

Outsystems vs Mendix vs GeneXus

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How does GeneXus compare with OutSystems and Mendix? This is a question that we are being asked more and more frequently, so we decided to write this short article.

GeneXus has been working on simplifying software development since the late 1980s, unlike Mendix and OutSystems that have arrived relatively recently.

This long maturation process has allowed us to gain many technical advantages, and a lot of practical experience in countless industries and markets. It has also allowed us to develop a way of seeing our business from a completely different perspective than that of our competitors, while validating a unique technological and philosophical proposal. Our company and platform have grown a lot in these three decades, but something has remained unchanged in these 30 years: Our purpose to simplify software development, based on a unique theory and architecture in the world that respond to continuous technological evolution and enable our customers to automatically evolve software systems of any size. That is possibly our biggest advantage.

OutSystems and Mendix are two great development platforms, but they are different from GeneXus in terms of some fundamental pillars and a myriad of minor details. We would like to describe some of the fundamental differences below.

The three main pillars that distinguish GeneXus as a Low-Code Platform

It is the only theoretical framework proven to be “Future-Proof”

In the beginning, GeneXus asked the following question: “Is it possible to find a way to develop software that is independent of the technology that will be used to run the application?”

In 2012, in his paper “Futureproofing Your Organization,” Ken Orr put it this way:

“Wouldn’t it be great if it were only possible to make business and technology decisions today that would stand up under the barrage of constant change and still make sense well into the future? What if it were possible to build systems that were so flexible that they could be adapted easily and quickly no matter what business or technology changes came about?”

The search for an answer to these questions, in the mid-1980s, was what led to the creation of the theoretical base that supports GeneXus. This differential theoretical base has allowed GeneXus to generate software systems automatically, at the same time that it has allowed it to easily incorporate each new technology that has emerged in the last three decades, giving our clients the fastest access to new trends and the power of new technologies.

Many platforms increase productivity when creating applications; however, none can compete with GeneXus when it comes to maintaining and evolving an application, with functional changes, or automating the generation of that application for a new technology.

“Customers generally purchase GeneXus to obtain development productivity; then they take a liking to automatic maintenance, but, as time goes by, they see that there may be even more important things, such as platform or architecture independence.” Breogán Gonda, 1998.

As we like to say, this theoretical foundation is what has allowed our clients to survive technological changes that have buried many of our competitors of the past, who could not evolve because their products had been developed on the wrong paradigm.

This is what makes GeneXus truly “Future-Proof” on two levels:

1. Evolution of a given solution, responding to business changes.
2. Automated technological change.

Bantotal is our canonical case: It is the Core Banking System with the largest number of installations in Latin America, which has survived its competitors and technological changes for more than three decades. It started by generating its Core Banking System as a green screen system, and then evolved to Windows. Later on, they evolved to responsive web applications and to native mobile apps. Even today, it continues to evolve by incorporating new technologies regularly. They were only able to make these transitions easily thanks to the use of GeneXus.

“GeneXus helps us by creating applications with a future-proof approach. Each application is described independently of the technology, so that the applications can be generated automatically for all the platforms supported today and those that will arise in the future. It allows companies to keep their systems on the cutting edge of technology. It works as a technology insurance that protects their systems from future changes and allows them to focus on what is really important, which is their business.” Breogán Gonda, 2012.

Verdict: OutSystems, Mendix and GeneXus increase development productivity. However, only GeneXus is unbeatable when clients face a change in business, market or technology, because GeneXus allows them to evolve automatically.

Greater technological coverage

Once the foundations of the platform had been established, and a new way of modeling applications independently of technology had been designed, the work we faced during the following three decades was the creation of more and better code generators and databases to support each new technological wave.

While we started generating from PCs to build systems for AS / 400, we quickly began to expand our capabilities in response to the natural evolutionary pressures of technology. We went on to create applications in client-server mode, then applications for Windows, and later for the Web, generating native mobile applications. Now, we also simplify the integration of artificial intelligence services offered by the most important technology providers. We have always done this with a unique way of modeling applications: starting from the knowledge users have of their business, which is something independent of technology, and generating the technology as a by-product.

We started to grow in Latin America, working for the Spanish-speaking market; then we adapted GeneXus to the Portuguese market, and to English, Japanese, Chinese and the Arabic world, covering different languages and forms of writing. Currently, our clients generate applications with GeneXus for all imaginable industries in more than 55 countries, deploying applications in the most varied combinations (local, cloud, and hybrid modes), integrating and interoperating with the most varied services, technologies, platforms, and data providers.

This three-decade evolution across technologies, industries, and markets is unparalleled and positions GeneXus as the Development platform with the widest technological coverage in terms of both databases and generated languages. In addition, it positions GeneXus as the most experienced applying this technology to different markets, which makes it the most reliable option for those who are looking for the greatest flexibility and the highest technical capacity.

Verdict: Compared to OutSystems and Mendix, GeneXus has the greatest coverage of programming languages, databases, integration methods, and experience with languages, markets, industries and territories. Furthermore, GeneXus is the only one that has been in business for 30 years and can guarantee technological evolution.

A price for developers

Price and “Total Ownership Cost”: These are two other fundamental points in which Mendix and OutSystems differ from GeneXus. GeneXus is a product for developers, and charges per developer seat, regardless of the size of the applications generated, the number of lines of code, the number of objects described, or the number of end users of the application deployed to production. Therefore, the cost of buying GeneXus is increased per developer in the team, but is divided by each application generated and by the number of end users of those applications, unlike OutSystems and Mendix, which add a cost for each new application deployed to production and by the number of users that each application effectively has.

We at GeneXus know so little about the number of applications our customers make and for how many users that we have to organize the GeneXus International Meeting every year to find out what they are doing with our platform! (We have already organized 29 Meetings). Mendix and OutSystems are going another way: their cost is associated with the end users of each generated application, and not with how many developers use their platform, which makes their platforms several times more expensive.

This is why OutSystems and Mendix clients often approach us to find out more about our proposal: simply because these other platforms are very expensive alternatives when the number of end users of the applications is factored in.

Why do we have such a different perspective of the business? Because GeneXus' growth is self-financed, we do not depend on third-party capital and we are free to defend our philosophy in all aspects, including charging only per developer. For their part, Mendix and OutSystems have received large private investments that force them to be more aggressive and try to maximize the return on those investments. This causes them to run their companies with a different business model. Like them, we could charge much more to earn more, but we actively decide not to.

In addition, although GeneXus traditionally was focused on the corporate market that allowed for higher business volume, in the last 10 years we have begun to create products targeting different audiences with lower entry costs. This is why we created GeneXus for ISV, GeneXus for Startups, GeneXus for Students and we are currently working on new products and strategies, and in different subscription modes to help more people enter the world of software development.

Verdict: Compared to OutSystems and Mendix, GeneXus has the platform that seeks to simplify and democratize the use of automatic tools for software creation, trying to provide the best options and the greatest reliability for each client, not only from the technological point of view, but also from that of its price.

Who are the target users of Mendix and OutSystems Low-Code Development platforms and how does GeneXus position itself against them?

Although in a certain way they try to solve the same problem, from very different perspectives, the target audience of the different platforms is not the same.

Both Mendix and OutSystems have great solutions aimed at what Gartner calls “Citizen Developers;” that is, professionals who need to quickly develop applications to meet the needs of their businesses, but who do not necessarily have a technical profile and prefer a more visual approach to application modeling.

This visual approach to development is great for quick impact at the start of projects. Unfortunately, as you work on real and more sophisticated projects, you need tools other than the strictly visual ones to be able to respond flexibly and completely to requirements, without having to program by hand. In this regard, both Mendix and OutSystems are limited in different ways.

GeneXus, on the other hand, is focused on pragmatic programmers; that is, those looking for the most flexibility, at the lowest cost. Those who know that technology is going to change and don’t want to have to program the same for every new platform that emerges. Those for whom project success, deadlines, and reasonable costs are an important aspect to take into account. Also, for those who do not have all the resources they would like, but do not want to provide a poorer experience to their users or miss out on a new technology because they do not have the time to learn. GeneXus is for all those who consider that “what” is more important than “how.”

For this reason, GeneXus travels another path. We believe that having both visual and textual options for modeling applications allows us to achieve greater coverage of technologies as a Low-Code development platform than strictly visual modeling, which must necessarily be simpler. Although we have many visual tools, we at GeneXus know that strictly visual modeling greatly limits the flexibility and complexity of the applications that can be achieved. This is a very real problem, which affects our competitors when they are faced with creating sophisticated applications, which are not just a beautiful shell, for the real world.

In summary, although the three platforms are leaders in their respective categories, GeneXus outperforms OutSystems and Mendix mainly in the three most important points:

- Ability to evolve projects in terms of functionalities and any technology, current or future.
- Greater technological flexibility, and more languages, databases and supported platforms.
- Lower Cost, both in the short and in the medium and long term.

If you want to know more about GeneXus, please contact Jaime González to schedule a call or a Demo.

If you are intrigued to learn why Forrester classified us as **“the best low-code platform you’ve never heard of,”** write to us. We would love to show you why **GeneXus is the Low-Code platform you are looking for.**



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