

FlexDeploy Case Study

How one company used FlexDeploy to improve visibility and time to market



One global enterprise mobile computing company creates solutions that connect users with the data they need, guiding them with clear and accurate insights for the best next action. When your organization is responsible for helping customers make business-critical decisions, your internal delivery processes need to be on point.

The Challenge: Lack of trust in the team's ability to deliver quality software on time

The company's IT team had challenges with manual migration and a lack of visibility for quite some time. One Senior Manager has been with the company for about 11 years in the Middleware team. When he started there was a small Middleware footprint, using SOA 10g and some small Java applications. Since that time, the team has upgraded to SOA 11g and were planning an upgrade to 12c. Additionally, they had introduced technologies such as Oracle Data Integrator (ODI), and their footprint has grown to 18 instances on-prem.

The impending upgrade to 12c brought all their challenges to the forefront. They had managed their upgrade from 10g to 11g manually, which the Senior Manager described as a "complete nightmare"—a tedious and manual approach resulting in a mismatch in code migrations, uncertainty about which code base was in which instance, a reliance on Excel spreadsheets to track changes, and long execution times.

The processes were painful and frustrating for the Middleware team's upgrade, but they also had ripple effects for projects across other IT groups and the rest of the business. When deployments were not accurate the first time, shared services groups had to run steps like deployments multiple times, tests had to be re-run, and project timelines were extended, impacting final delivery for the business. "If the correct code base was not in a target environment, migrations to that environment would have to happen multiple times," explained the Senior Manager "This impacted the DBA team who had to re-migrate, the test team who had to run tests again, and it delayed any down-stream activities." These issues left the organization with a constant skepticism – they never knew if the right code base would be in the target instance, and if project timelines would be delayed.

The Solution: One centralized DevOps platform for automated and transparent delivery processes

The Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition (OBIEE) team within the company had been using FlexDeploy with positive results and suggested the Middleware team use it with their upgrade. The team did a brief POC which "went really well," and quickly started using FlexDeploy in production with SOA.

Industry: Data Technology

Employees: 8,800

Environment

- Oracle SOA Suite
- Oracle Integration Cloud
- Oracle Cloud Infrastructure
- Oracle Data Integrator (ODI)
- Oracle Business Intelligence

Life After FlexDeploy

- Reduced overall time spent for project deployments 30X - from six days to five hours
- Visibility to what code is running in what environment
- Increased speed of delivery to customer
- Completely eliminated project schedule delays that previously occurred in 15% of projects
- Confidence that deployments will work the first time, every time



The Outcome: Improved visibility, faster time to market, and increased stability

The Middleware team initially started using FlexDeploy with SOA and ODI on-prem, and later introduced Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) and Oracle Integration Cloud (OIC). “With SOA and ODI we are in a stage where we’re doing CI/CD,” said the Senior Manager. “We can do continuous deployment without any issues and are moving to get there with OIC at a good pace.”

The team found that FlexDeploy is the right tool for them to grow their CI/CD practices and take them to the next level. With FlexDeploy they replaced manual and tedious processes that were time-consuming and vulnerable to human error with automated and repeatable processes. They are no longer tracking environments via spreadsheets, but instead have visibility to what code base is running where, reducing the risk that needed code will be overwritten or that an environment isn’t ready for a deployment.

The organization has gained benefits across five main areas using FlexDeploy:

1. **Reduction in Time:** A 70% reduction in migration efforts occurred by injecting automation and removing manual steps. Where migrations used to take five to six days, they are now taking four to five hours. This is reducing manhours required on projects and freeing the group to take on additional tasks and deliver faster.
2. **Stability of the Code Base:** With FlexDeploy the team never needs to guess what code is in which environment. They have confidence when they deploy to a target environment that the expected code will be there the first time. This has removed the need and additional time spent to troubleshoot, re-migrate, and test where errors arise.
3. **Cross-Functional Improvements:** The ripple effect of delays created when the Middleware group needed to re-test or re-deploy has been eliminated increasing cross-functional team effectiveness, confidence, and satisfaction.
4. **End-to-End Process Flow:** The team has integrated FlexDeploy with other tools in their toolchain. Users are no longer jumping between tools and instead have a wholistic, fluid process.
5. **Improved Speed of Delivery to Customer:** With FlexDeploy the team has been able to eliminate the delivery slippage that would occur in 10-15% of their projects. Ultimately, increasing project delivery speed and ensuring new features and enhancements are available to customers quicker.

The Senior Manager summed the improvements by saying “we’re at a point where we just know it’s going to work when something is deployed. We’re not guessing anymore. Deploy one or one hundred and we know it will work.”

Next Steps: Expanded usage in the Middleware Team and across the IT organization

The Middleware team plans to continue expanding their use of FlexDeploy. First by connecting FlexDeploy further across their toolchain – integrating with test tools such as Tosca and security and authentication tools. They also plan to expand usage of FlexDeploy’s built-in reporting and auditing functionality to support process-level audits and traceability.

Based on the success the Middleware team has seen, other groups within the IT organization are looking at FlexDeploy. “Maybe the best testimonial I can give is that other teams are looking at and starting to use FlexDeploy for their own delivery. They saw our results and wanted to get those same benefits themselves.”

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, Middleware, E-Business Suite, Cloud IaaS, PaaS, SaaS, and many open source and commercial technologies.

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