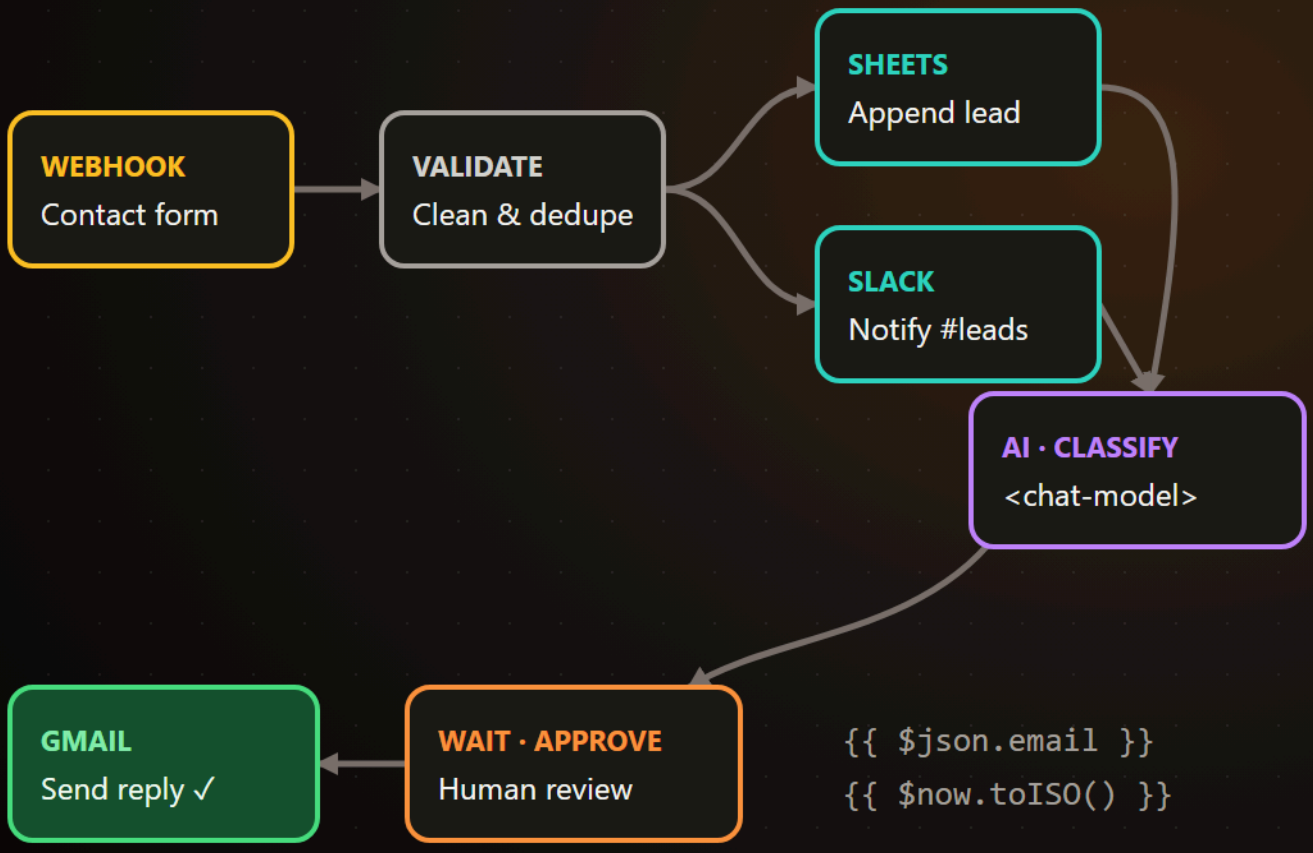


TRIGGERS · APIS · DATA · ERRORS · AI AGENTS · SELF-HOSTING

PRACTICAL WORKFLOW AUTOMATION

Automate Repetitive Tasks with n8n

From first flow to reliable, AI-assisted automations in production

Integrations, APIs, error handling, human approval,
AI agents, and self-hosting with Docker

NO-CODE · LOW-CODE · AI · SELF-HOSTED

THENEXBOOKS

Automate Repetitive Tasks with n8n

Practical Workflow Automation, Integrations, and AI Agents from First Flow to Production

First Edition

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Practical Workflow Automation, Integrations, and AI Agents from First Flow to Production

First Edition, 2026

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Loomwell, the running example in this book, is fictional, as are all people, clients, and companies in its examples. Any resemblance to real companies or products is coincidental.

Preface

Every organization has work that nobody enjoys and everybody repeats: copying form submissions into a spreadsheet, posting a heads-up in a chat channel, sending the same follow-up email, chasing overdue invoices, renaming and filing documents, compiling the same weekly numbers. Each task takes only a few minutes, which is exactly why it never gets fixed — and why, added up, it quietly consumes a surprising share of a small team's week.

n8n is a workflow automation tool that lets you connect the apps and APIs you already use and teach them to do that work for you. You build workflows visually by connecting nodes, you can drop into JavaScript or Python when you need to, and you can run it in the cloud or on your own server. Recent versions also make it straightforward to add AI steps — classifying messages, extracting fields from documents, drafting replies — while keeping a human in the loop where it matters.

This book is a practical guide to automating real work with n8n, from your first two-node workflow to a small automation estate running reliably in production. We explain *why* each technique works and where it breaks, not just *where to click*, and we follow one realistic organization throughout so every workflow builds on the last.

Who This Book Is For

- **Operations and admin staff** who want to eliminate copy-paste work without waiting for a developer.
- **Freelancers and small-business owners** who run their business on a handful of cloud apps.
- **Analysts and marketers** who move data between tools and build recurring reports.
- **Developers and IT staff** who want a fast, maintainable way to glue systems together — and to host it safely.

What You Will Learn

- How to spot automation opportunities worth the effort, and how n8n models workflows, items, and executions.
- Triggers, expressions, data mapping, transformations, branching, merging, and loops.
- Calling any API with the HTTP Request node, handling credentials and OAuth2, and using the Code node.
- Everyday automations with email, chat, spreadsheets, databases, files, forms, and scheduled reports.
- Error handling, sub-workflows, human approval, long-running processes, pagination, and rate limits.
- Testing and debugging with pinned data and execution history.

- AI steps and agents: prompts, structured output, tools, memory, document Q&A, and safe human review.
- Self-hosting in production with Docker, PostgreSQL, and queue mode; security, monitoring, and scaling.

How This Book Is Organized

Part I — Automation Foundations (Chapters 1–5) sets up n8n and explains how it thinks. **Part II — Core Building Blocks** (Chapters 6–10) covers transformations, logic, APIs, credentials, and code. **Part III — Everyday Automations** (Chapters 11–15) builds the automations most teams need first. **Part IV — Robust Workflows** (Chapters 16–20) makes them reliable. **Part V — AI Automation** (Chapters 21–25) adds AI safely. **Part VI — Production** (Chapters 26–28) covers hosting, security, and a complete case study. The appendices provide a cheat sheet, templates, a production checklist, and a glossary.

Each chapter includes practice exercises and ends with a **Key Takeaways** box for quick review.

The Running Example: Loomwell

Throughout the book we automate **Loomwell**, a fictional six-person creative studio that designs websites and brands and sells a small online course. Jess runs operations, Omar leads design, Priya is the developer who helps with code and hosting, and Dana, the founder, reads the weekly report. Loomwell runs on familiar tools — a website contact form, a Google Sheets CRM, Gmail, Slack, Google Drive, Stripe in test mode, and later a PostgreSQL database — and it has exactly the kind of repetitive work this book is about: leads to capture and follow up, invoices to chase, clients to onboard, files to organize, and reports to compile.

Versions and Conventions

Examples target recent versions of n8n. The editor evolves quickly, so we describe where things are rather than relying on exact positions, and we mark newer features as such. Workflows are shown as small diagrams followed by node-by-node configuration; expressions and code appear in `monospace`, such as `{{ $json.email }}`. AI examples use placeholders like `<chat-model>` instead of specific model names.

> **TIP**
> A recommended practice or a technique that makes your work easier.

> **NOTE**
> Background information, version details, or a useful aside.

> **WARNING**
>
> A common mistake or a behavior that can lose data, leak secrets, or spam real people.

Captions such as *Lead Intake › Code node "Score lead"* tell you which workflow and node an example belongs to.

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PART I

Automation Foundations

Finding work worth automating, getting n8n running, understanding how workflows, items, and executions behave, starting workflows with triggers, and mapping data with expressions.

1 · Why Automate
2 · Setting Up n8n
3 · How n8n Thinks
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CHAPTER 1 · PART I — AUTOMATION FOUNDATIONS

Why Automate: Finding Repetitive Work Worth Automating

Before you drag a single node onto a canvas, you need to know which work deserves automation and which work does not. This chapter gives you a practical method for finding, scoring, and designing automations — and introduces Loomwell, the small studio whose operations we will automate throughout the book.

A Monday at Loomwell

Loomwell is a six-person creative studio. It designs websites, builds brands, and runs a small shop that sells online courses. Jess is the operations lead, and on a typical Monday morning her to-do list looks like this: copy the weekend's contact-form messages into the `Loomwell CRM` spreadsheet, post each new lead in the `#leads` Slack channel so Omar (the lead designer) can see what came in, check the `Invoices` tab for anything overdue, write polite reminder emails from `hello@loomwell.example`, create a folder in Google Drive for any client who signed last week, and put together a short summary of the previous week for Dana, the founder.

None of these tasks is difficult. That is exactly the problem. Each one takes a few minutes, requires Jess to switch between four or five browser tabs, and depends on her remembering to do it. When Jess is on holiday, some of it does not happen. When the studio is busy, a lead sits unanswered for two days and quietly goes to another studio. When she copies an invoice number by hand, a typo sends a reminder to the wrong client.

Priya, the studio's developer, could write scripts for some of this, but her time is billed to clients. What Loomwell needs is a way for Jess — who understands the processes better than anyone — to build and maintain the automations herself, with Priya stepping in only for the occasional tricky piece. That is the space n8n was designed for, and it is the space this book lives in.

What n8n Is (and Is Not)

n8n (pronounced "n-eight-n", short for "nodemation") is a workflow automation tool. You build automations visually by placing **nodes** on a canvas and connecting them. Each node does one job: receive a web request, read rows from a spreadsheet, send a Slack message, call an API, filter a list, or run a few lines of JavaScript. A connected set of nodes is a **workflow**, and every time a workflow runs, n8n records an **execution** that you can inspect afterward.

Three characteristics make n8n a good fit for teams like Loomwell:

- **Visual first, code when you need it.** Most workflows need no code at all. When a built-in node cannot do something, the Code node lets you write JavaScript (and, in recent versions, Python) inside the same workflow rather than leaving the tool.
- **Hosting choice.** You can use n8n's managed cloud service, or you can self-host it on your own machine or server, for example with Docker. Self-hosting keeps data on infrastructure you control, which matters for client records and invoices.
- **Integrations plus a universal adapter.** n8n ships with nodes for many popular services, and the HTTP Request node can talk to almost any service that has a web API, even if no dedicated node exists.

n8n's source code is publicly available, but it is not "open source" in the strict sense defined by the Open Source Initiative. n8n describes itself as **fair-code**. The core product is distributed under the **Sustainable Use License**, and some enterprise features are covered by a separate enterprise license. In broad terms, the Sustainable Use License is designed to let you use and modify n8n for your own internal business purposes, while restricting certain commercial uses such as offering n8n itself as a hosted service to others.

> **NOTE**
>
> This summary is orientation, not legal advice. Licensing terms can change, and the details matter if you plan to embed n8n in a product, resell it, or run it for clients. Read the current license text in n8n's repository and documentation, and consult a legal advisor if your use case is anything other than automating your own organization's work.

n8n is also *not* a replacement for every kind of software. It is not a database (although it can talk to databases), not a full application framework, and not the right place to run heavy data processing that belongs in a dedicated data pipeline. It shines at glue work: moving information between systems, applying business rules, and notifying people at the right moment.

What Makes Work Worth Automating

A common mistake is to start with the tool and look for something to automate. A better approach is to start with the work. Some tasks are excellent automation candidates; others will cost more to automate and maintain than they will ever save. The following characteristics distinguish the two.

1. It happens often

Frequency is the first multiplier. A task that takes three minutes but happens thirty times a week is a much better candidate than a task that takes an hour but happens twice a year. Frequency also affects reliability: frequent tasks give you frequent feedback, so a broken automation is noticed quickly.

2. It follows rules you can write down

If you can describe the task as "when X happens, look up Y, and if Z is true, do W", it can probably be automated. If the honest description is "Jess reads it and decides based on experience", the task needs human judgment. Many real tasks are a mix: the rule-based part can be automated and the judgment part routed to a person. Chapter 18 shows how to build workflows that pause and wait for human approval, and Chapter 24 shows how AI can assist with some judgment-heavy steps under human review.

3. The inputs are digital and structured

A web form submission, a row in a spreadsheet, an email with a predictable subject line, a webhook from a payment provider — these are easy inputs. A scribbled note from a client meeting is not. Structure is a spectrum: an email body is semi-structured, and n8n can often extract what it needs from it, but the more structured the input, the simpler and more reliable the workflow.

4. The process is stable

Automating a process that changes every month means rebuilding the automation every month. If the team is still figuring out how onboarding should work, run it manually for a while, write down what actually happens, and automate once it settles. Automation freezes a process; make sure it is a process worth freezing.

5. Mistakes are costly or embarrassing

Copying data by hand introduces errors: a mistyped email address, an invoice reminder sent for an invoice that was already paid, a lead assigned to nobody. When a task's errors are expensive — lost revenue, confused clients, compliance problems — automation earns its keep even if the time saved is small, because a well-built workflow does the same thing the same way every time.

6. Delay hurts

Some tasks are not frequent, but timing matters. A new lead contacted within minutes has a very different experience from one contacted two days later. Automations run the moment their trigger fires, at night and on weekends, which makes them ideal for anything time-sensitive.

> **TIP**
>
> A quick test for any candidate task: try to write its steps as a numbered list on a single sheet of paper, with every decision expressed as an "if". If you finish the list without writing "use your judgment" or "it depends", you have a strong automation candidate.

What Not to Automate (Yet)

Knowing what to leave alone is just as important. The following are warning signs:

- **Rare, one-off work.** Migrating last year's invoices into a new format once is usually faster by hand or with a one-time spreadsheet formula than with a maintained workflow.
- **Relationship moments.** A personal note to a long-standing client after a difficult project should come from a person. Automation can *remind* someone to write it, but should not write it for them.
- **Unclear ownership.** Every automation needs an owner — someone who notices when it fails and knows how to fix it. If nobody would own it, it will quietly rot.
- **Processes nobody agrees on.** If two people do the task differently, automating it forces a decision. That can be healthy, but have the conversation before you build.
- **Irreversible actions without safeguards.** Deleting files, refunding payments, or emailing every client at once should not be the first things you automate. When you do automate them, add confirmation steps, limits, and logging (Parts IV and VI cover these patterns).

> **WARNING**
>
> An automation that runs silently and fails silently is worse than no automation, because people stop checking the work by hand. From your very first production workflow, decide how failures will be noticed. Chapter 16 builds Loomwell's `Error Handler` workflow, which posts to `#ops-alerts` whenever another workflow fails; until then, check your execution history regularly.

Running an Automation Audit

An automation audit is a short, structured exercise for finding candidates. It takes an hour or two for a small team and produces a prioritized backlog. Loomwell ran one in a single afternoon. Here is the method.

Step 1: Collect tasks for one or two weeks

Ask everyone to keep a simple log of recurring tasks they perform: what they did, what triggered it, which tools they touched, and roughly how long it took. A shared spreadsheet with four columns is enough. People are poor at remembering routine work after the fact, so a log kept in the moment is far more accurate than a brainstorm.

Step 2: Describe each task in trigger–action form

Rewrite each logged task as "When *trigger*, do *actions*, producing *outcome*." For example: "When the contact form is submitted, add the lead to the `Leads` tab and post it to `#leads`, so that someone replies the same day." This phrasing reveals the trigger (which becomes the first node of a workflow) and the outcome (which tells you how to judge success).

Step 3: Estimate frequency and effort

For each task, note how often it happens and how long it takes by hand. These are rough numbers, and that is fine; the goal is ranking, not accounting. Loomwell's estimates below are its own illustrative guesses for a typical month, not measured data or industry benchmarks.

Step 4: Score and rank

Score each task on a few dimensions and sort by total. A simple 1–3 scale works well.

Dimension	1 (low)	3 (high)
Frequency	Monthly or less	Daily or more
Rule clarity	Mostly judgment	Fully rule-based
Input structure	Free text, paper	Forms, rows, APIs
Error cost	Harmless	Lost money or trust
Time sensitivity	Can wait a week	Minutes matter

Subtract a point for tasks whose process is still changing, and subtract another if nobody is willing to own the automation. The exact formula matters less than applying the same one consistently across all tasks.

Loomwell's audit results

After the audit, Jess had a list of about twenty recurring tasks. The top of the ranked list looked like this (time figures are Loomwell's own illustrative estimates):

Task	Frequency	Est. manual time	Score	Workflow
Copy form leads to CRM and Slack	Several per week	5 min each	14	Lead Intake
Remind overdue invoices	Weekly	30 min	13	Invoice Reminders
Follow up leads with no reply	Weekly	20 min	12	Lead Follow-up
Set up new client folders	A few per month	15 min each	11	Client Onboarding
Weekly summary for Dana	Weekly	45 min	11	Weekly Ops Report
Sort support emails	Daily	15 min	10	Support Triage (AI)
Back up key Drive files	Weekly	10 min	9	Drive Backup

Notice what did *not* make the list: writing proposals (judgment-heavy, every one different), negotiating budgets (relationship work), and the annual tax preparation (rare, high-stakes, handled by an accountant). Those stay manual, and that is a good outcome of the audit, not a failure.

Also notice that the top task is not the one that takes the most total time. The weekly summary takes longer each time, but lead intake scores higher because it happens often, delays are costly, and the rules are crystal clear. Scoring on several dimensions keeps you from optimizing only for minutes saved.

The Anatomy of an Automation

Every automation you build in this book has the same basic shape, whatever tool it uses:

1. **A trigger** — the event that starts it: a form submission, a schedule, an incoming email, a change in another system, or a person clicking a button.
2. **Input data** — the information that arrives with the trigger, such as the fields of a form.
3. **Steps** — lookups, transformations, decisions, and actions performed on that data.
4. **Outputs and side effects** — rows written, messages sent, files created, responses returned.
5. **Observability** — a record of what happened, and an alert when something goes wrong.

Here is Loomwell's highest-scoring task, Lead Intake, sketched in that shape. We will build a first draft of it in Chapter 2, expand it throughout Parts I–III, and assemble the complete version in Chapter 14.

Lead Intake — design sketch

```
[Webhook: contact form]
        |
        v
[Validate & clean fields] --(invalid)--> [Respond 400 to form]
        |
        v
[Assign lead ID + score]
        |
        +--> [Google Sheets: append to Leads tab]
        |
        +--> [Slack: post to #leads]
        |
        +--> [Gmail: send thank-you to lead]
        |
        v
[Respond 200 to form]
```

A sketch like this is worth drawing before you open n8n. It forces you to answer questions that are easy to skip: What happens if the email field is empty? Should the thank-you email go out before or after the row is saved? What does the website show the visitor if something fails? Each question you answer on paper is a bug you will not have to debug later.

The data at the heart of it

Automations move data, so it helps to look at the data early. When a visitor submits Loomwell's contact form, the website sends a small JSON document to n8n. We will use this exact payload throughout the book:

Contact form payload (webhook body)

```
{
  "name": "Ava Chen",
  "email": "ava@bluefinch.example",
  "company": "Bluefinch Bakery",
```

```
  "service": "website redesign",
  "budget": 8000,
  "message": "We would love a fresh site before the holiday season."
}
```

If JSON is new to you, do not worry. It is simply a way of writing named fields and their values: text in quotes, numbers without quotes, and curly braces around the whole record. Chapter 3 explains how n8n wraps data like this into **items**, and Chapter 5 teaches you to pull individual values out with expressions such as `{{ $json.email }}`. For now, notice that every field has a clear name. That clarity is what makes the task automatable.

Designing Before Building: A One-Page Automation Brief

For any workflow that will run unattended, Loomwell writes a one-page brief before building. It is not bureaucracy; it takes ten minutes and saves hours. The brief answers seven questions:

1. **Purpose:** what problem does this solve, in one sentence?
2. **Trigger:** what starts it, and how often do we expect it to run?
3. **Inputs:** what data arrives, and which fields are required?
4. **Steps and rules:** the numbered list of actions and decisions.
5. **Outputs:** what changes in which systems when it succeeds?
6. **Failure behavior:** what should happen when a step fails — retry, skip, alert, or stop?
7. **Owner:** who maintains it, and who is the backup?

Here is the brief Jess wrote for Invoice Reminders:

Question	Answer
Purpose	Politely remind clients about unpaid invoices so Jess does not have to track due dates.
Trigger	Schedule, weekdays at 09:00 studio time.
Inputs	Rows in the `Invoices` tab: number, client, amount, due date, status.
Rules	Remind if status is "sent" and due date has passed, or status is "overdue". At most one reminder per invoice per week.
Outputs	Email from `hello@loomwell.example`; note in the sheet; summary to `#ops-alerts`.
Failure	Retry email sending; if still failing, alert `#ops-alerts` and do not mark as reminded.
Owner	Jess; backup Priya.

With the canonical records, this brief is immediately testable. Invoice `INV-2026-015` for client `C-202` (Harbor Lane Books), 950.00 USD, due 2026-10-01 with status "overdue", should receive a reminder. Invoice `INV-2026-014` for `C-201` (Bluefinch Bakery), 2400.00 USD, due 2026-10-15 with status "sent",

should not — at least not until its due date has passed. Writing down expected outcomes for known records like these gives you test cases before you have written anything.

> **TIP**
>
> Keep your briefs next to your workflows. n8n lets you add sticky notes to the canvas; pasting the purpose, owner, and failure behavior into a sticky note means anyone who opens the workflow understands it without hunting for a separate document.

Automation Patterns You Will Meet Again and Again

Once you have audited a few processes, you start seeing the same shapes. Naming them helps you recognize which techniques a new task will need.

Capture and route

Something arrives (a form, an email, a webhook) and needs to be stored and passed to the right person. Lead Intake is the classic example. Key techniques: webhooks and form triggers (Chapter 4), validation and branching (Chapters 6 and 7), writing to sheets and databases (Chapter 12).

Scheduled sweep

On a schedule, look through a list and act on the entries that match a condition. Invoice Reminders and Lead Follow-up are sweeps. Key techniques: the Schedule Trigger (Chapter 4), filtering and date logic (Chapters 5 and 6), and avoiding repeated actions on the same record.

Sync

Keep two systems consistent — for example, making sure every signed client in the `Clients` tab also has a folder under `Clients/` in Google Drive. Key techniques: comparing datasets, removing duplicates, and idempotent writes (Chapters 6, 12, and 13).

Digest

Collect events over a period and produce a summary. The Weekly Ops Report posts to `#weekly-report` every Monday for Dana. Key techniques: aggregation and formatting (Chapters 6 and 15), and optionally AI summaries (Chapter 24).

Approval

Prepare an action, ask a human to approve it, then carry it out. For example, draft a discount offer and wait for Jess to confirm. Key techniques: the Wait node and approval patterns (Chapter 18).

Triage

Classify incoming requests and send each to the right queue. Support Triage (AI) reads support emails, classifies them, and routes them. Key techniques: AI classification with human review (Chapters 21–25).

Estimating Value Honestly

It is tempting to justify automation with impressive numbers. Resist that temptation, especially when presenting to someone like Dana who will make decisions based on them. A good estimate is modest, transparent, and includes the costs.

A simple way to estimate the time value of a task is:

```
monthly minutes saved = runs per month x minutes per manual run
net benefit           = time saved - build time - ongoing maintenance
```

The second line is the one people forget. Every workflow needs maintenance: services change their APIs, credentials expire, a Google Sheet gets a new column, and someone has to update the workflow. For a simple workflow, maintenance might be a few minutes a month; for a complicated one that touches many systems, it can be much more. If a task saves ten minutes a month and will take a day to build and an hour a month to maintain, it is not worth it on time alone — though it might still be worth it for accuracy or speed of response.

For Loomwell, Jess estimated (again, the studio's own rough guess) that Lead Intake runs a handful of times a week and replaces about five minutes of copying each time. The bigger benefit, though, was not the minutes. It was that leads would be acknowledged within seconds instead of whenever Jess next checked the inbox, and that no lead would be forgotten during busy weeks. Those benefits are real but hard to measure, so she described them in words rather than inventing a number.

> **NOTE**
>
> Throughout this book, any time or cost figure attached to Loomwell is an illustrative estimate made up for the example. We do not quote industry statistics about time saved by automation, because such figures vary enormously between organizations and are easy to misuse. Measure your own processes instead.

Where n8n Fits Among Your Options

n8n is one of several ways to automate work. Understanding the alternatives helps you choose the right tool for each job — which is sometimes not n8n.

Approach	Strengths	Trade-offs

Built-in app automations	Zero setup; lives inside one tool	Rarely crosses tool boundaries
Hosted no-code services	Quick start, many connectors	Data leaves your control; pricing varies
n8n (cloud or self-hosted)	Visual, flexible, code when needed, self-host option	You design for failures; self-hosting needs upkeep
Custom scripts or apps	Unlimited flexibility	Needs a developer to build and maintain

Built-in automations are often the right answer for simple, single-tool rules: a spreadsheet's own notification rule, or an email client's filter. Reach for n8n when work crosses boundaries between tools, needs branching logic, or must be visible and maintainable by non-developers. Reach for custom code when the automation is really a product feature, needs very high throughput, or has requirements n8n cannot meet. Many teams use all of these together, and n8n can call scripts and APIs just as easily as it calls cloud services.

For Loomwell, the deciding factors were practical: Jess wanted to build the automations herself, Priya wanted a self-hosting option with JavaScript where needed, and Dana wanted one understandable system instead of a pile of disconnected tools.

Human-Centered Automation

Automations affect people: the colleagues whose work changes, and the clients who receive automated messages. A few principles keep automation humane and trusted.

- **Automate the chore, not the relationship.** Lead Intake sends an immediate acknowledgment, but Omar still writes the real reply. The automation buys him time and context; it does not pretend to be him.
- **Be transparent.** Automated emails should read naturally but should not claim to be personally written when they are not. A simple "we received your message and will reply within one business day" is honest and helpful.
- **Keep a manual override.** Every automation should have a documented way to pause it. In n8n, deactivating a workflow stops its triggers; make sure more than one person knows how.
- **Involve the people doing the work.** Jess knows the edge cases because she lives with them daily. The best automations are designed by, or with, the people whose tasks they replace.
- **Respect data.** Leads and clients trust Loomwell with their contact details. Only move the data a workflow needs, store credentials securely (Chapter 9), and avoid sending personal data to services that do not need it.

Loomwell's Automation Roadmap

With the audit complete, Loomwell turned its ranked list into a roadmap. The order is deliberate: early workflows are simple and teach the fundamentals, later ones build on them. The roadmap also doubles as a map of this book; the chapters listed are where each workflow features most prominently, and most workflows reappear elsewhere as examples.

Workflow	Pattern	Main chapters
Lead Intake	Capture and route	2–4, 14
Invoice Reminders	Scheduled sweep	4, 11–12
Lead Follow-up	Scheduled sweep	7, 18
Client Onboarding	Sync	13, 17
Weekly Ops Report	Digest	15
Drive Backup	Scheduled sweep	13
Support Triage (AI)	Triage	22, 24
Error Handler	Observability	16

The whole system comes together in Chapter 28, where we review Loomwell's operations end to end: which workflows run, how they share data through the `loomwell_ops` PostgreSQL database, how failures are reported, and how the team maintains everything over time.

How to read this book

Parts I–III require no programming. You will use expressions — short snippets inside double curly braces — to reference data, and optional Code node sections teach just enough JavaScript for the cases where built-in nodes fall short. Part IV makes workflows robust, Part V adds AI, and Part VI covers running n8n in production. If you are a developer, you can move faster through the early chapters, but do not skip Chapter 3; n8n's item-based data model is the single most important concept to understand, and misunderstanding it causes most beginner bugs.

Every chapter uses the same Loomwell data, so you can build along. You do not need access to Loomwell's real tools, because Loomwell is fictional. Where a chapter uses Google Sheets, Slack, or Gmail, you can connect your own test accounts, or substitute placeholder nodes and pinned sample data (introduced in Chapter 3) while you learn. Where a chapter calls the fictional Loomwell Portal API at `https://portal.loomwell.example/api`, you can substitute any REST API you have access to, or a public test API.