



## Flexagon FlexDeploy - Customer Case Study

# Consistency with a Scalable Automation Platform

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## Key Facts

Industry: Biotechnology

Company: Shire

Employees: 22,000

The leading global biotech focused on rare diseases

## Environment

- Fusion Middleware
  - WebLogic
  - SOA
  - OSB
  - ADF
  - BPM
  - JMS
  - MDS
- ServiceNow
- Subversion
- Google Apigee
- Docker
- Kubernetes

## Benefits

- 95% success ratio over 400 projects and 35 environments
  - 8x increase in deployment speed
  - 5x reduction in the number of errors and outages
  - ROI in 4 months
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## Background:

Shire is the leading global biotechnology company focused on serving people with rare diseases. Founded in 1986, they quickly innovated drug development programs on behalf of patients dealing with challenging conditions. Ultimately, their purpose is to enable people with life-altering conditions to lead better lives. With this history of innovation to take on the toughest tests, it's no surprise that their IT organization faces business challenges head on as well.

## Challenges: Inconsistent and Ineffective Processes

The team was feeling pain associated with being able to consistently and effectively deploy Oracle WebLogic and SOA related artifacts across their environments. Shire has a solution architecture which required regular changes, resulting in a significant amount of integration related work. In addition, Shire has a stringent change control process which was being executed manually and needed to be streamlined.

Shire is no stranger to automation, as they had been using tools for around 10 years, including both Cruise Control and Hudson. Even with those tools, there were still many manual and scripted processes, and the team, which runs lean, was spending a lot of time brute forcing deployments across their environments. Shire was growing through a series of mergers and acquisitions, and the team needed a scalable automation platform. In short, the deployment related processes were just not working.

## The Solution: FlexDeploy

Shire didn't want to get in the business of building out a solution, so they started looking for a commercial option. Shire Head of Global Integrations Platform Blake Xiao had some experience with what was available in the market, and he felt the time was right to find a new solution. Ultimately, they were looking for an enterprise platform that had workflow capability, including release management and controls such as approvals and scheduling, and could automate the deployment of their artifacts across environments.

Shire looked at FlexDeploy, Rubicon Red's Myst, and open source solutions such as Hudson and Jenkins. Both Hudson and Jenkins would require extensive management from the Shire team, resources they weren't willing to commit. Myst's capabilities didn't align with the pain points Shire was facing, and that tool was quickly eliminated as an option. Shire installed the Community Edition of FlexDeploy to run a Proof of Concept and explore the tool themselves.



## Challenges before FlexDeploy

- Stringent change control process was being executed manually, adding complexity, causing a bottleneck, and making audits a challenge
- Many manual and scripted processes requiring the team to brute force deployments
- Inconsistent and ineffective delivery of WebLogic and SOA related artifacts

## Life after FlexDeploy

- Built-in approval system makes getting approvals painless and easy to manage, track, and view
- Automation allows Shire to deliver higher quality software faster, while freeing the team up to do other work
- Workflows ensure code and other changes are being deployed in a repeatable and consistent process

## After: Increased Speed and Reduced Errors

During the POC, Shire was impressed with the support provided by Flexagon, and the broad and deep support for Oracle's Middleware. The team quickly saw the value in working with FlexDeploy. "The FlexDeploy support for Oracle Fusion Middleware was built by people that had lived the struggle of being Fusion users," said Blake, "and that came through in the tool's performance."

FlexDeploy was able to meet all of Shire's objectives in adopting an automation solution.

- **Workflow capability:** With FlexDeploy, Shire can configure reusable workflows that lay out the delivery processes to ensure code, configurations, and other changes are being built, tested, deployed, and released properly. These workflows can range from being straight forward one-after-another execution, to incredibly complex, requiring multiple stages, "if" requirements, human intervention, failing and restarting, etc. With workflow capability, Shire can link together complex pipelines and automate tasks across the lifecycle.
- **Manual and scripted steps:** Shire was able to drastically reduce the amount of time spent executing manual steps, and building, testing, and maintaining scripts. In addition, they were able to eliminate the time spent handling the fall-out from failed deployments such as production outages and the frantic search to identify and fix what caused the failure. Not only can the team see what exactly was deployed, but with rollback capabilities they can go back to a prior working version.
- **Managing Change Process:** The benefits of a controlled means for managing the approval process were felt quickly. Shire was able to cut out laborious paper forms, spreadsheets, and hard-to-follow email threads that were used previously. Not only is the status of an approval quickly identified for the team, but the approver has all required information to approve or deny a request. The team can easily see what changes were made, who approved them, when, and what was included in the change.

Shire has been able to expand their usage of FlexDeploy beyond the initial scope of the project. In addition to the success of Fusion Middleware artifacts, Shire is leveraging Flexagon for Google Apigee release pipeline/deployment and have been co-innovating with Flexagon on use cases involving Docker and Kubernetes.

Shire has achieved an increased deployment speed of 8x, while reducing the number of errors and outages by 5x. The improvements coincide with an ROI of 4 months.

## 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, Fusion Middleware, E-Business Suite, Cloud, and many open source and commercial technologies.

For more information, please visit [flexagon.com](https://flexagon.com)

