



Seven Reasons Why Development, Operations, and IT Management are All On Board With the Rocket ALM Hub

Seven Reasons Why Development, Operations, and IT Management are All On Board With the Rocket ALM Hub

A White Paper by Rocket Software

Version 1.2 May 2014

© Rocket Software, Inc. or its affiliates 1990 – 2014. All rights reserved. Rocket and the Rocket Software logos are registered trademarks of Rocket Software, Inc. Other product and service names might be trademarks of Rocket Software or its affiliates.



Seven Reasons Why Development, Operations, and IT Management are All On Board With the Rocket ALM Hub



The Good, the Bad and the Not So Ugly

There's never been a more exciting or more challenging time to be in the application development world. Whether you are...

- ❖ building for mobile,
- ❖ adding collaboration tools,
- ❖ supporting cloud,
- ❖ synchronizing multi-platforms,
- ❖ incorporating new department and compliance processes,
- ❖ or deploying to even more servers

...the industry is in explosive growth mode. But it can get incredibly stressful for all those involved. Market conditions today demand that organizations perform better, or at a higher level with fewer resources while making the most of current and past technology investments. The challenge to maximize the return on legacy solutions and tie them to growth is more important than ever. Everyone in development, operations, and IT management needs to elevate their game to properly drive and manage it all—and the time is now.



“A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.” There is no better example of the importance of this than with the application development lifecycle and all its moving parts. If any system, code, process, or workflow breaks down at any time and becomes a “weak link” it can be devastating for an organization’s business. And the reality is, widespread failures and outages happen every month. Recently, a major urban transit organization was unable to operate for several hours because of a failed software upgrade. Commuters were stranded for hours because of the software glitch! And everyone knows that the federal government’s new healthcare program was almost derailed due to software delivery problems. Yes, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. But by making the entire process visible and tightening all the links between the moving parts, we can significantly strengthen the entire chain of software delivery.

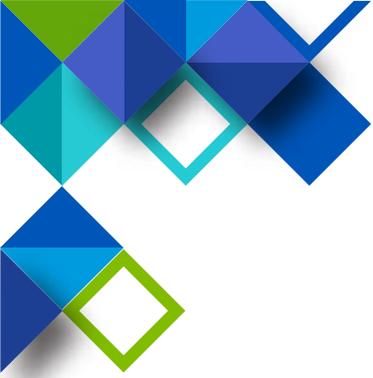
High performing IT organizations don’t get that way by accident! They have the tools they need to rapidly and nimbly respond to the needs of the market. They choose to operate with strategic technology and best practices with an emphasis on real-time visibility and automation. This helps them produce quality products, on-time and on-budget, while keeping teams synchronized. It’s never been more important for the development, operations, and IT management world to adopt this approach and for good reason. Enter the Rocket® Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) Hub—your new strategic differentiator.

What is the Rocket ALM Hub?

The Rocket ALM Hub is your real-time, anytime, anywhere control center for everything related to your software development and delivery organization—so you can determine the health of your applications at all times and take needed action. Whether it’s code, projects, deployment status, workflow, testing, release progress, operations, processes, reports, dashboards, or hardware status—the ALM Hub provides instant updates on it all. Is the development director asking, “Is the Release moving forward on schedule?” Does a programmer want to know, “Do I have the latest build?” Do the operations people know “What are all the parts of the upgrade and to which systems do they need to be delivered?” Is every team member aware of the tasks they need to perform and when those tasks need to be completed? The ALM Hub has your answer and empowers you to act on it. It also is platform-agnostic so you can perform synchronized deliveries across multiple platforms, that include updates on your UNIX/Linux boxes, your cloud servers, your Windows machines and your IBM i. And you have complete visibility to the entire deployment process or into specific parts of the operation. It’s like Google Earth for your application lifecycle, where all the data is tracked and accessible to you and you can zoom in and out depending on how granular you need to be at the moment.

Why the ALM Hub is the Ultimate Game-Changer

On the following pages, we’ve highlighted the seven biggest reasons that businesses are adopting the ALM Hub and what it can do specifically for development, operations, and IT management today!



1 You will get immediate visibility, coordination and control across distributed systems, distributed teams, and distributed tools. (Yes, all that!)

Your teams might be spread across various geographic locations, departments, or working with different platforms and software change management (SCM) solutions. You may have one team working on the IBM i with a sophisticated software change management system, but another working on Linux with Subversion or CVS or another SCM. Are some teams working in Eclipse with others working in Visual Studio or using additional IDEs? Are you able to automate consistent processes across those environments? Can it be frustrating to keep track of projects, code, deployments, people and release status?

The ALM Hub puts everyone onto the same process-based system—regardless of platform, language, server use, or location—so you can have total visibility across IT and your teams can maximize productivity. You can manage promotion and deployments, automate testing and compliance workflows, compare and merge changed files and generate detailed activity reports across multiple platforms and operating environments. The built-in services metadata registry makes it easy for developers to navigate and instantly access all application services. It will help you easily identify, find, and reuse code from different applications. The ALM Hub also has role-based views so that engineers, project leads, development managers, and senior IT management can get up-to-date status on any project at any stage of the development lifecycle, in a reporting structure that makes the most sense for them.

The ALM Hub adds the safety net you always wanted to ensure complex environments do not impact your business. You are able to quickly and easily mitigate the risk of managing multiple environments and manual processes.

2 You can manage by mobile! The health of your network can be addressed instantly.

When it comes to time-sensitive deployments or even system failures, the “I’ll get back to you” method of communication will simply not cut it. With the ALM Hub, you can use your smartphone or tablet to access any and all information in the system. From a single screen, you can track project status, view service request completion, initiate or back out changes, and make sure processes are being enforced. You can see who’s working on what code, who may be breaking workflow, or if someone hasn’t approved a step in the workflow and is now holding up a critical process. You are able to view each and every IT asset you have, their interdependencies, and what happens if you change them—and all straight from your mobile device.

The ALM Hub gives you the ability to drill-down and act immediately. Now, whether you are leaving the office or out on the road, you are empowered to fix things and make decisions regardless of where you are.



3 The ALM Hub does not discriminate! Everyone can use the tools, environments, languages and methodologies they are accustomed to, and you get to manage it all from one spot.

The ALM Hub is both open and flexible in nature, allowing for integration with other IT systems, a wide variety of tool options, and support for any process methodologies so users can pursue a "best-of-breed" strategy. It supports numerous technical standards (e.g., Eclipse, Microsoft, web service APIs, etc.) to give you the flexibility to choose the right tool for your IT organization.

With the ALM Hub, there are also no limitations on what kind of application objects can be managed, promoted, distributed, or the kinds of distributed environments. From source code, object code, HTML, PERL and ASP to graphics, audio and other content—to any platform, whether it's UNIX, Linux, Windows, Cloud, mainframe, or IBM i—every object is managed appropriately, facilitating automation, maximizing ease-of-use, and ensuring synchronization. So go ahead: build, test, and promote that new banking app to a banking kiosk in Brazil while updating your backend servers in New York and sending client changes worldwide to your Windows users. Your ALM Hub will automate the entire process regardless of platform, objects, or location.

And if you need to be compliant and are subject to IT audits, having everyone on the ALM Hub solution is a no-brainer. Ultimately, the ALM Hub will serve as the central nervous system managing every stage of the application development, enforcing your processes and providing visibility to managers and auditors—regardless of other tools and standards.

4 You can deploy to distributed targets worry-free and check on status (and fix things) from anywhere.

With the ALM Hub, it's all about pain-free deployment and automated moves-to-production. Rather than relying on scripts or manual procedures to create compliant move-to-production processes, your ALM Hub provides a simple point-and-click setup function for selecting the application changes you want released and their target destinations. Once the workflows are defined for the various stages of the lifecycle, the system enforces and automates them, relieving the staff of that administrative burden. This saves time, users make fewer mistakes, and productivity is increased.

If there are any problems during the deployment, you can use your mobile device to review status and logs and take remedial action. The ALM Hub also has a built-in safety net that allows you to back out a problem deployment. With its features such as smart labeling and built-in project manifests, you can easily restore systems back to a previously labeled state. For testing purposes or to set up a new system on a network, you can replicate a deployment package or an application version to another machine. And the best part is you can do this anywhere at any time from your mobile device.



With the ALM Hub, you can also seamlessly merge releases without ever losing version and historical information in the merged release. You just need to define a release (version of an application) which allows you to manage and track all associated development. It even notifies users when a change in one release might conflict with changes in another release.

5 Now aligning with DevOps processes and best practices is easy for everyone.

From the IT operations side of the house, the ALM Hub will get you totally synchronized with what's going on with the application development lifecycle. With the single-point-of-control that the ALM Hub provides, you will be able to follow the release management process as defined by you or IT operations from the moment a change is committed, through the build process and on to final deployment. This workflow is completely configurable to meet the individual business requirements that your organization has established. You start by defining and setting up the deployment profile which tells where the build items are sent at each stage.

The ALM Hub will automate all your IT-related business processes. With simple point-and-click procedures, you will be able to define a portfolio of processes that meet your application development requirements. For example, only promote source code when certain criteria have been met, e.g., unit testing has been performed, or the end users have signaled their acceptance. Then set it and forget it. Once these processes are in place, the ALM Hub will automate the workflows. Staff will be notified when they have tasks to perform and artifacts will move through the appropriate lifecycle stages.

6 The reports, dashboards, and metrics rock! Get empowered to make better business decisions.

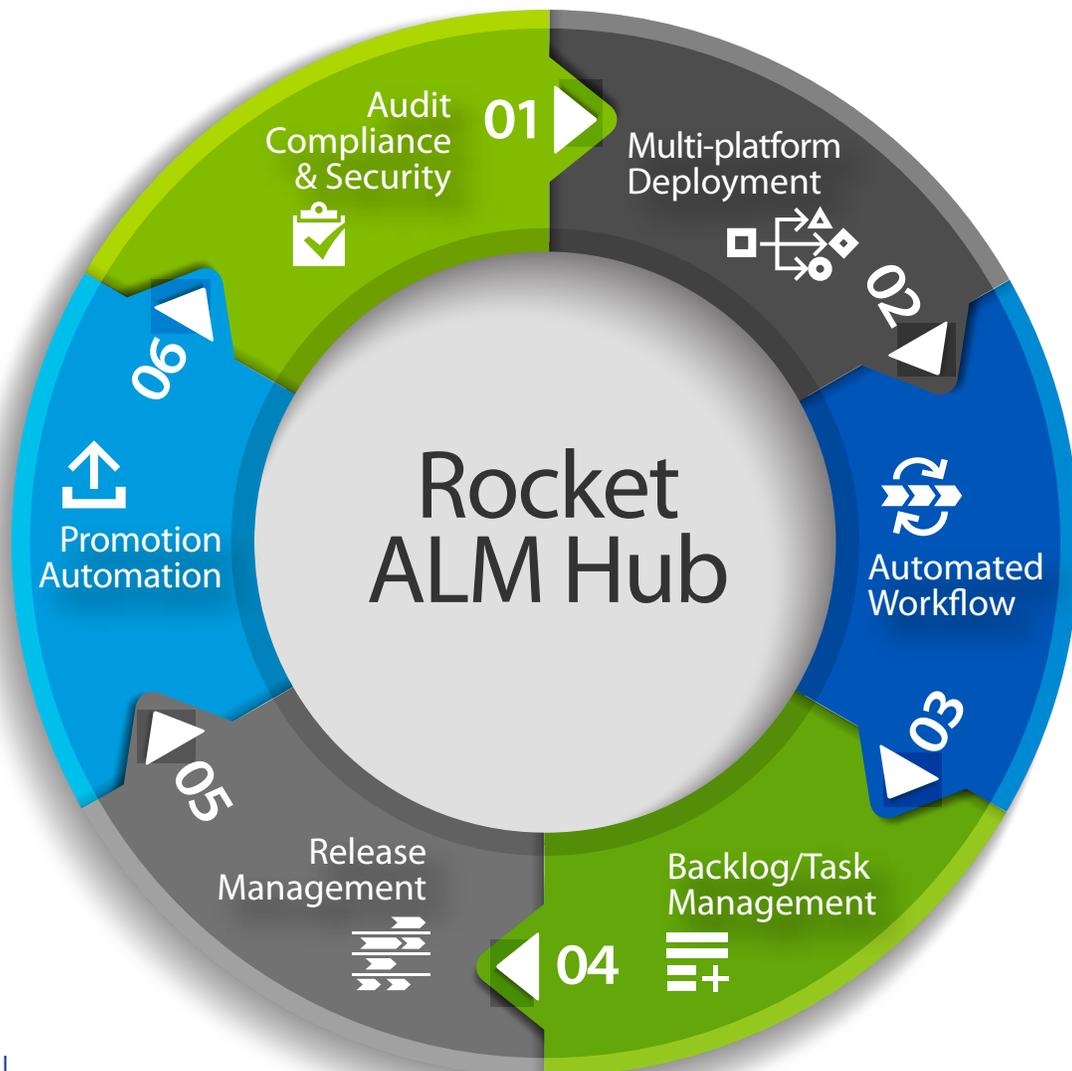
Metrics, dashboards, and reporting can often be the most important piece in choosing the right ALM solution. Regardless of how busy your IT group is or how complex the architecture, you want to be able to quickly access real-time information on productivity, staff utilization, application development progress, incident resolution statistics and other historical data to improve and optimize your development process. The ALM Hub comes with customizable reports and dashboards that offer instant overviews of project status, metrics, and key performance indicators. It also includes a variety of report templates, from general SLA reports, to ITIL to Sarbanes-Oxley, to HIPAA compliance reports. The reports are role-based so whether you are in development, operations, or IT, you can produce and display the information in a way that makes sense for you. Bottom-line is that the ALM Hub will provide you with the visibility and information you need to properly deploy resources and assess the return on IT projects.



7 You can say goodbye to compliance reporting nightmares.

Are you compliance-challenged and dreading the next IT audit? Does your IT group need to provide reports on who has touched what code, where the code is, what changes have been made to it, and then present it in an organized fashion? Are your teams working from different platforms and SCM solutions and finding information is making you feel like a hunter and gatherer and not an engineer? The ALM Hub is the perfect answer!

By putting everyone onto the same centralized system, you'll get one-click promotions and deployments while enforcing repeatable, traceable, auditable processes across IT. You will also easily deliver reports with all the historical data that most audits require, including service request history, application change activity, authorizations and approvals, and incident trails. It becomes a one-stop compliance shop.





You'll Soon Find You Can't Live Without the ALM Hub

IT is in a constant state of flux. Business users are expecting the latest and greatest like never before. Because of this, development and operations teams are expected to deploy fixes and functionality faster than ever before. Which means the more complex your IT environment and development and release processes become, the more points of failure proliferate.

This is why the ALM Hub has become a must-have solution to monitor and orchestrate all the moving parts, processes, and people that touch the application lifecycle. Its ability to seamlessly bring together systems and workflows will minimize manual challenges and maximize productive collaboration. From anytime, anywhere mobile access, to end-to-end process automation, to error-free deployments, to point-and-click compliance reports to new levels of visibility, you will find that once you adopt the ALM Hub you won't know how you survived without it!

The ALM Hub from Rocket Software: your organization's key for unlocking business growth, doing more with existing technology investments & resources, and the compliant development "safety net" across your entire enterprise.

For more information on where to get an ALM Hub, contact Rocket Software at @rocketsoftware.com.

