

Technology portfolio management

Learn how Alfabet from Software AG helps ensure the success of your technology portfolio management practice.

The application landscape includes a wide range of technologies such as application servers, LDAP repositories, BI engines, and many more. These technologies are the IT backbone on which businesses rely. But their diversity and number create great challenges maintaining the know-how to operate them. Constant change due to new releases and new technologies introduced through projects and acquisitions exacerbates this problem. Failure to get this problem under control increases operating and project costs as well as the risk of incidents and project failure. This makes it essential to have a robust, effective and efficient Technology Portfolio Management (TPM) practice, which:

- Provides current and reliable information on the technologies in use and where they are used
- Supports rapid analysis of the impact on the technology portfolio due to changes in the application portfolio and vice versa
- Facilitates the choice and definition of the technology standards to be used and enforces those standards
- Demonstrates clearly the costs and risks of the use of the wrong technologies and
- Identifies technology innovations that can provide business benefits to the enterprise

Key Benefits

- Single repository for technologies, technology usage and standards
- Standards catalogs that support variations, e.g., regional catalogs
- Reports exposing multiple technologies and versions for the same purpose
- Standards enforcement using governance processes and reports
- Exceptions management and technology debt exposure
- Cost and risk reduction by reducing the number of technologies in use
- Creation of standard platforms to reduce the cost of integration testing

Five steps to success

Establishing a robust, effective and efficient TPM practice requires the right approach. These five steps will help ensure success:

- Establish the right mix of importing data from available technology repositories and manual oversight by technology owners and domain experts
- Establish life-cycle management for technologies and align them to those of the business applications using them
- Define and publish standards allowing for variations in the standards dependent on regional, functional or organizational factors
- Manage exceptions to the standards and ensure their impacts are assessed
- Introduce processes for approval of new technologies and for monitoring future technology innovations

Software AG (Alfabet) is a Leader in the October 2013 “Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Architecture Tools” and the November 2013 “Magic Quadrant for Integrated IT Portfolio Analysis Applications” reports and also a Leader and top-ranked in the Current Offering category in Forrester Research, Inc.’s “The Forrester Wave™: EA Management Suites, Q2 2013.”

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Alfabet – the standard solution for TPM

Technology inventory

A central inventory is available to manage technologies. It supports single and composite technologies. Also supported are multiple taxonomies. Several relationships are provided, e.g., usage by applications, providing vendors and associated contracts. Import and export together with wizards and workflows ensure that the inventory is complete and up to date.

Standards and exceptions

Standard technologies and standard composite technology platforms can be defined for the organization. Catalogs are used to specify the standards that apply to, for example, a specific region or business area. Workflows are used to request exceptions, i.e., the use of non-standard technologies. The technical debt is assessed within this process.

Portfolio analysis

KPIs can be imported from other systems or gathered in a survey. They can also be combined and aggregated to create rankings. Portfolio diagrams and many other report types help to identify and communicate technology choices. Future technology innovations, e.g., mobile or cloud can be documented and assessed for their ability to improve business. Assessment of impact on the current landscape facilitates planning of transformation programs.

Life-cycle management

Dashboards give project managers and application owners an overview of the available technologies and their life cycles. This enables them to plan accordingly. They can also initiate workflows to request assessment and usage of new technologies. Vendor and contract information provides support to technology owners when creating technology road maps.

Integrated approach

TPM on its own delivers significant benefits. It is, however, more effective when integrated with other IT disciplines. For example:

- Project portfolio management integration ensures that projects do not introduce unwanted technologies and that they adhere to technology standards
- Application portfolio management integration aligns technology and application road maps so that expensive planning errors do not occur
- Integration to demand and strategy management supports assessment and alignment of technology innovation to business needs

Alfabet delivers support for these IT disciplines in a tightly integrated solution. Alfabet also provides a framework that supports rapid integration to other systems at the data and process levels. This guarantees the full benefit of integrated IT portfolio management.

Fast path to value

Software AG is a quick enabler of TPM, providing customers with the tools needed to take the steps to TPM success effectively and efficiently, namely:

- A standard solution for TPM: Alfabet
- A proven TPM methodology — available out-of-the-box
- Templates to implement roles such as technology owner, technology domain architect, application owner, project manager and many more
- Standard reports and dashboards for IT management and other key stakeholders
- Best-practice templates for new technology requests, exception management and other common governance processes
- A framework for rapid integration to other technology repositories, for example, CMDBs and IT asset repositories

ABOUT SOFTWARE AG

Software AG helps organizations achieve their business objectives faster. The company’s big data, integration and business process technologies enable customers to drive operational efficiency, modernize their systems and optimize processes for smarter decisions and better service. Building on over 40 years of customer-centric innovation, the company is ranked as a “leader” in 14 market categories, fueled by core product families Adabas-Natural, Alfabet, Apama, ARIS, Terracotta and webMethods. Learn more at www.SoftwareAG.com.

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