



TOWARDS EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

with  Creator

FOREWORD

In this e-book, we share the story of Team Everest, a youth-run NGO that set out to bridge the education gap in the society through volunteering. Like any other organization, they had unique processes that conventional packaged software failed to address. What follows is a brief on how the organization underwent digital transformation with the help of custom apps built on Zoho Creator—a low-code application development platform.

WHAT'S IN STORE:

Team Everest	01
Before Zoho Creator	02
A change for the better	04
The digital volunteer	05
Staying mobile-ready	08
Did Zoho Creator deliver?	09



TEAM EVEREST

A good education is a way to empower. Educate one generation, and others will follow. While the education systems in many parts of urban India are at par with the best of the world, there are places where even primary schooling remains a luxury. It was this disparity that motivated Team Everest's founder, Karthee Vidya, to build a model institution with volunteering at the heart of its activities.



We have a dream where every person volunteers at least once a month.

Karthee Vidya

Founder and First Volunteer

Founded in 2006, Team Everest is one of India's largest youth-run non-profit organizations operating in six major cities in India. With 9500 volunteers and growing, the organization seeks to impart quality education to underprivileged children.

TEAM EVEREST BEFORE USING ZOHO CREATOR

In this section, we look at their volunteer and donor management processes—two functions pivotal to any non-profit.

Volunteer Management

Process:

The team sent emails to the volunteers informing them about upcoming events. Interested volunteers emailed back to confirm their availability. The team then manually entered volunteer details in a spreadsheet.

As an alternative to email, the team tried WordPress. They'd post a blog about the event, and volunteers commented to show their willingness to participate. Once the required number of volunteers registered, the comment section was disabled.

Drawbacks:

- The main drawback to using email was that they couldn't restrict the number of registrations. Though using WordPress helped them to overcome this problem, they found the overall process time-consuming.
- Since there was no automatic email trigger in place, the team had to manually send acknowledgement messages to volunteers.
- They had a lot of data about volunteers, but no way of analyzing and drawing insights from it.

Donor Management

Process:

Team Everest maintained a spreadsheet with donor information. They then manually tracked donor details, using bank statements. After the end of the campaign, they issued receipts.

Drawbacks:

- Identifying their donors was a tedious process. They had to scroll through endless bank statements to find the details.
- With spreadsheets, there was no way to generate e-receipts. The team had two employees manually issuing receipts to donors, which was both resource- and time-intensive.

“ Since we were issuing physical receipts, it took us a long time to send the receipts to the donors. This somehow affected our credibility.

Karthee Vidya

Founder and First Volunteer



A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

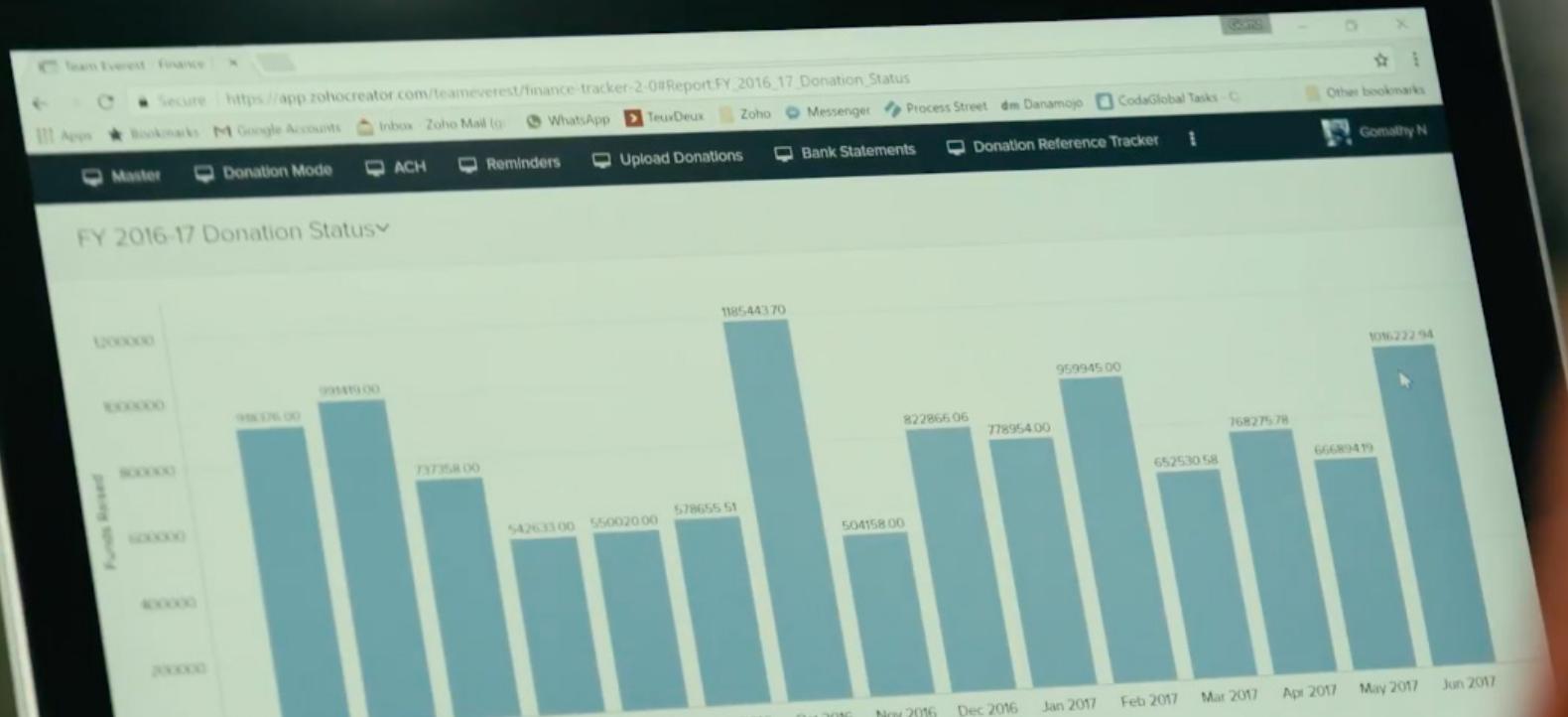
After three years of struggling with spreadsheets, WordPress, and Outlook, Team Everest set out on a search for a powerful platform—a platform that would allow them to customize applications to meet their specific needs.

We looked for a solution for three years, and luckily we came to know about Zoho Creator. We even evaluated a few other platforms, but none suited our needs. Unfortunately, very few options are available in the market for non-profits.

Karthee Vidya, founder and first volunteer

They were looking for a platform that:

- Was cloud-based and budget-friendly
- Had an easy-to-use and intuitive workflow builder that required less programming
- Helped them cut down on the time and resources spent on back-end development
- Allowed them to automate critical tasks and improve general productivity



THE DIGITAL VOLUNTEER

Team Everest was looking for a simple way to build applications, and that's precisely what Zoho Creator gave them. The platform's powerful drag-and-drop builder helped them develop feature-rich applications. It took the hassle out of the building process and reduced development time from weeks to hours.

Zoho Creator is like a canvas; you can build whatever you want with it. We love the drag-and-drop form builder. But the most favorite feature has to be Deluge scripting, because it gave complete control over the application.

Karthee Vidya, founder and first volunteer

Eight years later, the organization has built a number of applications, spanning operational domains like IT, finance, and resource management. Here's a brief look at a few of them.

Finance Tracker 2.0

The Finance Tracker 2.0 is a centralized application to track donations and expenses. The team uses it to record donation details, as well as bank statements. E-receipts are then automatically generated and sent to the donors.

One of the key aspects of Finance Tracker is donor tagging. This powerful reporting feature helps Team Everest gather more insight from collective donor data. For example, a tag that classifies the donors by the frequency of their donations assists the team in identifying first-time donors, as well as allowing them to study donation patterns.

Everest Ecosystem

A common pain point among all organizations is the amount of employee information they need to manage. Team Everest built this application for the sole purpose of maintaining employee data. Using Everest Ecosystem, the team tracks attendance, sends email, and issues pay slips.

“ With this app, we were able to automate about 80% of our manual work. It's almost a mini NGO-specific CRM, which we built using Zoho Creator.

Karthee Vidya

Founder and First Volunteer

iGift

Team Everest asks the children they support what they wish for, and stores the information in a unified database. That info is then shared with the donors, who donate to the wish they want to fulfill. When the process is complete, email and e-receipts are automatically sent to the donors.

Student Attendance Tracker

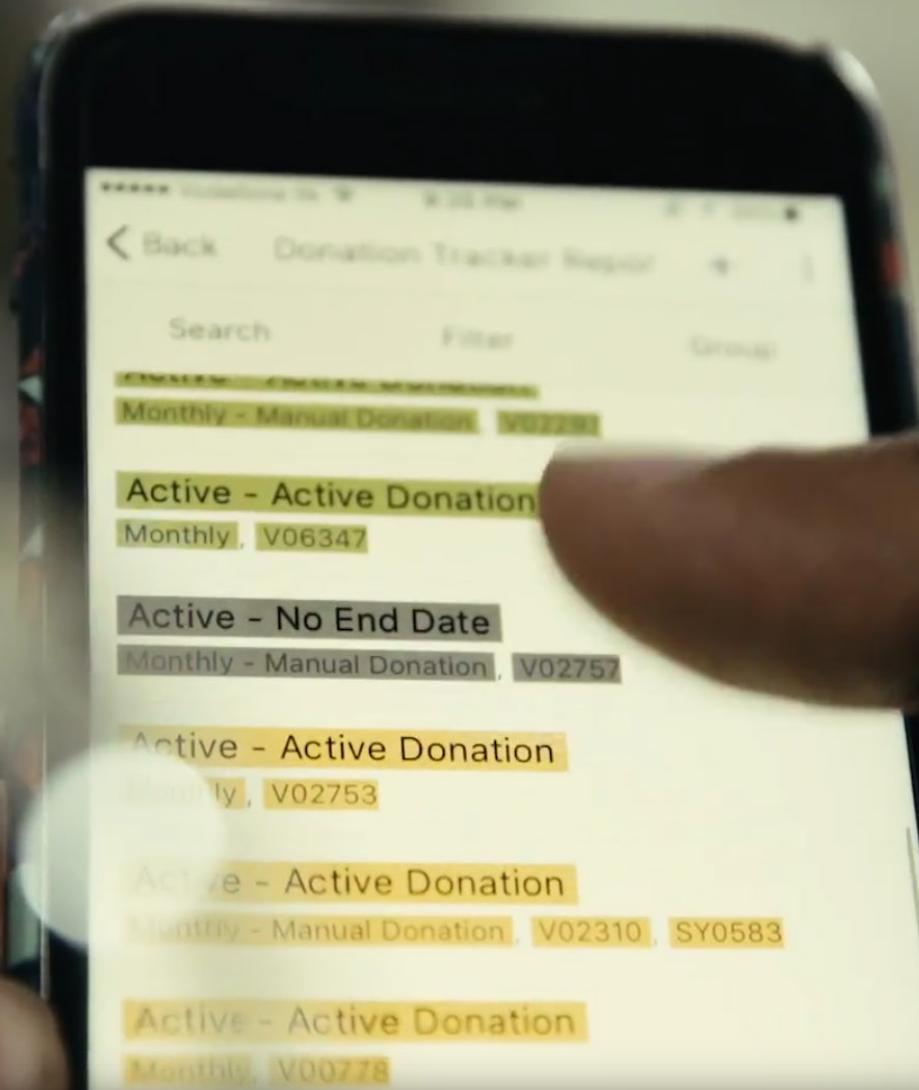
Over the years, Team Everest has organized several weekend drives, giving volunteers the opportunity to teach in government-run schools across different locations.

The volunteers use the attendance tracker to keep track of student attendance. The detailed report generated at the end of each session allows them to analyze the effectiveness of the event.

In addition to those mentioned above, Team Everest has built applications to automate their volunteer, donor, and event management activities.

“ A majority of the apps hardly took us a few hours or a day to build. 99% of the time, we didn't face any major issues, and the remaining 1%, the support team did a wonderful job with helping us fix it. We now have two people in the team who work on building custom apps on Zoho Creator.

Hanumantha Rao,
CTO and Marketing Officer



STAYING MOBILE-READY

With Zoho Creator, the apps were automatically available on Android and iOS devices as soon as they were built. The volunteers and teachers use the mobile app to track attendance and update student information. This comes in especially handy when the team organizes outdoor events.



DID ZOHO CREATOR DELIVER?

It did! Here are a few takeaways from Team Everest's journey with the low-code application development platform.



Influential scaling

Team Everest recorded a 400% growth within just two months of using Zoho Creator. The organization scaled from 1000 volunteers, one city, and 3.4 million rupees in donations (52k USD) to 9500 volunteers, six major cities, and 9.5 million rupees (145k USD).



The chain effect

The custom apps allowed the team to automate time-consuming manual daily activities. The automation quadrupled employee and volunteer productivity, saving over 30% of their previous annual costs.



Seamless integration

In today's work environment, apps rarely operate in isolation. With Zoho Creator, the team was able to integrate their applications with others, quickly and easily. That meant additional functionality through secure cross-channel accessibility.



Job efficiency

Using customized applications, employees saved up to 20 hours per week that they would have otherwise spent on repetitive tasks.

“ If you need to build custom software which suits your business, requires less programming knowledge, and development time, go for Zoho Creator. It's a one-stop solution for easy app building. This unique platform has helped us reduce the time we spent on manual work. For a small team like us, this made a huge impact. Now we can deploy our resources for impactful work.

Hanumantha Rao,

CTO and Marketing Officer

About Zoho Creator:

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

Great brands that trust us:



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

sales@zohocorp.com

US : +1 877 834 4428

UK : +44 (20) 35647890

Australia : +61 2 80662898

Spain : +34 918368598

India : +91 (44) 71817070