

Is Your Application Platform **people**  **ready**?

| Application Platform Optimization

## Application Lifecycle Management

### Align your IT investment with your business goals

Business and technology executives are being asked to do more with less all the time. Managing complexity, improving security, and enabling agility are top priorities. But maintaining legacy systems and supporting current technology consume vast amounts of the typical IT budget. This leaves limited budgetary resources and manpower to stay on top of new technology and develop applications to meet the core needs of your business. Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) is an effective solution.

To get started, assess the current state of your application lifestyle. An ALM assessment enables you to:

- Compare your development infrastructure against industry best practices and the latest IT research.
- Measure the effectiveness of your current development infrastructure in platform-agnostic terms.
- Use your results to prioritize your IT investments and help your organization thrive and continue to grow.

“ALM solutions are integrated tool sets that support and unite the following lifecycle activities: requirements management, design and modeling, development, software configuration management (SCM), and testing.”

Source: “The State of Application Development in Enterprises and SMBs,” Forrester Research, February 2007

ALM is a method of managing software development and IT initiatives by automating the process from end to end and integrating information from every stage of the project. ALM helps you synchronize business goals and IT investment priorities and can help transform IT from a cost center into a valuable business asset.

### **ALM confronts common application development challenges**

You've no doubt faced some or all of these challenges before:

- Lack of visibility into project status—ALM provides a single, unified view of the project that helps enforce responsibility, accountability, sign-offs, and checkpoints.
- Ineffective team communication—By coordinating efforts across functional, geographic, and organizational boundaries, ALM helps align everyone with the overall business goals and give people access to the information they need.
- Balancing business demands with project risk—Better project management from the outset helps define objectives properly and make estimates more accurate, while minimizing the impact of changing requirements, scope creep, and complex and rapidly evolving technology.

With ALM, your team is better equipped to complete your projects on time and on budget, while delivering critical business value that helps support business goals.

### **ALM creates measurable process improvement**

Introducing ALM at your organization can help you deliver improved business value to your customers and even provide an additional competitive advantage. Process improvement stems from improved integration, so you are no longer wasting time and effort with disparate tools and duplicated data.

You can expect to see:

- Stronger collaboration between business and IT, resulting in better alignment of IT and business goals.
- Increased accountability, enabling stricter compliance with governance initiatives.
- Improved project management, including better estimation, tracking, and reporting through a single, unified view of the project.
- Quality improvements, so the final application meets the requirements of your customers and quality of service requirements.

**“Now that we have the right tools, we’re thoroughly embracing the application lifecycle model...With all the information that developers need now at their fingertips, they’re at least 10 to 15 percent more productive.”**

*David Moye*  
Chief Technical Officer  
CC Intelligent Solutions

- Shorter development cycles and improved productivity through shared best practice and process learning.
- Increased ability of the IT department to rapidly build and adapt applications to support dynamically changing business requirements.

### **How to get started with ALM**

You can begin an online ALM assessment right away. From there, a Microsoft partner can conduct an on-site assessment that will:

- Create a baseline measurement of the current development capability.
- Surface existing best practices.
- Uncover opportunities for improvement.
- Identify the most impactful areas to the business.
- Generate a preliminary road map to implement improvements.

To get started, go to [www.microsoft.com/alassessment](http://www.microsoft.com/alassessment).

## **Begin your assessment today.**

To evaluate the current state of your organization and subsequently measure progress as you implement process change, you can use the online ALM assessment engine at [www.microsoft.com/alassessment](http://www.microsoft.com/alassessment). For additional support in assessing the current strengths and weaknesses of your organization's IT function, and how you can phase in an ALM approach, you can also visit [www.microsoft.com/click/usapo/default.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/click/usapo/default.aspx).