



Why is ALM Important?

What does it really do?

Whether your company is in the investigation stage or has implemented SOA, SaaS or ALM, the enterprise today is full of acronyms that represent both new technologies and methodologies to manage them. That last acronym is unique because it is both a technology and method all at once. Application Lifecycle Management, or ALM, is about the best practices for software development, management and delivery; typically in that order.

Beyond technology, ALM is a methodology because it requires certain behavior around best practices from software developers (an example being team collaboration).

Application Lifecycle Management allows developers to not only collaborate and manage the entire software creation process, but true ALM technologies also create “installers” to deliver the application to end-users. The creation of installers, whether native, managed or integrated installers is tantamount to success for achieving an ALM-ready enterprise, and it gives the company the power to deliver technologies to their customers in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

The top-shelf ALM technologies provide security tools as well by allowing for version updates, bug fixes and enhancements while in a persistent “Hacker Awareness” mode, which monitors the software and its installation environment. Today’s best ALM solutions will provide this ‘phone home’ functionality that alerts the company’s IT staff if predefined software specs are violated.

Finally, the very best ALM technologies will not only provide collaborative environments for developers, but also utilize the same mechanisms to deliver products to end-users.

Standardize the process

Developers are a lot like artists, each bring their own methods and ideas into the enterprise mix; and that's a great thing when creativity, problem solving, and developing unique business opportunities arise. Every business needs a diverse group of application developers to stay competitive and relevant. In execution though, the organization must be standardized on technologies and methods so as to be cost-effective, continually unique, and most importantly - on-time and on-budget with project deliverables.

Using ALM technologies, the enterprise can get their diverse teams standardized on what tools, version numbers, and operating systems are present on their desktop. By standardizing the process the enterprise saves time by automating the delivery of these technologies to end-users; saves money by utilizing the time each individual and team spends to get “on board” with the rest of team(s). And, ALM technologies keep projects on-time as developers are up and running quickly; other team members collaborate on bug fixes and project workarounds, and the project can be delivered to end-users using the very same technology that created the project.

Running smoothly... now what?

The different teams are now standardized on sanctioned tools and machines and everyone understands and contributes to the project as originally expected. But, once the application project is complete the enterprise needs to deliver it to its users.

Typically a company, whether shipping software to internal staff or end-users, uses a delivery process that takes several known routes. An IT manager can e-mail the zipped application to customers, set-up a URL and direct users to a website where they can download it, or use a peer-to-peer network where the users and the enterprise are directly connected. In earlier times, a CD was mailed to customers or passed around the office to share new software. The truth is, all these methods work, though there are new and efficient ways to send software to customers. Ways that save money, time and headaches.

Utilizing ALM technologies, an enterprise can build different types of installer(s) in a matter of hours, white label the installer with any type of corporate branding or sales message, then launch the installer to its user base where once loaded the software begins to download. Basically, an enterprise built the bullets (the application) and now they built the rifle (delivery) to fire off software to customers at will. This approach is beneficial because it allows complete control and management of the application installation process, it's fast and easy for users to understand as it takes very little effort to download software in this way, and it allows for an enterprise to up-sell other software products or enhancements during the download process.

Manage the application

The application has been delivered and it is a well constructed program that now requires regular maintenance. It is in the care of millions of users and they are happy with how the application performs and the ways in which it lives up to its promises, though like all software, it has bugs that need fixing. ALM technologies are perfectly suited to not only allow for real-time bug fixing but in-depth enhancements can be made and automatically sent to the user's desktop. An IT team can make repairs to the application while also adding new features that have been requested; since they are standardized on the same tools and collaborating in an efficient manner, the management process is saving both time and money as these steps were implemented during the first stage of developing software, collaboration for development stage.

Once the application has been updated, the IT manager simply re-deploys the software and it shows-up as an "update" on the user's desktop. This method requires the least amount of interruption to the customer because it means they only have to accept the update and keep going about their business.

ALM is just that good...

The evolving software marketplace means that companies must stay competitive in order to survive. Whether adopting agile methods, embracing new technologies and hiring the very best developers on the market, using ALM throughout the entire process relieves many existing burdens in software development process and allows enterprise teams to focus on their core mission – delivering software to their customers.

To learn more about how ALM technologies can help your company, contact Genuitec today to see how ALM can help you work better, faster, and smarter.

Learn more about [Pulse](#) today. Contact Genuitec toll-free at: (+1) 214-224-0461 or info@genuitec.com

