Forms on Power Platform

A comparison of Microsoft's native solutions

resco

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Forms on Power Platform:
A comparison of Microsoft's native solutions

Microsoft Forms

Dynamics 365 Customer Voice

Canvas Apps

Model-driven apps

Power Pages forms

Dynamics 365 Field Service inspections

...and

Resco Forms+

Executive summary

Microsoft offers a variety of options for creating digital forms — each designed with specific scenarios, user roles, and technical constraints in mind. For solution architects, Power Platform admins, and developers, choosing the right tool for the job is not just about UI—it's about automation, data integrity, lifecycle management, and how deeply forms can integrate into broader business processes.

This whitepaper compares the key Microsoft-native form solutions available on Power Platform, analyzes their strengths and limitations, and introduces an alternative: Resco Forms+, a solution purpose-built to unify form design, data capture, automation, and reporting in one streamlined platform.

Introduction: Why forms matter

Forms are often the first and most frequent user interaction point in any business application. They collect data, trigger workflows, enable audits, and inform decisions. Across Power Platform, Microsoft offers multiple form technologies with varying capabilities and limitations.

Whether you're gathering feedback from customers, conducting inspections in the field, or doing quick internal surveys, understanding each option's tradeoffs can make or break the solution's success.

Comparison summary

	Microsoft Forms	Dynamics 365 Customer Voice	Canvas Apps	Model-driven apps	Power Pages forms	Dynamics 365 Field Service inspections	Resco Forms+
Best suited for	Quick surveys	Customer feedback	Custom UI apps	Data-driven apps	External portals	Field inspections	All data collection scenarios
Ease of designing forms	*****	****	**	***	**	****	****
Forms for external users	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☑
Forms can be designed by a business user	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑
Populating forms with Dataverse data	☐	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Rewriting existing Dataverse data based on Forms answers	☐	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
Does not require change in metadata	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑
Lifecycle management	☐	☐	Part of Power Platform ALM	Part of Power Platform ALM	Part of Power Platform ALM	Basic	☑
Business logic	☐	Basic	☑	☑	With dev work	Basic	☑
Scales for 1 million+ answered forms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Dedicated PDF report tool	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑

Questions to answer before choosing a forms solution

The concept of digital forms is simple: a user interacts with a form and collects some type of data.

But deciding which technology to use for implementing forms in the Power Platform ecosystem is far more complex. Multiple options exist—each with unique strengths and limitations. For a one-size-fits-all solution for management of all forms within a Power Platform organization, you may find that none of the Microsoft native options is sufficient, and you may need to reach for a 3rd party solution like Resco Forms+.

To find the best fit, ask the following questions:

Who will use the forms

- Who will be filling in the forms? Do all users have a Microsoft license?
  Some of the forms solutions are intended for internal users with authentication credentials, others also cater to users external to your organization
- Should users remain anonymous?
  Do you plan on gathering anonymous feedback, or do you need to track who filled in the forms?

Who will design and maintain the forms

- Who will be building and maintaining the forms?
  Should business users be able to tackle form setup, maintenance, and data handling? If you require validation, business logic, and automation, will you need a consultant, or even a developer to step in?

Output data and usage

- Where should the collected data be stored?
  Do you plan to store data in Excel, Dataverse, SharePoint, or Microsoft Fabric?
- Will data need to be archived for compliance?
  Does your worklow need to comply with regulatory requirements?
- What tools will be used to visualize and analyze the data?
  How will you make sense of the collected data? What insights do you expect to gather? Are simple dashboards sufficient, or do you want your data to be interpreted by Power BI?
- Will PDF reports be required?
  Do you need to create reports for customers or compliance needs? Are legally binding signatures needed?

Automation

- Will you need post-form-submission automation?
  Should an outcome from a submitted form trigger actions (e.g., alerts, document generation, task creation)? For example, when a result of a service inspection is insufficient, you can automatically send an e-mail to a customer and schedule maintenance.
- Will business logic be needed while filling in a form?
  For example, for showing and hiding question groups depending on previous answers, color coding, or dynamic calculations.

Template lifecycle

- Is it critical to have a template lifecycle in place?
  Will you need to track which template version was used? When there is a requirement to add, change, or remove questions, and there is no template lifecycle in place, you can only guess what the exact question for each of the answers was. In many cases, you may need to change business logic and dashboards tied to the questions or whole forms and this might be unsustainable without a template lifecycle.
- Is it critical to know who has changed the form?
  Do changes to the form need to be audited?

Answer lifecycle

- Will the users need to save work in progress and complete it later?
  When going through a lenghty workflow, it is not always possible to finish filling in a form in one go.
- Do submitted form answers need to be locked and unchangeable?
  In some use cases, it is critical that after submitting a form the answers cannot be changed – for example after a client adds a legally binding signature.
- Will you need a full audit trail of submitted responses?
  When the answers can be changed, you might need to audit who changed what and when. This might be the case when you are dealing with high-value or high-risk assets.

The rest of this document explores Microsoft-native options and Resco Forms+ through the lens of these requirements.

Forms data collection business process

Design → Automate → Collect → Report

Microsoft Forms

Microsoft Forms is Microsoft's simplest form tool, designed for fast and frictionless data collection. It is generally available to Microsoft 365 Apps for business customers, and users with a Microsoft account. It works well for basic internal surveys, quizzes, and event registrations. While not native to the Power Platform, it integrates via Power Automate to store data in Dataverse. Within the Microsoft Forms UI, users can see which forms they have answered and create new ones.

Use cases: Internal employee surveys, event feedback, quick polls, anonymous idea submissions
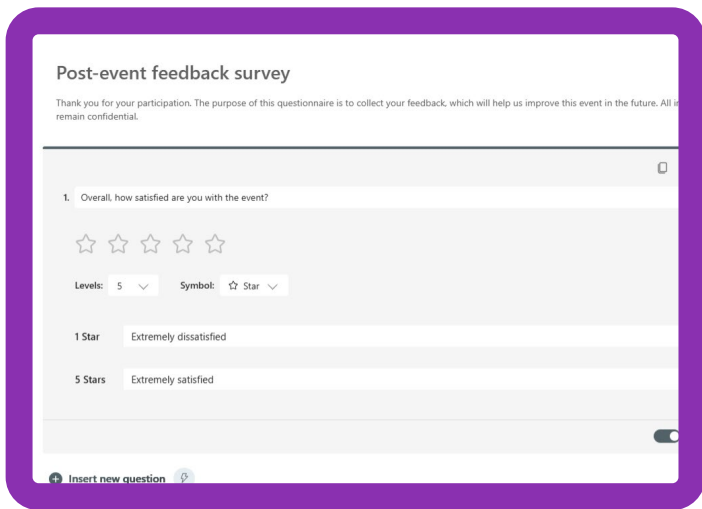
Forms designer interface:

Image source: Microsoft

Who will use the forms: Basically anyone: internal and external users, anonymous or authenticated. Does not require a Microsoft license to submit responses. You can send out a link to start gathering responses. Integrated with Microsoft Teams. Microsoft Forms provides a generic survey link for all of your respondents.

Who will design and maintain the forms: Business users with no technical expertise. No coding or schema design required.

Output data and usage:

- Stored in Microsoft Forms backend
- Responses can be viewed in a simple dashboard
- Exportable to Excel
- Can be routed to Dataverse or SharePoint via

Power Automate. When adding a new question or making changes to the form, the Power Automate flow needs to be adjusted as well

Automation:

- Form submissions can trigger flows in Power Automate
- Automation is limited to post-submission logic. Showing/hiding questions based on previous answers or dynamic calculations are not possible
- Forms cannot be pre-populated with data from Dataverse
- No out-of-the-box support for PDF generation

Template lifecycle:

- No template version tracking
- Even though users have filled in the form, a new question can be added. Also, a question can be deleted and a new one with the same name added. This may cause confusion as to which answer ties to which question
- Who changed the form template is not tracked

Answer lifecycle:

- Cannot save in progress
- Form submisions are editable if routed to a shared destination like Excel or SharePoint unless additional protections are set manually
- No audit trail of submissions

Strengths:

- Fast to deploy, simple to use
- Integrated into Microsoft 365 suite (Teams, Outlook)
- Ideal for informal, short-lived forms and surveys

Limitations:

- No support for long-term lifecycle management
- Business logic cannot be added to the form
- The form does not populate with Dataverse data
- Not suitable for complex, sensitive, or compliant business processes

Dynamics 365 Customer Voice

Dynamics 365 Customer Voice is Microsoft's built-in survey solution for Dynamics users. Designed primarily for feedback collection and management, it stores data on Dataverse and supports business process flows. It is ideal for organizations already using Dynamics 365 and looking to gather customer or employee input quickly, without custom development. Thanks to its strenghts and the lack of a more suitable native solution, many companies use Dynamics 365 Customer voice for a wider range of use cases than it was intended for.

Use cases: Post-delivery satisfaction surveys, onboarding feedback, market research, internal employee sentiment surveys
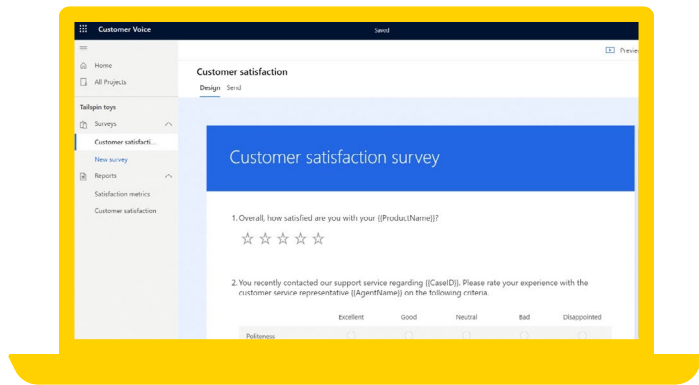
Forms designer interface:

Image source: pragmatiq.co.uk

Who will use the forms: External and internal users. Forms can be shared via link. Responses can be anonymous. Users do not need a Microsoft license to submit. Ideal for quick feedback loops.

Who will design and maintain the forms: Business users with a Dynamics 365 licence. Easy to configure with no coding required. Option to use out-of-the-box templates. Option to choose theme colors, fonts, and text formatting, and to upload images.

Output data and usage:

- Data is stored in Dataverse in tables that are automatically created
- Satisfaction metrics automatically calculate the overall customer metrics score
- Visualized in out-of-the-box dashboards suitable for displaying customer feedback

- Data can be used in Power BI with additional setup
- No native PDF generation

Automation:

- Branching based on the answers the respondents are giving as they fill out the survey for skipping questions or making a new question visible based on a response
- With the personalization feature you can address someone with their name or reference a particular record, such as a case number
- Customer Voice creates a unique link for every recipient you can tag against the contact record
- Trigger surveys via Power Automate based on events (e.g., sales order completed)

Template lifecycle:

- No template version management

Answer lifecycle:

- No ability to save in progress
- Progress bar, especially helpful with long surveys
- Responses are locked once submitted but lack traceability of template version used

Strengths:

- Simple, survey-focused experience for both creators and respondents
- The data is stored in Dataverse
- No need to create a Power Automate flow
- Free with Microsoft Dynamics 365 licenses

Limitations:

- Designed for surveys, not forms tied to structured business processes
- Not suitable for use cases requiring complex business logic beyond the scope of the personalization feature and branching; e.g. you cannot add a list of accounts or products, let customers choose from them and adapt the form accordingly
- Not extensible for broader workflows
- Limited question types
- No out-of-the-box support for regulated template and answer lifecycle needs

Power Apps – Canvas Apps

Canvas Apps offer the highest degree of design flexibility and UI customization in the Power Platform. App makers start with a blank canvas and build every part of the user interface and logic. Copilot can help with this process to a great extent.

This makes Canvas Apps ideal for specific, tailored internal processes—especially those requiring complex logic or integration with multiple data sources. However, this flexibility comes with high design and maintenance costs, and little lifecycle support out-of-the-box.

Use cases: Internal tools for inspections, asset tracking, multi-step workflows, or processes requiring custom interfaces

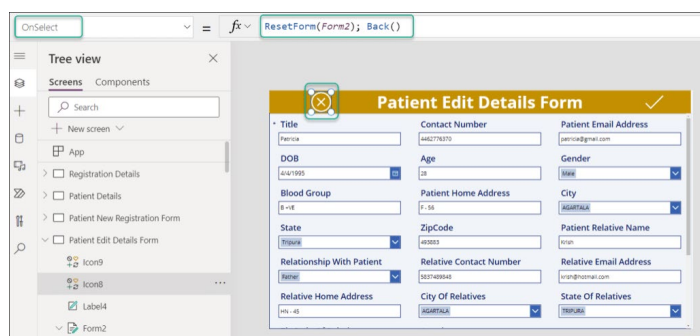**Forms designer interface:**

Image source: spguides.com

Who will use the form: Internal authenticated users with Microsoft licenses. You can invite external business partners, contractors, and third parties to run your company's canvas apps via sharing with guest users of a Microsoft Entra tenant.

Inputting the data is usually not as straightforward as with Microsoft Forms or Customer Voice. Generally, Canvas Apps require users to be more technically skilled and provided with detailed instructions.

Who will design and maintain the form: The app makers can range from citizen developers and consultants for simple apps to developers for complex apps.
The UI of the app is controlled by Power Fx. The app builders are supposed to be familiar with it. For each of the forms, the app maker first needs to create a new Dataverse table where the data will be stored in. Only then can they proceed to creating

the form.

This setup is not suitable for companies that have dozens of forms templates, each with up to a hundred questions, as is often the case. It would be challenging to design such an app, let alone maintain it - even with the use of Copilot.

Output data and usage:

- Stored in Dataverse or external sources (via connectors)
- Suitable for structured, repeatable records

Automation:

- PowerFx logic defines form behavior
- Power Automate workflow orchestration
- PDF generation and for archiving require custom implementation
- Canvas Apps are built to handle nearly any use case, not only data collection. They don't offer a "form submitted" trigger in Power Automate. Instead, users need to build automations around data changes. This offers great flexibility, but it also introduces additional complexity compared to form-centric solutions.

Template lifecycle:

- Versioning of forms as a part of Power Platform ALM
- All form changes must be manually maintained and updated

Answer lifecycle:

- No built-in concept of saving in progress or marking submissions as immutable

Strengths:

- Unmatched design flexibility
- Integrates many systems and data sources
- Suitable for long-lived applications with embedded forms

Limitations:

- High complexity and maintenance cost
- Not optimized for ad hoc data collection or scalable form reuse
- No form-specific lifecycle controls or templating capabilities

Power Apps – Model-driven Apps

Model-driven Apps generate forms automatically based on structured data stored in Dataverse. They are perfect for business environments that rely on a well-designed relational data model and require consistent forms and workflows across the organization. With strong business logic support, they work best for internal CRUD operations—but lack UI flexibility and adaptability needed for rapid form iteration.

Use cases: Structured applications such as CRM, case management, and relationship tracking with well-defined business entities
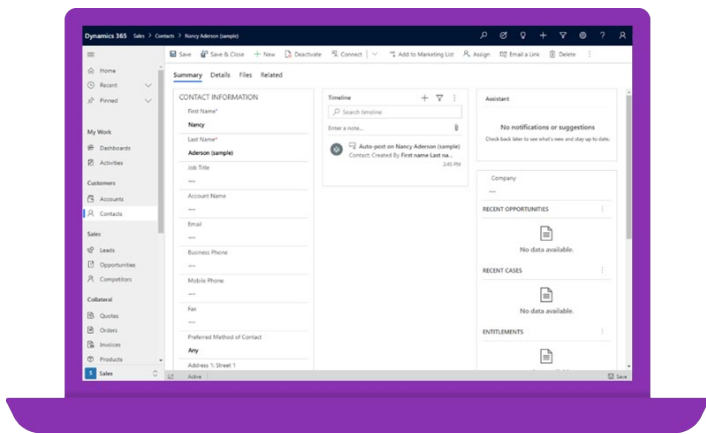
Forms designer interface:

Image source: Microsoft

Who will use the forms: Internal licensed users with pre-defined access roles. Administrators can use their organization's Microsoft Entra groups to manage access rights for licensed Dataverse users. Guest users can access the Model-driven app, but licensing must be explicitly assigned. Security roles in Dataverse need careful configuration.

Who will design and maintain the form: Consultants or system admins with a deep understanding of Dataverse schema and security model.

Model-driven apps are based on tabular data. For each of the forms, the app maker needs to first design the table in which the data will be stored.

Output data and usage:

- Stored in Dataverse in a tightly coupled schema
- Power Automate connectors to Microsoft and 3rd party tools for data visualization and interpretation
- No out-of-the-box tools for creating PDF reports

Automation:

- Works well with Power Automate and Dynamics workflows
- No native "form submitted" concept; triggers fire on data changes

Template lifecycle:

- Version control for form templates as a part of Power Platform ALM
- Audit trails available if enabled, but not form-centric
- When changing the form by modifying or adding questions, the underlying tables, logic and automations need to be changed as well. With deleted questions, a decision needs to be made as to what to do with the answers that were filled in before the change. As each template change requires intervervention, this solution might not be suitable for flexible and complex workflows.

Answer lifecycle:

- Saving in progress possible through draft states, but must be custom built
- No built-in version control for submitted data

Strengths:

- Powerful for data-centric applications
- Out-of-box business logic, views, and relationships

Limitations:

- Requires full schema design before deployment
- Not friendly for dynamic or frequently changing forms
- Not a good fit for external users

Power Pages

Power Pages (formerly known as Power Apps Portals) is the go-to Microsoft-native solution for creating forms that external users can access. Ideal for partner portals and public submissions, it provides secure, role-based access. However, form design is rigid and requires significant developer involvement. It is not built for agility or rapid form prototyping.
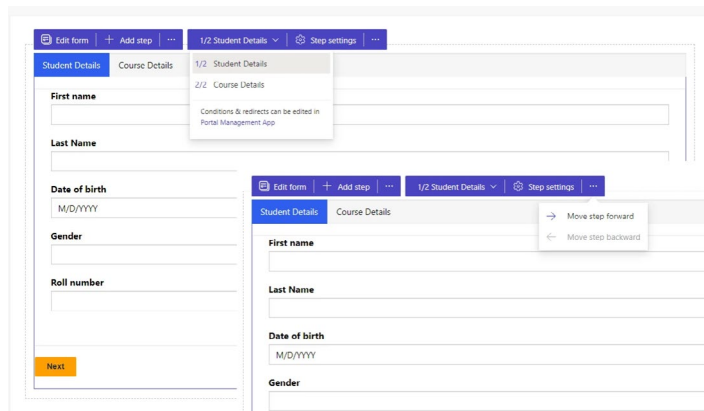

Image source: Microsoft

Who will use the forms: External authenticated or anonymous users. Internal users can also be served, but this tool focuses on outside access.

Who will design and maintain the forms: Developers. High customization requires Liquid templates, HTML/CSS, and familiarity with Dataverse structure.

Output data and usage:

- Stored in Dataverse
- Form design strictly tied to preconfigured tables

Automation:

- Supports Power Automate on record creation
- No built-in analytics or PDF support

Template lifecycle:

- No forms version management, only as a part of Power Platform ALM

Answer lifecycle:

- No audit trail or submission lock without external setup

Strengths:

- External authenticated and anonymous form access
- Role-based portal access control

Limitations:

- Not a focus in Microsoft's current roadmap
- Developer-heavy for any complex scenario
- Limited visual customization without custom code
- Cannot quickly adapt forms or questions without schema edits

Dynamics 365 Field Service Inspections

Field Service Inspections offer a form experience for technicians on the go. Built specifically for Dynamics 365 Field Service, this solution focuses on mobile-optimized data capture in inspection workflows. It's easy to use, integrates with work orders, and supports basic lifecycle controls—but it is not designed to be generalized outside field scenarios or extended for other use cases.

Use cases: Field inspections, asset checks, quality control by technicians in the field

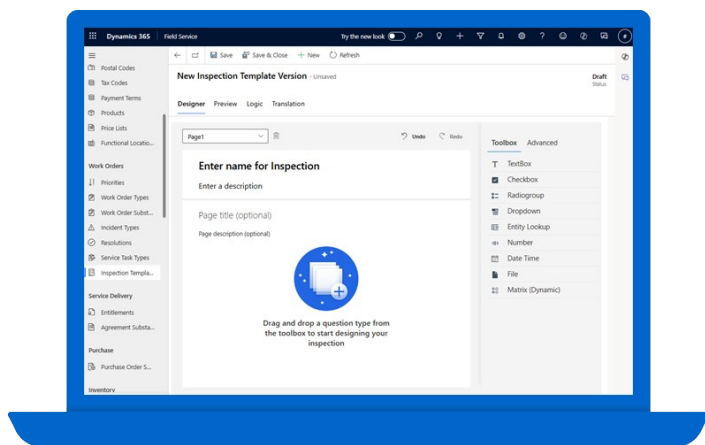**Forms designer interface:**

Image source: Microsoft

Who will use the forms: Users with Dynamics 365 Field Service licenses. Each frontline worker must have a Field Service license assigned through the Microsoft 365 admin center.

Field Service inspections require no further training and are designed to be easy to use.

Who will design and maintain the forms: Business users can build forms via a simple UI. Administrators can easily create an inspection using the drag-and-drop interface without the need to add new entities and fields to Dataverse.

Output data and usage:

- Stored in Dataverse, linked to assets or work orders
- Inspection responses can be exported as a PDF file
- Administrators can export inspections as

JSON objects to import them to another environment

Automation:

- Integrated with Field Service workflows
- Drag-and-drop interface
- Dynamic branching and conditional logic
- Relating inspections to assets to build service histories
- Basic follow-up logic available
- Built-in Field Service analytics

Template lifecycle:

- Basic version management for templates - you can see what template version the aswer ties to, you can export and import the version etc.
- Administrators can easily republish or change inspections to accommodate changing processes and evolving business needs

Answer lifecycle:

- Submitted data can be locked
- Save-and-resume not supported

Strengths:

- Designed specifically for inspections
- Field-optimized app interface

Limitations:

- Not suitable outside of inspection scenarios
- Forms are filled in by licensed users

Resco Forms+

Resco Forms+ is a forms platform that fills the gaps in Microsoft's offering. It combines no-code simplicity with powerful data and lifecycle features and external access, making it suitable for everything from field inspections to customer surveys to regulated audit workflows.

Unlike Canvas apps or Model-driven apps, Forms+ does not require altering Dataverse schema to change a form. It supports full lifecycle management, making it ideal for scalable, compliant form-based processes across any industry.

Resco Forms+ is especially well suited for organizations that want to have all their forms managed in one environment.

Use cases: Inspections, audits, surveys, external data capture, regulatory reporting—across any user type or industry

Forms designer interface:

Who will use the forms: Internal and external, authenticated or anonymous users. No Microsoft license required for respondents.

Who will design and maintain the forms: A no-code experience is designed for both business users and consultants. Simple yet powerful forms designer is combined with a visual interface for adding business logic and optional advanced customization.

Output data and usage:

- Dedicated flexible data design: data is stored in Dataverse within flexible data design independent from the Dataverse schema, form makers don't need to create tables before designing the forms as this is taken care of by design
- Use JSONs, record based storage, or push the data to Fabric and have a hybrid mode best for business intelligence
- Data is stored with a small database footprint, enabling the creation of millions of answered forms. With Microsoft solutions, there may
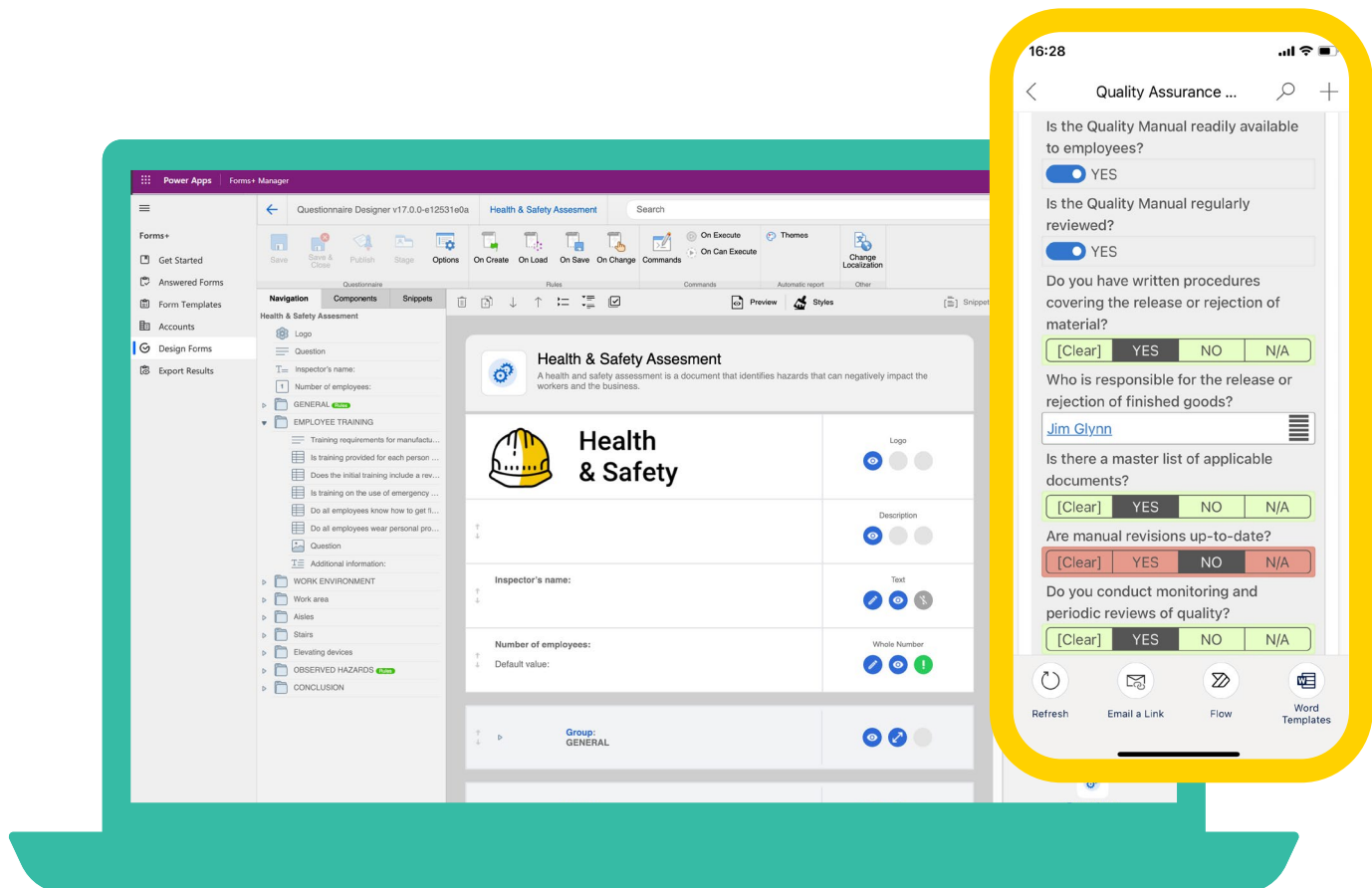
be a hard limit of 100 questions and 600,000 database records. Canvas and Model-driven apps are limited by design. This makes Resco Forms+ the best option for high-traffic, complex use cases
- Can integrate with SharePoint and Excel
- Ready to use integration with data analytics in Business Intelligence dashboards (Microsoft Fabric)
- Dedicated automation flow for creating PDF reports and sendig/saving them to your preferred destination. Ready without the need to create PDF templates or build the automation from scratch

Automation:

- Built-in automation
- Trigger flows on creation, submission, or status changes
- Forms can be pre-populated with Dataverse data
- Dataverse data can be changed based on forms input via data mapping
- Showing and hiding questions depending on previous answers, color coding, dynamic calculations
- Ready to use integration with data analytics in Business Intelligence dashboards (Microsoft Fabric)

Template lifecycle:

- Resco's product and development teams are heavily investing in template lifecycle management. As a result, companies are using it consistently across industries and use cases
- Simple adding, changing and removing questions and related automation with form versions
- Full template versioning with historical tracking
- Forms templates can be stored in folders

Answer lifecycle:

- Save-and-resume capability
- Submission immutability and locking
- End-to-end audit trails for compliance

Strengths:

- Flexible design and distribution
- Simple UI paired with advanced features
- Proven across industries

Limitations:

- Not bundled in Microsoft 365; separate deployment and licensing required

Resco Forms+ for Power Platform

Create forms to collect data

Conduct surveys, audits, and inspections, and use guided workflows directly in Power Apps and Power Pages. Deploy libraries of complex forms in hours, not months. Design in a simple drag-and-drop interface. Fit your specific industry and use-case.

For more information,
contact us at info@resco.net

Visual summary

	Microsoft Forms	Customer Voice	Canvas Apps	Model-driven apps	Power Pages Forms	Field Service Inspections	Resco Forms+
Non-licensed users	■	■			■		■
Business user designer	■	■				■	■
Dataverse native		■	■	■	■	■	■
Custom logic		~	■	■	■	■	■
Lifecycle management			~	~	~	v	■
PDF generation			~	~	~	■	■

Recommendations by scenario

For simple, quick-to-launch surveys or internal feedback

- Use **Microsoft Forms** for informal use cases where lifecycle management and automation are not priorities.
- Use **Customer Voice** if you work within the Dynamics 365 ecosystem and need basic feedback automation and reporting.
- Alternatively, **Resco Forms+** offers a more scalable and maintainable option—even for simple surveys—especially if you expect growth in scope, complexity, or compliance needs.

For forms embedded into larger business processes or internal apps

- **Canvas Apps** and **Model-driven Apps** are suitable if your organization already uses these technologies and has the technical resources to build and maintain custom logic and schema.
- However, **Resco Forms+** can simplify the same use cases with lower technical effort, while also offering better lifecycle management and easier data handling.

For external-facing forms (customers, partners, or anonymous public access)

- Use **Power Pages** if you need external access and can allocate development resources.
- Use **Customer Voice** for simple, unauthenticated external surveys.
- In both cases, **Resco Forms+** is a strong alternative—supporting both anonymous and authenticated external users with significantly more flexibility and better end-to-end data control.

For structured, on-site data collection like inspections

- If you're already using Dynamics 365 Field Service, the built-in **Field Service Inspections** tool may be sufficient.
- For more customizable, scalable, or multi-industry inspection scenarios, **Resco Forms+** provides the best lifecycle tools and performance at scale.

For scalable, compliant, and future-proof form processes across internal and external users

- **Resco Forms+** is the most comprehensive solution. It covers every key capability—user flexibility, lifecycle versioning, native PDF reporting, compliance, Dataverse integration, and business intelligence. It allows to manage all forms in one environment.
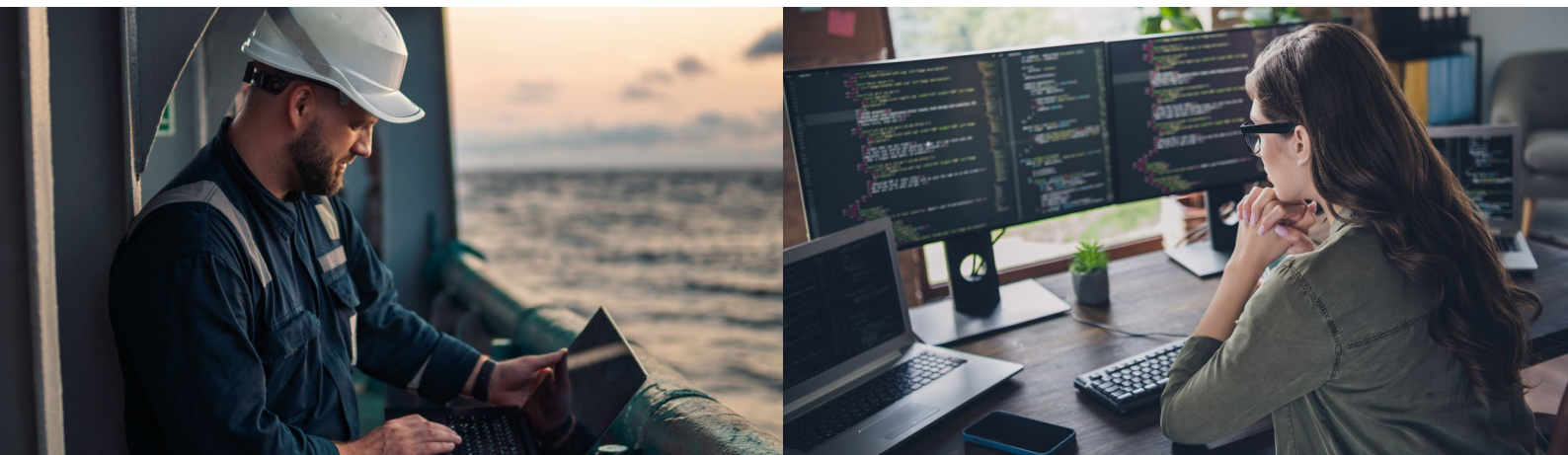
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Resco Inspections+
https://www.resco.net/inspections/

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