



Flexagon FlexDeploy - Customer Case Study

The Need for Speed at Scale

Background

One innovative technology company had a reputation for delivering automation solutions for their customers. Internally, they were asking questions such as “how can we make life better for our engineers which result in faster and more agile and effective delivery of software solution for our business?” The Sr. Manager of the 120+ engineer strong Order Management team realized that he needed to scrutinize his processes and tooling, which were already heavily automated. Order Management was a critical business process, and the team had a lot of pressure to deliver quality updates across a large customized footprint and increase the velocity of change.

Challenges:

After taking an internal assessment he realized they were spending 20% or more of their time in code management and deployment processes. The company was using multiple products including HP PPM/Kintana and Stat, however these tools still required scripting and manual steps to fully execute delivery. “This was a nightmare,” he explained. Even with the relatively high amount of time spent in deployment management and automation, errors were still happening too frequently, causing headaches and taking time away from software development.

The company was moving to an agile software delivery process which compounded and magnified the challenges. The group found they were not able to easily answer release management or senior level executive questions about release status (e.g. how many user stories were complete, which objects were deployed, etc.), and couldn’t keep up with the increased speed demanded from agile methodologies. Manual and scripted approaches and lost productivity was no longer acceptable.

The Solution: FlexDeploy

The Sr. Manager set out to find a better solution. He was looking for a solution which could deploy everything in a more fully automated way, provide visibility across the pipeline, help curtail errors and better manage them when they arose, and get his engineering team back to development rather than release management. After reaching out to colleagues working with similar technology stacks, he heard about FlexDeploy, a tool that supported Oracle E-Business Suite and many other Oracle, non-Oracle, and open source products.

This company performed a Proof of Concept to bring FlexDeploy into their ecosystem to get a realistic picture of how it would work in their unique landscape. The manager was impressed with not only how FlexDeploy helped meet their challenges, but with the support they got from Flexagon. “Flexagon provided real subject matter experts and kept them available through the process. They were flexible in their approach and took our feedback to enhance the product to meet our needs.”

Key Facts

Industry: Computer hardware/software

Employees: 102,000

Fortune 50 High Tech

Environment

- E-Business Suite 12.2.3
- utPLSQL
- Microsoft TFS
- Spring Framework
- NoSQL Elasticsearch
- MongoDB
- Pivotal Cloud Foundry

Benefits

- Shorten release cycle by 3X; from quarterly to monthly
 - Cut outage windows during deployments 4X; from six hours to ninety minutes
 - Unmanned deployments in eight non-production and performance environments
 - Free up operations team member completely during deployments in production and non-production
-

Challenges before FlexDeploy

- 20% or more of engineers' time spent in code management and deployment
- Deployment errors were occurring with too much regularity
- Lack of visibility into release status
- Processes required manual intervention and shepherding through the deployment process

Life after FlexDeploy

- Automation has shortened release cycle from six months to one, while increasing the amount of content that can be delivered
- Release windows cut from six hours to ninety minutes
- Visibility into the what, when and who of changes make managing deployments and troubleshooting more effective
- Pipeline and release management features reduce human intervention and management required, freeing up engineers to continue development

After: Automated, Repeatable, Streamlined

Since implementing FlexDeploy, this company has seen improvements in the speed, quality, and visibility of their deployment processes.

Before FlexDeploy, the company had large releases every six months, with smaller quarterly releases. Since implementation, they have been deploying large releases into production monthly. Not only have their release cycles improved, but down time during the releases has shrunk considerably – sometimes requiring no downtime. In one recent example, they were able to cut the release window from six hours to ninety minutes. They can react more quickly and support the ongoing demand for change driven by business demand.

They also freed up people time during the release, including unmanned deployments in 8 non-production environments. This also included removing an Ops team member completely in deployments in non-production and production environments. With PPM/Kintana, the team needed engineers to be involved as releases were running to shepherd the release to completion. With FlexDeploy, the company utilizes pipeline and release automation features that automated the release from start to finish, and improved the ability to orchestrate the multiple projects that make up a release. Per the team manager, “with FlexDeploy, we have taken our release management to the next level.”

FlexDeploy's extensive reporting capabilities have meant significant improvements in visibility. The team now has detailed reporting on deployment changes down to file-level detail. This visibility provides a clear picture of release status, allows for easier compliance, and is invaluable in troubleshooting when errors cause issues.

Ultimately, this company has been so successful in utilizing FlexDeploy for Oracle E-Business Suite that they've aligned their DevOps and Release Automation processes onto FlexDeploy. As this company goes down a strategic IT architecture path (heavily cloud-based and utilizing containers and microservices) FlexDeploy provides a strategic platform for both existing and new systems. This team can now orchestrate deployment across their diverse ecosystem which includes technologies such as Oracle EBS, Spring Framework, NoSQL Elasticsearch, MongoDB, and Pivotal Cloud Foundry. And all of this with a click of a button.

FlexDeploy has helped enable a smooth and self-service pipeline, meeting the requirements of all stakeholders; Developers, Quality Assurance, Release Manager, and Management. The team manager put it best; “FlexDeploy has shifted our developer's focus to writing code and delivering enhancements that help our business, and away from the time consuming and error prone deployment activities. Faster software development, more frequent releases into production, and higher quality.”

About Flexagon

Flexagon provides DevOps and Automation software and services which improve the speed, quality, and cost of software development and operations. Flexagon's FlexDeploy brings automation, controls, and visibility to software provisioning, build, deploy, test, and release processes, and includes pre-built plugins for Oracle Database, Fusion Middleware, E-Business Suite, Cloud, and many open source and commercial technologies.

For more information, please visit flexagon.com