

APPLICATION LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT OFFERS CRITICAL SUPPORT FOR ALIGNING SOFTWARE DELIVERY WITH BUSINESS GOALS, SAYS ANALYST REPORT

Macehiter Ward-Dutton's report looks at what application lifecycle management means to businesses today and why it is important for the next generation of software-driven business services and applications.

Cambridge, UK – 23 FEBRUARY 2009 – IT-Business alignment experts Macehiter Ward-Dutton (MWD) today highlighted the findings of a new report on Application Lifecycle Management (ALM).

According to the report, despite the fact that ALM concepts make a lot of sense, mainstream adoption is some way off. “Software delivery processes have been limping along for some time. Organizations need to realize that “good enough” no longer cuts the mustard, particularly in the context of today’s economic environment,” said Bola Rotibi, Principal Analyst on MWD’s software development research programme.

Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) is the governance of the practice of software delivery to ensure that maximum business value is delivered in the context of business strategies, priorities and constraints over time, and across projects. “The idea of application lifecycle management as an approach to governing software delivery practice has only really taken hold in the last couple of years, but the concepts are far from new,” said Rotibi. “The real value in ALM comes from its ability to make software delivery practice into a truly business-driven service.”

The report highlights four key findings:

- ALM’s purpose is to bring discipline to software delivery practice – in the context of business priorities and required outcomes
- ALM demands consideration of people, processes, and information as well as tools and technologies – but tools are still crucial
- ALM doesn’t have to be a “big ticket” investment: the key is to focus your efforts on identifying strategic control points that will give you the visibility, traceability and control that you need without unduly constraining the day-to-day working practices of individuals and teams

- ALM technology vendors need to do more to support real-world needs

There is a common misconception that the software delivery process only applies to custom-built applications. Although “green field” application development is not dead, ALM needs to govern all types of software delivery, regardless of whether the focus is custom-building, customisation of off-the-shelf solutions, or something in between. “ALM is widely relevant to all organisations developing applications because its goal is to secure repeatable and reliable delivery against defined business outcomes. Getting software delivery wrong can have dire consequences, with repeated failure adversely impacting employee trust, customer loyalty and retention and ultimately business reputation,” said Rotibi.

One of the most significant challenges for ALM is how to integrate multiple software development approaches into a common governance framework. However, if pursued correctly through a focus on identifying and managing specific strategic control points, ALM can provide a centralised governance framework that reaches out to everyone, without constraining the needs of individual development approaches.

This report is published as part of MWD’s software lifecycle programme of research and is available free of charge via the MWD website. To download the full report please visit <http://www.mwdadvisors.com/profile/index.php> to register for access to MWD’s full Guest Pass research library.

END

About Macehiter Ward-Dutton

Macehiter Ward-Dutton is a specialist IT advisory firm which focuses exclusively on issues concerning IT-business alignment. We use our significant industry experience, acknowledged expertise, and a flexible approach to advise businesses on IT architecture, integration, management, organisation and culture.

Contacts

Macehiter Ward-Dutton

Bola Rotibi, Principal Analyst

Phone: +44 (0) 208 099 8460

email: bola@mwdadvisors.com

Beth Barling, Director

Phone: +44 (0) 208 099 8297

email: neilwd@mwdadvisors.com