

appian

# Appian IT: Empowering Developers Across the CI/CD Pipeline

An interview with Ahmed Elmorsy.

Executive Perspective

IT

## Summary.

During the first half of 2022, the Appian IT teams substantially increased their development and delivery velocity to meet growing project demand from lines of business. They identified manual processes, handoffs, and repetitive tasks within the Continuous Integration / Continuous Delivery (CI/CD) pipeline that were limiting their ability to accelerate, including steps and reviews to promote applications across environments.

Appian created a self-service capability that empowered its developers to directly promote applications and code across Development (Dev), Test, and Production (Pro) environments in real time. Prior to this, Appian developers regularly reported having to “hurry up and wait” for code reviews and for a governance body to manually promote code from one environment to the next. Quotes below are based on conversations with Ahmed Elmorsy, Appian’s Senior Director of Business Applications, that occurred in the first half of 2022.

### Accelerating promotion from Development to Test.

“We allow any developer to promote from Dev to Test, without restriction, as long as they follow proper documentation protocols.

“If the test environment gets broken, we can always fix it. This is a practice that organizations need to get comfortable with. As long as you have audit logs and backups, you can fix this easily and learn from your mistakes. When there are mistakes, use deployment logs and the Appian out-of-the-box features around version control to understand what happened and recover quickly. Ideally, a rollback should take only a few minutes.

“The minor risks are far outweighed by the efficiency and speed gains. There was a full headcount dedicated just to moving things across environments, but we’ve been able to remove that role entirely. Now, that person is freed up to do much higher value activities.”

### Accelerating promotion from Test to Production.

“When promoting from Test to Production environment, we created a curated list of trusted developers. These individuals include developers that have a proven track record of successful deployments to application components they regularly work with.

“Individuals on this list are eligible for self-service promotion to the Production environment without the need for additional governance review processes or checkpoints. From time-to-time, individuals on this list have their applications and code audited to ensure compliance with the Appian standards.



To me, CI/CD is fundamentally about the deployment pipeline and how you move code across environments. You need to make sure you can do it in a streamlined fashion that doesn’t involve too many tasks and leverages governance and structures already in Appian.

Ahmed Elmorsy



**Ahmed Elmorsy**  
Senior Director of Business Applications, Appian

“Most people I talk to are afraid of breaking the Test environment, but with backups and an audit trail in place, risk is nominal. The Appian IT team also curates a database of trusted developers that can promote select applications and code from Test to Production with an expedited review instead of going through a full review process.”

### Application deployment phases.

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-  1 Staging deployment
-  2 UAT testing
-  3 Review and approval
-  4 Prod deployment

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By automating reviews and enabling any developer to promote from the Dev to Test environment, the Appian IT team not only increased speed to delivery but also reassigned to reallocate 10% of its workforce to higher value activities.

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Think you have a best practice to share with the Appian community? Email us at [bestpractices@appian.com](mailto:bestpractices@appian.com) to schedule a research call with our team.

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