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Five Signs You Need to Change Your Change Management Solution

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A White Paper by Rocket Software

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Five Signs You Need to Change Your Change Management Solution



Introduction

If you're developing applications on the IBM i platform, there is a good chance you already have a change management solution in place. Using an application lifecycle management (ALM) solution can dramatically decrease application downtime, improve programmer efficiency, and ensure compliance with audit regulations.

However, today's business and technology environments are changing. The demands placed upon your ALM solution have shifted considerably over the past several years. Executives are demanding that IT departments be more productive with less staff. New web and mobile technologies are dictating rapid release cycles. Developers are embracing new operating system advancements that enable rapid development and application modernization. Not every change management vendor has been willing, or able, to keep up with this break-neck pace. And the results for their customers are often disastrous.

You need to know if your ALM vendor is not keeping up with the needs of your business. So if you rely on a software change management solution to protect your mission-critical IBM i applications, what are the warning signs that the solution you once relied upon is outdated?

This white paper will outline the five warning signs which indicate that you may be using an unreliable software change management solution, and what to look for when you've decided to switch to a more responsive solution.



The Warning Signs

Sign 1 Your Vendor Doesn't Support their Customers

Whether you are a newbie or seasoned veteran, there comes a time when you need immediate help from your vendor. But have you noticed lately that it's getting harder and harder to get the help you need from your vendor? Or has it dawned on you that you are paying more and getting less support?

Here are some warning signs that your vendor is running on auto-pilot:

- ❖ Using contractors rather than long-term, permanent employees
- ❖ First-call resolution is increasingly rare
- ❖ Customer support is very hard to reach and not in your time zone or country
- ❖ Answers lack understanding, are vague, or are just plain wrong

Poor customer support is a leading indicator that you need to start thinking about a new solution to manage your application changes.

Sign 2 Your Vendor Doesn't Support the Latest IBM i Technologies

It goes without saying that software change management solutions for the IBM i need to support the features and functions of every new release of the IBM i operating system.

Has your solution dropped the ball on supporting advanced functions such as iASPs, SQL, ILE, and stored procedures? And is it compatible with IBM i OS 7.2 and RDp 9.0? Even if you are not currently using the latest technologies, you absolutely want the assurance that when the future of your business pushes you in that direction, your ALM software and its vendor will be a support, not a hindrance.

Sign 3 Your Solution is Too Complicated and Rigid

Your software change management solution must be flexible enough to adapt to the demands of any team and any application. It should be able to manage simple solutions right out of the box, as well to as to handle complex requirements without having to create macros and scripts. It also means that the total installation and training time is measured in days, not weeks. Your change management solution should meet the needs of your business as it adapts. And if it can't— watch out.



4 Sign It's Too Difficult to Comply with Audit and Regulatory Statutes

Most software change management solutions today say that they offer some sort of compliance functionality. But if you're still required to write your own reports, mine your own data, keep months of email history, and archive paper copies, your current system is costing you much more than you realize.

Today's up-to-date software change management solutions come with pre-configured web-based reports, electronic task history, and automated history logs that enable you to comply with your audit requirements with ease. The last thing your company needs is to fail an audit because of your ALM solution's inability to track, record, and report on every move and change related to your customer's sensitive data and the applications on which they reside.

5 Sign There Has Been No Change in your Change Management Solution

As technology and techniques advance, so must your change management solution. That's why it's essential to pay attention to the software releases that your software change management vendor provides. If they are not investing in the advancement of their solution, that is a sign that they aren't committed to their product's future—or yours.

Here are some tell-tale signs that your software change management vendor simply isn't keeping up their end of the bargain:

- ❖ New releases are few and far between
- ❖ Existing releases show few exciting new features and functions
- ❖ R&D seems unable to embrace new industry trends in a timely fashion
- ❖ Little to no desire to respond to customer demands

No one has a crystal ball to predict what the future holds for their business or for the technology landscape. That's why it's critical to rely on a change management solution that responds and adapts to changing situations.



Time to Change Your Change Management Solution—and How to Justify It

Do all these warnings sound familiar? Then it's time to make a switch to an up-to-date change management solution from a partner invested in your success. Recognizing that you need to move away from your current software change management solution may be the easy part. The biggest challenge comes next: justifying the time and the expense to make the change.

Here's a list of areas where your current ALM solution may be costing you precious time and money:

- ❖ What is the cost of errors directly attributed to mistakes, flaws, or shortcomings of your current solution?
- ❖ What is the cost to your business, to your customers, and to your reputation from an improperly compiled change, an incomplete deployment, or an untested, unapproved change?
- ❖ How much work is it taking your team to customize and extend your current solution with macros, scripts, and still more software? Once the scripts are created, how much time does it take to maintain and support them? How much of your own development effort is lost to the ongoing care and feeding of your current vendor's solution?
- ❖ What is the efficiency of your team worth? How much extra time is your team spending to ensure that compiles, promotions, deployments, and installations are done correctly, done on time, and fully documented?
- ❖ How much money are you paying for yearly maintenance and what are you getting in return?
- ❖ How much longer can you afford to write (and maintain) your home-grown solution that does not fully meet your needs today, much less tomorrow?
- ❖ How much is it costing you to manually comply with the stringent requirements of your internal or external audits? How much could you save if many of those steps were fully automated?
- ❖ Are you being held back by your existing change management software? Is it preventing you from moving to the latest operating system or fully utilizing new features like iASP, SQL, ILE, database conversion, stored procedures, and more?

Top reasons to switch to the Rocket ALM Solution

Continued investment in R&D

Customers come first

Top notch support

Ease of use

Help meet audit requirements

Supports the latest IBM i functions



Rocket Software: Switch to a Future-Proof Change Management Solution

Companies that don't adapt to the changing business and IT landscape won't survive. That's why Rocket Software is committed to helping customers adapt their IBM i software development lifecycle to a best practices approach.

Companies that rely on the IBM i platform have been relying on Rocket ALM solutions to optimize their change and configuration management for over 30 years. Rocket's customers recognize that we have the experience and the knowledge to become their trusted advisor in software change management best practices. We understand and solve their problems because we have seen them, and solved them, for thousands of customers around the world.

While other vendors have cut back on development, documentation, and testing specialists, Rocket has expanded and invested heavily in research and product development. With Rocket, you will have the assurance that your chosen solution will keep pace with new industry trends and operating system enhancements.

Rocket offers the hallmarks of future-proof change management solutions for the IBM i:

Service and Support

Rocket places customers first. Our mission remains to provide the best customer experience from implementation to ongoing support. We are here for enhancements, upgrade help, continuous training, and much more. We consider our relationship with you to be a partnership, and we're in it for the long run.

Committed to R&D

Rocket remains committed to investing in the future. By continuing to heavily invest in product development, we make sure that you are getting the best change management product on the market today:

- ❖ We support the latest IBM i operating systems as they are announced.
- ❖ We create new industry-mandated and customer-requested functionality in each release.



Key Features You Need

Whether it's our ease-of-use, our reliability, or our feature-set, here are some of the reasons you should take look at Rocket's change management solutions for the IBM i:

- ❖ Comes ready to work right out-of-the box with no macros to write and maintain.
- ❖ Provides strong support for advanced SQL and ILE.
- ❖ Supports application modernization via the conversion to ILE.
- ❖ Supports database modernization via the conversion to SQL.
- ❖ Provides role-based security, separation of duties, and automatic logging to comply with the most stringent auditing requirements.
- ❖ Gives developers the choice of an Eclipse-based or 5250-based interface.
- ❖ Easily manages concurrent development, multiple releases, and conflict resolution.
- ❖ Deploying source code to the production machine is not required (or even recommended)
- ❖ Increases developer productivity with a powerful, yet comfortable user interface.
- ❖ Powerful cross-referencing solution ensures speedy and accurate analysis and eliminates downtime from level checks.
- ❖ Rocket Software has the breadth and depth to address many other needs under one vendor.

Find out why many of your peers and your competitors have already made the switch to the Rocket ALM solution for their IBM i change management needs. If you are ready to change your change management solution, the first step is the easiest one: contact us at info@rocketsoftware.com for a risk-free consultation on how our software change management solutions can help you keep pace in today's ever-changing world.



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