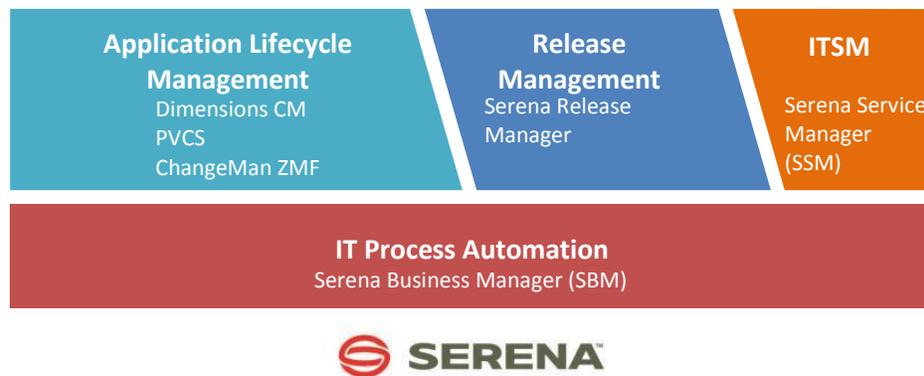# Serena Dimensions CM 14 delivers integrated Software Change/Config Management

By Rich Ptak

Serena Software has made its mark with a software suite that enables Global 2000 enterprise IT organizations to develop and deploy better software. The suite includes solutions for application development, deployment, process automation and service management solutions. Their skills at conceiving and delivering process-based solutions facilitate and enable consistent customer success.

Tuesday, June 10th, Serena announced Dimensions CM 14. This is a major release of the company's well-established software change and configuration management solution. It includes such new features as Serena Pulse to enable accelerated application development and increased software quality.

Early adopter Ricardo Oliviera of Caixa Geral de Depositos (Portugal's largest bank) believes that: *"Dimensions CM 14 is a new landmark in the SCM tools universe."* Let's examine the features whose availability led them to make those statements; and our thoughts about this release.

Dimension CM 14 – Problem solving, Enterprise ready

Software change and configuration management has become more complex and difficult than ever, Software Change & Configuration (SCCM) solutions need to evolve this challenge. This is not simply because of the increasing rate of change as solutions must rapidly adapt to customer demands for new and better services but also in response to the greater visibility required to maintain solution health and quality levels as a result of changes and enhancements. As technologies and platforms evolve and proliferate, such as cloud, mobile devices, etc., parallel development efforts that assure consistency in user experience and interfaces across multiple, different platforms become more complex. Today's typical SCCM solutions are only casually integrated, seldom process-oriented and lacking in end-to-end visualization capabilities and health indicators.
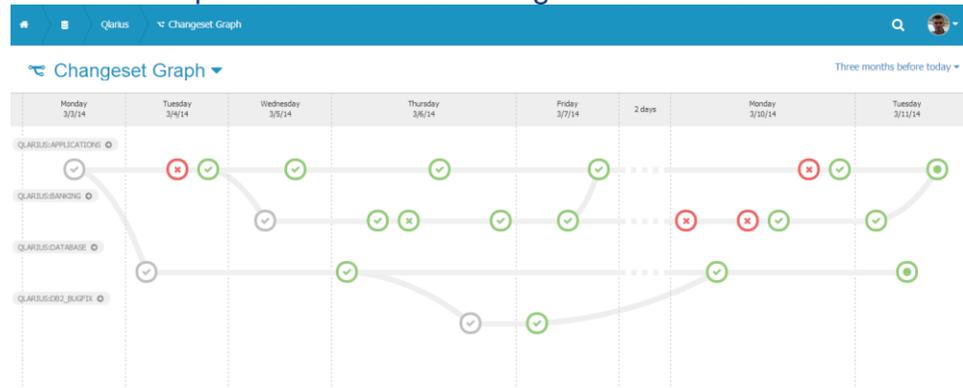
The process-centric implementation of Dimension CM 14 brings discipline and provides context to change and configuration process thus increasing management efficiency. Changes are made more quickly and consistently to speed the entire process.

This is the result of three innovations:

1. Change and Branch visualization – simplifies and clarifies changes made in each branch of the solution. Dependencies are presented and tracked visually; details can be aggregated to avoid overly complex diagrams that hinder understanding relationships. Tiered visualization allows insight into release readiness as well has highlighted problem areas. Ken Vane, IT Change and Configuration Manager at Navy Federal Credit Union, also an early adopter, says: *"We understand speed is the new paradigm, but delivering at speed and with quality has been a challenge. The visibility & insight that CM 14 provides, allows us to see if we are converging to quality or diverging from quality in real-time."*

2. Integrated Peer Review – automated, web-based processes, configurable to match existing procedures, support and document a collaborative peer review for all steps in the change and configuration effort. Complete documentation of all activities and decisions provides a full audit trail that is accessible to parties. Teams have full visibility from change-to-review. Process-oriented structures make it easy to introduce and enforce compliance with best practices for code review improving quality. Consistent visibility facilitates team cooperative efforts making them more effective to speed results and

improve efficiency. Richard Prescott of SPTS Technologies, another early adopter, says: *"Managing the merge of new features from one branch to another will be greatly simplified, and the adoption of peer review will improve team collaboration and quality."*

3. Global Scalability and Security – today's global economy means that change management and development teams are widely dispersed across multiple different time zones. This reduces performance while increasing the difficulty in assuring a seamless consistent user experience as application code changes. A personal library cache provide significant performance improvements for these distributed teams. Automated, centralized management and control of updates and upgrades to Dimension CM code reduces administrative maintenance burden. A personal library cache maintains a local copy of all files downloaded from, and uploaded to Dimension CM. This means users experience 'local performance' when the repeatedly fetch or access the same revisions. Transferring just the delta file changes if modification made between revisions, reduces loads and speeds network traffic. Or, as Maximillian Janker at Teamstreet puts it: *"With Dimensions CM 14, I am able to continuously integrate while visually displaying the health and quality of release readiness, increasing development velocity and downstream visibility."*

The Final Word

There's more to Dimension CM 14, such as its integration with an increased number and variety of development environments and solutions including mobile IDE's and CI integration. And, its built-in Araxis File merge that also works with non-text formats such as Word or PDF. You can find out about these and more at the [Serena Dimension CM](http://www.serena.com/index.php/en/products/featured-products/dimensions-cm/)[1] website:

Serena doesn't include hard performance metrics in their current literature, so we asked about that. They do use Dimension CM 14 internally. Their own team reports productivity improvements of up to 30%, which is pretty impressive. Of course, results from customer experiences would be viewed as being less biased. We've extended an offer to pursue documenting customer experiences. We'll be following up on that. But, for now, from what we've seen and heard about this new release, we recommend that you take a look.

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[1] http://www.serena.com/index.php/en/products/featured-products/dimensions-cm/

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About Ptak Associates LLC

Our analysts cover a breadth of areas that are ideal to bring you the "Big picture" on new technology trends across the industry. Whether it's Cloud computing, Mobile (BYOD), the Internet of Things, DevOps, Big Data, IT Operational Analytics, Workload Optimized systems or other new trends, Ptak Associates analysts cover these trends with a unique perspective that is both deep and broad.

Our clients include both industry leaders and dynamic newcomers. We help IT organizations understand and prioritize their needs within the context of present and near-future IT trends, enabling them to use IT technology effectively in solving business problems. We help technology vendors refine their strategies, and provide them with both market insight and deliverables that communicate the business values of their products and services. We provide all clients with an understanding of how their competitors are playing in their market space, and deliver actionable recommendations.

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