

GUIDE

Set yourself up for continuous improvement

There's no denying it. Getting up and running with an enterprise cloud application can be a big job. All too often, it's a slog to finish and, at the risk of sounding controversial, by the time you go live, the greatest impact on your business has been the cost of getting there. Certainly, a good implementation sets you up for success. But the good stuff—the real business value—only kicks in once you're working within your shiny new platform.

In this guide, we're going to look at the vital elements needed to get true ongoing value from your Oracle Cloud Applications investment. But first, let's consider why so many organizations don't manage to



Go-live is just the start of the journey

Once upon a time, technology-enabled transformation projects ended when the system went live. Go-live was 'job done' and everyone went back to their day jobs. Then came a long period of business-as-usual, until the next major transformation project came around.

But that's now a thing of the past.

Most organizations recognize this of course, but all too often, the regular updates and enhancements that are core to this brave new(ish) world are seen as necessary evils—tolerated at best, ignored at worst.

Few organizations truly embrace the world of cloud and its culture of ongoing evolution. Many still succumb to the temptation of 'if it isn't broken, don't touch it' and after go-live the project stakeholders return to their departments and expect IT to manage the system for them.

Over the decades, technology trends have come and gone. From mainframes to federated architectures; from client-server to the Network Computer. The difference is that those advances were essentially technology for technologists.

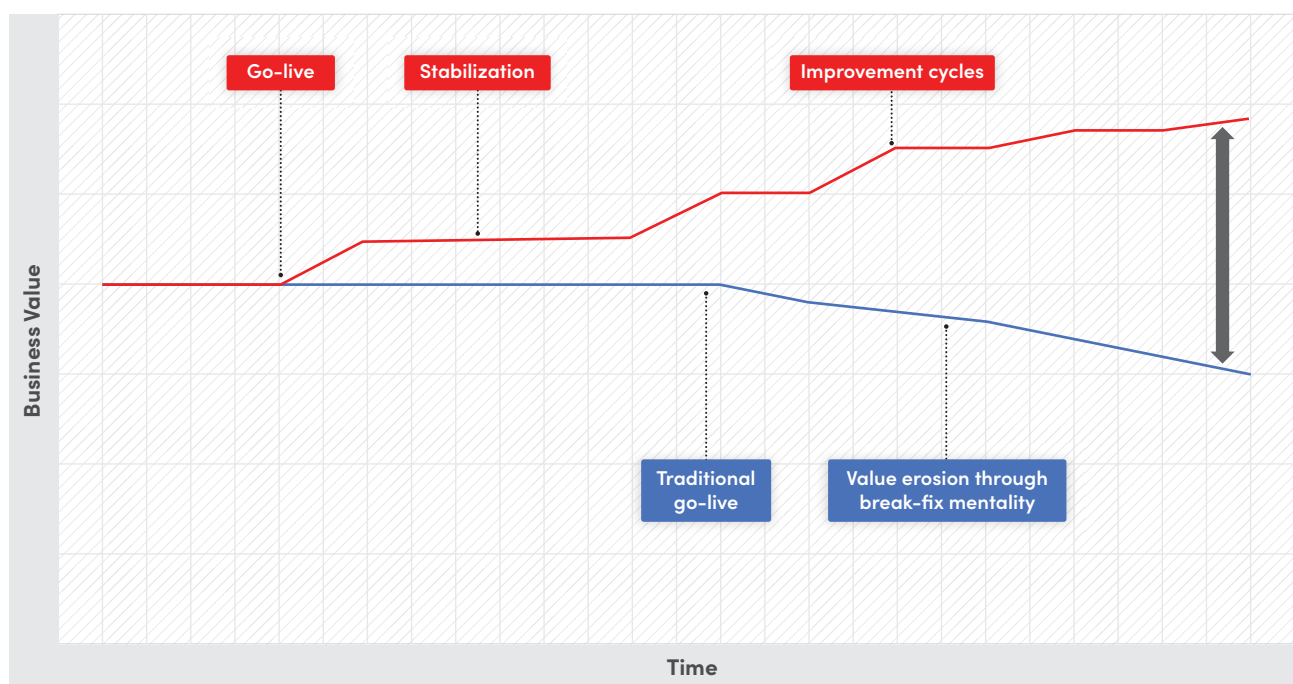
With Software as a Service (SaaS), there's been a fundamental change to the game. Now, the systems are owned by the business. And IT, along with specialists like Inoapps, are there to serve the business rather than own the solution. Yes, this may sound like old news, but time and again we see that mindsets are still catching up to the shift.

Continuous improvement is about more than keeping the lights on

Part of the issue is that we've lived in the break-fix world of reactive support for decades, but the model no longer serves us. In the world of SaaS, choosing to only fix things when they break, or maintain the system to a minimal level, translates into progressive value erosion from the moment you go live. Instead, you need to focus on balancing support activities with driving continual improvement and incremental business value.

Business value over time

— Traditional Deployment — Inoapps Continuous Improvement Approach



By embracing continual evolution, and doing so early, you can also start realizing benefits sooner. Your go-live date can actually be accelerated. Where there's confidence in the journey of continual evolution, go-live is the start rather than the end of that journey. By embracing a 'minimal viable product' approach with a focus on creating a foundation for growth, business value can be realized early and change can be progressive and accelerated.

Continuous improvement of your SaaS solution enables you to be more agile and responsive to business change, to scale and pivot as opportunities arise. However, setting yourself up for success calls for changes to the way you work and engage with your business-critical technology. It takes commitment and additional effort.

The four pillars for success

To make a continuous improvement program work, you need to have four Ps in place: people, processes, products and partners— ideally by the time the implementation goes live. But don't worry if you're already underway. Wherever you are on your journey, there's no time like the present to get more out of it.

1 People

The business and IT need to band together to manage the new system's evolution.

You'll need specific roles and responsibilities in place to make decisions about what the business needs and how to prioritize ongoing work— like when to focus on maintenance and when to introduce new functionality.

Setting up solid governance and reporting structures up front will be invaluable.

3 Products

This is the tooling to manage your environment. Some of this may already be in place. This includes tools for IT service management, active monitoring and alerting, configuration management, automation, capturing requirements and testing.

2 Process

This is the nuts and bolts of managing your system. You'll need processes for:

- **Support:** Incidents and Problems that interrupt service
- **Maintenance:** such as Oracle product updates, environment management, regression testing, compliance requirements etc.
- **Continuous improvement:** this includes Change and Release Management, assessing new features, engaging with business decision makers and training users on new functionality

4 Partners

Third party specialists like Inoapps can help with anything from consulting on your roadmap, hands-on managed services and advice on licensing, to helping you maintain alignment with your original business plan. Oracle Corporation is now also a key partner on your journey.

Key questions to kick start your planning

As you see, there's a lot to think about and work out. It can be tricky to know where to start—but rest assured, this is entirely achievable. Establishing a firm foundation for your operations will not only save you hassle later, but moves your SaaS investment from being just another office tool to a living, breathing engine for business growth.

Here are a few questions to get started.

1 People

- Have you worked out the roles needed—within the business, in IT and externally—to look after the environments after go-live?
- Do you have people in mind to fill those roles and will they be available in time?
- Are there any gaps that need to be filled?

2 Process

Support

- Do you have processes in place to log and manage Incidents and other support requests?
- Is there an agreed process to identify the root cause of recurring issues?
- Are you set up to monitor systems and respond to alerts?

Maintenance

- Have you established processes to assess and accept Oracle updates and new features?
- Do you have regression testing scenarios to validate updates?
- Are you monitoring subscriptions and licenses to avoid breaches?

Continuous improvement

- Are there processes for capturing improvements— whatever their source?
- Do you know how you'll assess, prioritize, deploy, test and accept the improvements?
- Do you know where you may need ongoing change and user adoption support?

3 Products

- Do you have an IT Service Management 'ticketing' system that's suitable for your SaaS application/s?
- Are there tools in place to help you monitor license and subscription compliance?
- Do you have what you need to automate testing as part of your Oracle update cycles?

4 Partners

- Do you know who your Oracle Customer Success Manager (CSM) is, and that you can schedule regular review sessions with them?
- Have you identified any gaps in your internal capabilities, now or in the future, that could be sourced externally?
- Are you planning to, or have you already engaged, an Oracle Managed Service provider to help you drive the continual improvement program?

Take our Cloud Applications Service Readiness Assessment survey to unpack more of the elements you need for continuous improvement success

Conclusion

Adopting Oracle Cloud Applications can deliver massive benefits and is highly achievable. To maximize your investment, you need to think about what happens after go-live, and the best time to do so is at the start of your project. The second best time is now.

While there's a great deal to consider, everyone faces similar challenges. The choices you make and the direction you take will depend on your business objectives and aspirations. The friendly Managed Services team at Inoapps is here to help you make those choices. Reach out at any time for a chat.



Complete our Cloud Applications Service Readiness Assessment survey and we'll send you a strength analysis and pointers on where best to focus your effort.

At the end of the survey, you can also claim a free configuration report on one of your Oracle modules to gather additional insight into your Oracle solution.

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