **Auction Caddy** that assists real estate investors in making informed decisions by helping them locate, gather, sort, and track data while connecting with their servicing broker/agent. With this software and other support channels, the Auction Caddy team strives to create a brokerage ecosystem that provides all their clients with the best real estate experience.

Recently, we had the opportunity to connect with **Hunter Carter**, the **managing broker and CEO of Auction Caddy**. He's extremely tech savvy and the man who single-handedly built several custom solutions on Zoho Creator that help him and his team to organize and track data, automate processes, and get more done in less time.



Before Zoho Creator

Around 2015, Carter was looking for a platform to build customized applications and help his agents focus more on important tasks, like presenting properties, legal documentation, and increasing profits. At that time they were using **Google Sheets, Excel, and Dropbox** to manage all their data and documents.

Just like any real estate business, they had to deal with a large amount of paperwork and files holding all the necessary documents on a day-to-day basis. Using these tools, Carter and his team were able to store important data and access it whenever required, but they were scattered in different systems.

That's why Carter wanted **a single tool that could store important documents along with data**. That is within a record, along with the data you add, one must be able to upload multiple documents and files—a system that would help his team stay organized, find documents on time, and ensure they have all the right papers while presenting to a client.

Additionally, as a real estate firm, it was important that the platform they chose offered them the flexibility to create custom reports and make important information available to agents and clients at any time, from anywhere.

You know Excel doesn't support extensive automation. That is, if I want to send an email based on a date or if I want to track data and then show someone a calendar; stuff like that is challenging.

Hunter Carter

Managing Broker and CEO of Auction Caddy, Inc.



Carter also wanted to create an **automated transaction system** that would help agents stay organized and sell better. He needed a system that would continuously spin off advice to agents and inform them about where they are in the process, remind them if a closing date is nearby, prompt them to fill in the necessary details, and send them notifications to follow up with their clients. But **he knew he couldn't achieve all of this using Google Sheets and Dropbox**. He wanted a **streamlined one-stop-shop solution** that would help him manage data storage as well as automate processes.

You know that Google Sheets and Dropbox together could be powerful and do similar things but it doesn't have all that spin-off automation. It doesn't have the guidance pieces that I wanted along with data storage

Hunter Carter

Managing Broker and CEO of Auction Caddy, Inc.



Discovering Zoho Creator

After a quick search on Google, and doing a bit of research on custom software development platforms, Carter discovered Zoho Creator. Once he started developing apps on Zoho Creator there was no looking back after that. Today he has around **40 applications on the platform**, which help him manage different aspects of his business. Many of the applications are spread across the different categories of their business.

Carter also took a look at a few off-the-shelf software solutions that catered specifically to the needs of real estate businesses. However, Carter wasn't completely convinced. He wanted a platform that would offer him the flexibility to build his own business applications, and he realized that a low-code platform like Zoho Creator would be more affordable than any off-the-shelf software available on the market.

The other competing piece was the actual transactional rooms—that is off-the-shelf software. Some companies were doing specifically what I was going to build for my business. But, the other option is I get this blank canvas for \$20 a month, as opposed to a transaction room which is built by somebody else who wants to charge me \$340 a month. So the cost differential of me building my own app was a big cost-saving measure.

Hunter Carter

Managing Broker and CEO of Auction Caddy, Inc.



I didn't feel like a lot of the apps out there were really sufficient for my needs specifically, and I felt like they lacked a lot of categories. I needed more apps without having to have this a-la-carte cost across multiple applications and multiple companies. I really wanted to have it all in-house, in one location, with a set fee.

Hunter Carter

Managing Broker and CEO of Auction Caddy, Inc.



Why Auction Caddy chose Zoho Creator



Ease of development and customization



Business process automation



Lower total cost of ownership (TCO)

Zoho had a lot of functionalities that allowed me to be creative, as opposed to giving me set forms or set applications. I loved being able to build my own stuff so that was kind of the transition into the environment and why we felt Zoho was right! Even today it helps us with a lot of different categories, even within our business.

Hunter Carter

Managing Broker and CEO of Auction Caddy, Inc.



Building solutions on Zoho Creator

For Carter, getting started with Zoho Creator was simple and straightforward, as he knew exactly what he wanted to build, and his tech background made it easier. Over the last 6 years, they've rolled out more than 40 applications running on Zoho Creator, with all of them built in-house. Utilizing various features, like workflow automation, reporting, custom graphical views, email automation, and real-time tracking, Carter has built the following apps for his business:

- Transaction rooms
- Agent tracking
- Inventory tracking
- Property tracking
- Agent recruiting and onboarding
- Construction tracking
- Fix cost automating and reporting
- Company information and date tracking
- Mapping/driving tools
- Payment tracking
- Loan and asset tracking
- Tax tracking
- Courthouse data mining
- Foreclosure data processing
- Wholesale deal tracking and marketing platforms

With Zoho Creator in place, Auction Caddy was finally able to access information on the go. Whether agents were in the office or in the field, inspecting a property or meeting a client, they had access to all the information they needed to get the job done.

For example, Carter was able to keep track of all their assets at any point of time. If an agent made a request for a lock box or sign board, the system can easily provide it to the agent based on its availability. In times of emergency, Carter could log in to the Zoho Creator app and just with a few clicks use the unique code to identify the location of any assets.

His team of drivers and agents also used the app on their iPads to gather information about properties during inspection. They'd have to answer 20 or 30 questions, which would then process into an algorithmic fixed-cost number that would be assigned to the property to convey to investors.



Applications critical to the Auction Caddy team



Transaction room:

With this app, Carter keeps track of all the contracts, from when an agent creates a new one till when they close the deal. This app helps them store all their contracts and automate calendar reminders for internal contract review, internal property tracking, lead tracking, commission tax reporting, paperwork tracking, agent deal reporting, company growth tracking, commission disbursement automation, and deal wrap up. The transaction room handles all of that for all of his agents.



Agent onboarding, training, and tracking:

This app is used in order to onboard new agents that are joining the team, and to document all their relevant information—licenses, phones, addresses, tax paperwork, and IC paperwork. It also assists in streamlining the training process and ensuring that the agent has uploaded the important documents. It even helps them keep track of agents' license expiration dates, so they can be notified beforehand about renewal.



Property tracking:

This app helps the Auction Caddy team make better decisions by tracking estimates vs actuals. That is, at the initial phase, when the agents/brokers are evaluating properties, they can record/upload the initial snapshots and details. After they've finished with the project, they can go back in and put in the actuals and then look at the differences, which assists them in making better decisions. The app also helps them keep track of purchase and sale dates, construction costs, and insurance.



Fix cost assistance:

This app helps them to track and automate the fix cost and cost of house repairs, and to get quick in-depth estimates. When an agent visits a home, they can fill out a form which will ultimately produce a fixed cost estimate, with links that give you full-blown breakdowns. These are then automatically emailed to the agent, like a summary of everything important.



Inventory:

This app helps the Auction Caddy team keep tabs on their assets—cameras, sign boards, lockboxes, and other marketing materials that the agents regularly use.



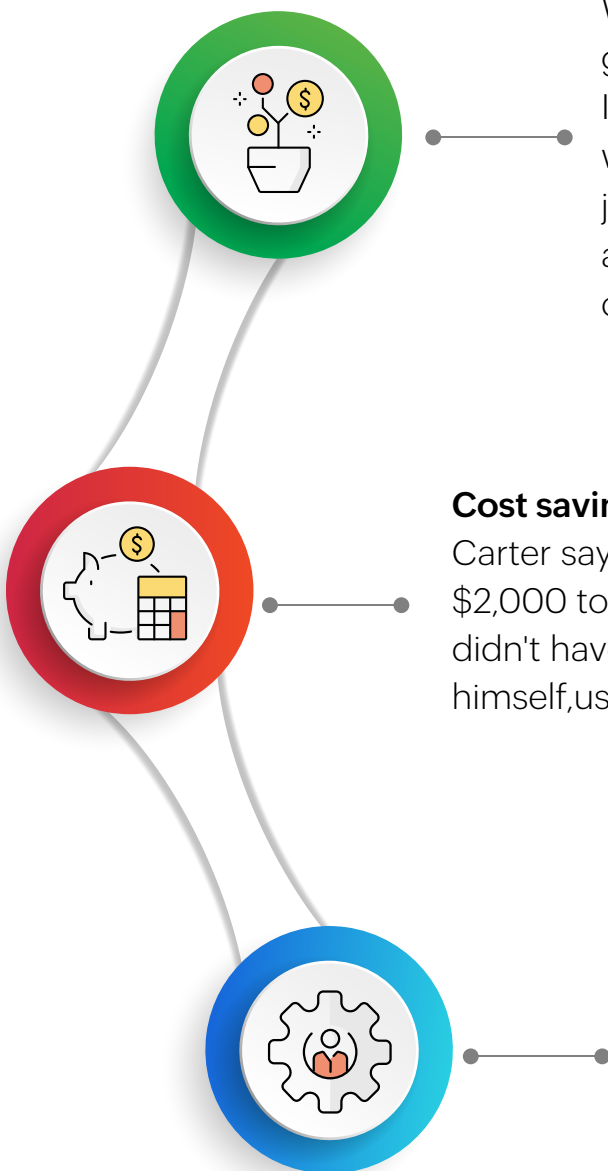
Data gathering:

Assists in data mining at courthouses through APIs and manual data gathering. The forms and tracking systems are the main hub as data is pulled in from multiple sources and then combined later for use.



Business **benefits**

Zoho Creator has helped Auction Caddy overcome various challenges over the last six years. From capturing data and relevant documents together in a single place, to automating repetitive tasks, to the ease of accessing real-time data by multiple agents and clients, this has enabled them to focus more on their actual business.



Growth:

With Zoho Creator, Auction Caddy grew from a \$1.7M Gross Commission Income (GCI) to \$50M in 5 years. They were able to bring in more agents to join their team—from 3 agents to 97 agents. They were also able to open up offices in three new locations.

Cost savings:

Carter says he was able to save between \$2,000 to \$3,000 a year for apps that he didn't have to purchase, as he built them himself, using Zoho Creator

Productivity:

After implementing Zoho Creator, the Auction Caddy team was able to be more being organized and productive. As a CEO, Carter has clear visibility of his business and can make higher-level decisions quicker.

I think productivity actually comes from being organized and being able to feel like you have a vision. As a CEO, that vision definitely allows me to be more productive. I'm able to make higher-level decisions quicker knowing where my businesses are that day, as opposed to there being a 30-day lag behind transactions. Also, knowing what's coming up allowed me access to financial products which enable me to invest and grow the team.



Hunter Carter
Managing Broker and
CEO of Auction Caddy, Inc.



About us

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

Great brands trust us:





www.zoho.com/creator

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