**Power Platform Usage Guide**

**1. Overview**

Microsoft Power Platform offers powerful low-code tools like **Power Apps**, **Power Pages**, and **Power Automate** to help build apps, websites, and automation workflows. Choosing the right tool depends on **your audience**, **interface needs**, and **security requirements**.

**2. Power Apps vs Power Pages**

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| **Feature** | **Power Apps** | **Power Pages** |
| **What it is** | App builder for internal business users | Low-code website builder for internal & external users |
| **Best for** | Internal business apps with a mobile-first design | Internal portals or external/public-facing sites |
| **Audience** | Internal users (licensed in Microsoft 365 tenant) | Internal or external users (AAD, B2C, local auth) |
| **Interface** | App-like (mobile/tablet/desktop) | Web portal with responsive, website-style design |
| **Authentication** | Microsoft Entra ID (AAD) only | AAD, Azure B2C, local auth, or anonymous access |
| **Use on mobile** | Optimized for mobile app experience | Mobile-responsive but browser-based |
| **Security** | Role-based via Dataverse | Web roles + granular table permissions |

**3. When to Use Power Apps**

Use **Power Apps** when:

* You're building **internal applications** for staff only.
* You need **mobile-first forms or rich data entry apps**.
* You're integrating tightly with Microsoft 365 (SharePoint, Outlook, Teams).
* You want **quick UI development** with advanced controls and logic.

**Common Scenarios**:

* Time-off request form
* Inspection checklist on a tablet
* Employee asset tracker

**4. When to Use Power Pages**

Use **Power Pages** when:

* You want to **build a secure web portal** for internal or external users.
* You need **branding and web-style layouts**.
* You want to **share data or workflows** with partners, vendors, or customers.
* You're building **internal dashboards or portals** that look more like websites than apps.

**Common Scenarios**:

* Internal employee portal with dashboard & training links
* Vendor onboarding or support portal
* Public job application or registration site
* Partner login portal for order tracking

**Power Pages for Internal Use**:  
Even for internal users, Power Pages can provide a **cleaner web-like experience** for scenarios such as HR portals, policy directories, or training dashboards—especially where mobile apps are not required.

**5. Power Automate & Desktop Flows**

**a. Power Automate (Cloud Flows)**

* Automate tasks like approvals, notifications, and data syncs.
* Works with Power Apps, Power Pages, Microsoft 365, and 3rd-party apps.

**b. Power Automate Desktop (RPA)**

* Automates tasks on your local desktop or VM (e.g., clicking buttons in legacy apps).
* Use **Desktop Flows** when:
  + There’s no API available
  + You need to work with Windows-only apps (e.g., SAP GUI, Excel macros)

**Deployment Tips for Desktop Flows**

* Use **unattended RPA licenses** for background processing
* Install: **Power Automate Desktop**
* Host on a dedicated **VM or physical device**

**6. Power Platform Licensing**

**Power Apps**

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| **License** | **When to Use** |
| **Included with Microsoft 365** | **Basic internal apps using SharePoint, Excel, etc.** |
| **Per App Plan** | **Users need access to 1 app with Dataverse or premium features.** |
| **Per User Plan** | **Users need access to multiple apps with full features.** |
| **Pay-as-you-go** | **Best for pilot projects or occasional users – billed via Azure.** |

**Power Pages**

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| **License** | **When to Use** |
| **Authenticated Users** | **Internal or external users with login access (per user/month).** |
| **Anonymous Users** | **Public website access (billed by page views).** |
| **Login Packs** | **For external users using Azure AD B2C login (e.g., 100 logins/month).** |
| **Internal User Access** | **Internal users can use Power Apps license to access Pages.** |

**Use Power Pages for both external and internal portals, especially where a clean web interface is better than a mobile app.**

**Power Automate**

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| **License** | **When to Use** |
| **Per User Plan** | **One user creating and running flows.** |
| **Per Flow Plan** | **One flow used by many people (e.g., approvals, alerts).** |
| **Process Plan (RPA)** | **Desktop automation (e.g., legacy apps, SAP GUI).** |
| **Free Desktop** | **Manual (attended) desktop automation on Windows 10/11.** |

**Dataverse**

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| **License** | **When to Use** |
| **Included in Power Apps Premium** | **Full Dataverse access.** |
| **Dataverse for Teams** | **Basic use inside Microsoft Teams.** |
| **Capacity Add-ons** | **Buy more storage if needed.** |

**Quick Tip:**

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| **Scenario** | **License** |
| **Build internal mobile app** | **Power Apps (Per App or Per User)** |
| **Build external customer/vendor portal** | **Power Pages (Authenticated/Login Pack)** |
| **Automate approval process** | **Power Automate (Per Flow or Per User)** |
| **Automate desktop tasks** | **Power Automate (RPA Process Plan)** |
| **Add more storage** | **Dataverse Capacity Add-on** |

**7. Infrastructure Checklist**

Ensure these items are in place for a smooth deployment:

**Power Platform Setup**

* Environments for **Dev**, **QA**, **UAT**, and **Prod**
* Configure **Power Platform Pipelines** for deployments.
* Use **Solutions** for structured deployments

**Data & Integration**

* Use **Dataverse** as the central data source when possible
* Connectors set up for:
  + SQL Server
  + SharePoint
  + External APIs (custom connectors)

**Security & Access**

* **Power Apps**: Set up roles, environment access
* **Power Pages**: Use Web Roles, Table Permissions, B2C/AAD auth if needed

**For Desktop Flows (RPA)**

* VM or machine with:
  + Power Automate Desktop
  + Access to systems being automated
  + Service account with proper permissions

**Deployment & Governance**

* CI/CD pipelines using Power Platform Pipelines or Azure DevOps
* Define **app standards, naming conventions, and documentation**
* Monitor via **Power Platform Admin Center**, **Application Insights**, or custom logging

**8. Summary – Quick Decision Table**

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| --- | --- |
| **Use Case** | **Recommended Tool** |
| Internal mobile app | Power Apps |
| Internal branded web portal | Power Pages |
| External customer self-service portal | Power Pages |
| Partner/vendor login site | Power Pages |
| Legacy desktop automation | Power Automate Desktop |
| Business process automation (email, forms) | Power Automate |
| Internal app + Microsoft 365 integration | Power Apps |