



**CASE STUDY | FINANCE**

# **FlexiGroup**

Simplifying database  
deployment with  
Redgate ReadyRoll

"With such a high number of databases, we'd never be able to reach this scale without automation."

Working in a 70-strong IT team in Sydney, Australia on 91 different applications and a very high number of complex database, Shane Gonsalves and Brent Robinson, know deployment time demands orchestration, speed, and precision. As Technical Delivery Manager and Release Management Team Lead at FlexiGroup, Shane and Brent are, together with their team, responsible for ensuring releases go out on time and to plan.

**FlexiGroup** is a diversified financial services group, providing finance products and payment solutions to consumers and businesses through a network of retail and business partners. Operating in Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, and the Philippines, FlexiGroup's software supports the global sales offices and call centers.

As FlexiGroup has grown, so the IT team has evolved its practices to keep pace. The team has changed its deployment approach from one that was both manual and difficult to administer, to one that is automated, repeatable, and reliable. At the heart of the new automated approach is a toolset which includes Redgate ReadyRoll and Octopus Deploy.

"ReadyRoll enables us to make changes at a faster rate while maintaining a high level of comfort."

Prior to evolving an automated approach, the team deployed their databases in one of two ways: either by generating scripts manually for a release and placing them in a common folder or project; or using PowerShell to extract a DacPac from a development database and subsequently generating a sync script for each target environment.

The first method meant the team executed the scripts by hand, whereas the second method was partially automated. Neither was perfect and both brought uncertainty to deployment time. 'Run once' scripts, such as transactional data updates, were hard to maintain too. This made it challenging for the team to orchestrate data changes on a regular basis. It wasn't easy, for example, to add new products alongside schema changes to the system.

As business demand for software changes increased, the team knew their methods needed to change. The team turned to automation, and releases have become faster and more accurate to the extent the team no longer needs to consult a DBA for the majority of changes.

"With ReadyRoll on board, we're now enjoying a simplified development and deployment experience that no longer requires heavy administration to ensure quality."

One of the greatest challenges for the team was integrating changes from multiple projects into a master solution. The team has solved this with ReadyRoll working in tandem with Octopus Deploy.

When developers check in their database changes to source control, ReadyRoll produces a deployment package using the OctoPack feature in Octopus Deploy. These packages are taken all the way from development through to production, using the team's 'build once' methodology. Application and database changes are deployed at the same time, allowing the team to make significant changes without having to worry about backwards compatibility.

# "We have greater confidence in merging changes across different projects."

With 70 members in the IT team, comprising developers, testers, release engineers, delivery leads, business analysts, project managers, DBAs, infrastructure, helpdesk, and application support, a tool was needed that everyone could use across multiple projects.

The team found that ReadyRoll was compatible for everyone and highly flexible. With ReadyRoll, developers can use their IDE of choice to make changes, whether that's Visual Studio, SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS) or a mixture of both.

Each team member has a sandbox to develop solo, then the team promotes changes to a development environment that contains additional data. Later in the development cycle, code is merged from other team members into a separate environment for integration testing. There are further quality gates to take the team's changes through UAT and, finally, to production.

# "ReadyRoll gives us the best of both worlds."

The team evaluated both the state-based approach to deployments offered by SSDT and the migrations-first approach in ReadyRoll.

As Brent explains, it's the precise view the team has into which scripts will be run and in what order that won their decision to go with ReadyRoll: "We like the granular control over releases that the migrations approach with ReadyRoll gives us."

At the same time, the team also takes advantage of one of ReadyRoll's 'hybrid' features – the Offline Schema Model. This provides a read-only view of stateful objects in the databases, allowing changes to tables, users, roles, and more to be tracked easily. As a result, Shane and Brent believe the team now has access to 'the best of both worlds'.

"ReadyRoll has given us the opportunity to grow in a situation that otherwise would have constrained business growth or required additional IT resources."

The introduction of ReadyRoll has transformed the way the team works with database releases.

With greater confidence in the scalability of releases, the team has been able to deploy software changes on time, even against an ambitious program of work.

As Brent explains, "If the team were still deploying our application components by hand, it would have been virtually impossible to achieve the pace of change we're seeing today."



To find out more about deploying databases with ReadyRoll, visit [www.red-gate.com/products/sql-development/readyroll](https://www.red-gate.com/products/sql-development/readyroll) where you can download a 28-day free trial.



To discover every feature of Visual Studio Enterprise, visit [www.visualstudio.com/products/visual-studio-enterprise-vs](https://www.visualstudio.com/products/visual-studio-enterprise-vs) and download the free trial version.



To download a 45-day trial of Octopus Deploy, visit the Octopus Deploy website at <https://octopus.com>