

Application Portfolio Management with IB-ARM



An Application systems portfolio represents a major investment for an organization. It is a major asset that is critical to the day-to-day operation of the business and perhaps most importantly, it costs significant financial resources just to maintain and support this asset. It is widely reported and accepted that most organizations spend over 70% of their information technology budget on maintenance and support of existing applications.

Application Management Challenges

Typical challenges and pain points related to application maintenance are:

- Diminishing application knowledge / understanding
- Need to reduce head count but maintain current level of service (do same with less)
- Need to handle increasing workload with current staffing level (do more with same)
- Need to reduce time for new resources to become productive (learning curve)

Organizations need to constantly do more with less. Difficult financial times often mean budget cutbacks. Methods are required to reduce the cost of application maintenance and improve the productivity of the application maintenance process.

Improving Productivity of Application Maintenance

Application managers require a number of disciplines to effectively manage an application portfolio of custom application software. IB-ARM provides support for these disciplines.

Dashboard Metrics

The IB-ARM Dashboard provides base metrics about each application, including:

- Size – number of objects, lines of code, function points
- Complexity – cyclomatic complexity, database complexity
- Quality – dead code, duplicate code, unreferenced code, percentage of comments
- Volatility – changes in application size over time
- Interfaces – details of interfaces between applications in the repository and where possible, to applications outside the repository

These metrics are kept up-to-date using an automated refresh process to allow monitoring of ongoing application or process improvements.

Strategic Planning

These base Dashboard software metrics allow application managers to make key application support decisions including:

- Staffing levels – based on size and complexity of applications

- Application re-factoring – create plans to reduce complexity, improve the quality of applications and remove obsolete code.
- Technology support – based on technologies currently supported

Application Sun-setting / De-commissioning

The Application interfaces diagrams and reports provide details about application interfaces which can be used to understand the impacts of replacing or removing an application. When an application is removed or de-commissioned, all the interfaces from that application to other applications must be analyzed and addressed. In some cases, such as change will require changes to the interfacing application systems.

IB-ARM provides the detailed information about these interfaces to allow accurate and detailed plans to be made related to the de-commissioning effort.

Assessing the Quality of External applications

How do you evaluate the quality of code created externally? IB-ARM's metrics and reports allow developers to sample code quality at various checkpoints throughout the software development life cycle (SDLC). For maintenance and enhancements, developers can set a baseline for application quality before third-party changes to the application and assess the application's quality again after the changes.

- Outsourced Development – assess the quality / complexity of outsourced code
- Mergers and acquisitions – assess the quality / complexity of applications inherited via mergers and acquisitions to help determine applications to be retained / removed.

About Information Balance, Inc.



Information Balance, Inc. develops software solutions to support large scale application development and maintenance practices across mainstream technology platforms. Its flagship product **Application Road Map (ARM)** is a unique Application Portfolio Management (APM) solution. The company's clients include leading financial services, insurance, telecommunications and retail organizations across North America.

For more information, please call 416-962-5235, e-mail infobal@infobal.com, or visit our website at www.infobal.com.