

Accelerate application development with HPE ALM

Centralized HPE ALM environment harnesses the solution's power while driving enterprise efficiency

Objective

Enable more effective and efficient applications development workflows

Approach

Offer consolidated, enterprise application lifecycle management platform to reduce project overhead while facilitating improved collaboration

IT Matters

- Majority of HPE's development projects are being managed on three HPE ALM farms
- The largest farm has 50,000 users
- 2,000 active projects today
- At the height of the separation, the ALM environment supported 5,000 active users daily

Business Matters

- 200 ALM projects consolidated to seven
- Enterprise HPE ALM fosters enterprise collaboration among development teams
- Security easier to manage, reducing security risks



Efficiency = simplification + consolidation. The formula is no secret—but putting that formula into practice takes attention and effort.

A great example can be found within Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE).

Over the years, the majority of the company's applications development teams embraced HPE Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) software to manage their development projects. Today, over 2,000 projects are being managed in HPE ALM; these include agile, waterfall and hybrid development workflows.

More recently, HPE reviewed the way HPE ALM is used and the level of collaboration between HPE's development teams. Based on that review, HPE decided to consolidate the environment from over 200 HPE ALM projects to seven.

The result is one of the largest HPE ALM implementations in the world—and a story that demonstrates how global companies can drive efficiency while leveraging HPE ALM to accelerate innovation.

Popular solution, widespread organic adoption—ripe for consolidation

HPE first examined the company's HPE ALM environment as part of a broader initiative to drive efficiency in application lifecycle management. "There's been a big push to consolidate tools and simplify the IT ecosystem," explains Douglas Fisher, IT Project Development, HPE.

HPE ALM was a natural candidate for consolidation, because the application development solution was well-established

“Adopting HPE ALM as a centralized, enterprise platform works—and works well.”

– Douglas Fisher, IT Project Development, HPE

and highly popular within HPE’s business units as well as the corporate IT organization. Fisher attributes the solution’s widespread, organic adoption to its powerful functionality: HPE ALM gives developers end-to-end visibility and control, from requirements management through testing, defect, and change requests. “Also, as HPE ALM software has matured, its functionality has become increasingly comprehensive,” Fisher adds. “For example, because the latest version supports traceability between requirements and testing, developers could retire their standalone requirements management tools. That was a huge plus for the users.”

After deciding to offer HPE ALM as a centralized, IT-managed service, HPE turned its attention to maximizing adoption.

One area HPE IT addressed was the solution’s performance. The hardware platform that runs the centralized HPE ALM service is HPE BladeSystem Servers. Initially, these servers were configured with 8 Gbytes of RAM, but as development teams began to come on board, HPE IT realized that it needed to increase the server memory to 64 Gbytes to meet the teams’ growing performance requirements.

“HPE ALM is highly customizable, and that is by design” Fisher explains. “It is very easy to add fields and functionality.” As a natural consequence of HPE ALM’s customizability, under the old, decentralized model, every instance of solution was unique—each team that deployed it also customized it. However, as HPE IT examined these deployments, it identified a great deal of commonality underlying these customizations. “We were supporting over 2,000 projects, each with its own custom workflow,” Fisher says. “It was unsustainable. If there was an issue with workflow code, we’d have to modify every workflow individually.”

So HPE IT decided to leverage HPE ALM’s template feature. “We created templates around pre-defined feature-based and list-based workflows. They provide a set of features that users can turn on or off depending on their needs.”

The HPE ALM templates harness the flexibility of the solution, while also making it simpler for HPE to manage. “If there is a problem with a template that we need to troubleshoot, we can do it in one place, instead of hundreds,” Fisher says.



Facilitating collaboration, coordinating work streams

Today, a majority of HPE's development projects are being managed on three HPE ALM farms. The smallest of the farms supports around 15,000 users; the largest around 50,000. The farms are organized to facilitate collaboration among development teams. Teams coordinating work streams on major IT projects, for example, are grouped in the same HPE ALM farm to make it easier to integrate those work streams. (The HPE ALM template also includes a field to record the project's HPE Project and Portfolio Manager ID number; this further facilitates tracking projects across teams if needed.)

This centralized HPE ALM deployment allowed HPE IT to consolidate to seven HPE ALM projects, significantly reducing the complexity of the HPE technology infrastructure. This consolidated environment enables development teams to collaborate more effectively and efficiently.

By having a centrally managed ALM environment, HPE IT is also better able to address potential security issues on an enterprise basis in a timely manner.

Ultimate test: supporting high-pressure business demands

A centralized HPE ALM environment also equips HPE IT to respond more effectively to out-of-the-ordinary business challenges—as was demonstrated in 2015, when HPE separated from HP Inc.

The company's IT resources played an enormous role in facilitating the split: every enterprise IT system had to be re-defined, re-configured, and re-deployed before the two businesses could disentangle their business workflow and management processes. This, in turn, meant that the HPE IT Separation

Management Office (SMO) spent 9.5 high-pressure months developing and testing the applications that HPE needs to operate—some 2,600 applications, about 300,000 test cases and around 7,500 testers in all.

The stakes were high. The launch of HPE as an independent company was a highly visible event. Wall Street, the business community, HPE's customers, and HPE's competitors were all watching closely. And the deadline wasn't negotiable. On November 1, 2015, HPE's business IT needed to be ready to go.

HPE ALM environment therefore proved an invaluable resource to the development teams working on the separation project. At its height, the environment supported 5,000 active users daily.

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Some of that value derived from the solution's functionality. By automating end-to-end management of the SMO development projects, HPE ALM optimized project workflows, accelerating development cycles while enabling teams to meet applications quality standards.

The application lifecycle management solution allowed the SMO to establish a common, consistent project nomenclature to facilitate efficient communication and collaboration. “Everything was tied together by release,” Fisher explains, “from requirements to defects tracking to testing.”

Case study

HPE on HPE ALM

Industry

High Tech

Customer at a glance**Primary hardware**

- HPE BladeSystem Servers
- Application and Repository servers are Linux®-based

Primary software

- HPE Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) software
- Oracle database running on HPE-UX

And it helped ensure that project leaders and managers had full visibility into project status. “Status information is all tracked centrally,” says Fisher. “People didn’t have to spin their wheels, sending out multiple emails, to find out whether an application test was complete and what the results were.”

By optimizing development efficiency, collaboration, and visibility, HPE ALM played an enormous role in the successful launch of Hewlett Packard Enterprise. “We already knew that HPE

ALM was a valuable development asset,” says Fisher. “Our experience supporting the SMO demonstrated that by offering HPE ALM as a centralized, enterprise solution, companies can multiply that value significantly.”

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