

Developing Agility

The Quarterly Newsletter for Unisys EAE and Agile Business Suite Customers



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The Platform for Innovation

By Fred Dillman, Chief Technology Officer, Unisys



Application modernization is not a novel concept. What is new, however, are the factors that have combined to elevate the importance of application modernization to a truly strategic business imperative.

Cloud and mobile technologies, fabric architectures, and digital business transformation are just a few of the innovations that are accelerating change in our industry and forcing organizations to increase the speed at which they modernize their underlying applications. When the pace of change is paramount, the ability to evolve existing applications is faster and more responsive than rip-and-replace approaches.

Organizations have made considerable investments in their existing code base over a number of years and must now determine how to extend what's already in place to capitalize on new technologies in ways that enhance and advance their businesses. Consider the current drive to digital business – where applications are now playing central roles in supporting and automating a new breed of complex, critical customer-facing services.

Not only do these considerations emphasize the mission-critical nature of the application in today's business and IT landscapes, they also speak to the immense importance of quickly updating and enhancing these resources to reflect changing requirements. >>



But, as our clients routinely tell us, budgets remain tight and this often limits their ability to integrate and improve applications in a timely manner. When there's only enough resources available to maintain the application, finding the time and money to modernize and enrich it to drive better customer outcomes can feel like an impossibility.

And that's where Agile Business Suite (AB Suite) comes in.

Better Productivity, Better Maintenance, Better Modernization

We've built – and routinely updated – AB Suite with an eye toward facilitating rapid application modernization. To that end, we've continually enhanced its model-based code generation capabilities in ways that result in greater developer productivity – and let you quickly regenerate an application to leverage the latest technological advances (take a look at this issue's [Engineering Corner article](#) for some concrete examples of how we're boosting productivity in AB Suite 5.0).

The ability for AB Suite to seamlessly integrate with other solutions on the marketplace – including Microsoft® Team Foundation Server (TFS) and mobile development tools – makes it easy for developers with varying skillsets to make an immediate, positive impact on critical modernization projects. Not only does this reduce the initial development cost, it makes ongoing maintenance faster and less expensive. And when maintenance is easier, there's more time to focus on innovation.

The productivity advances extend to application deployment, as well. Agile development is much less effective if you cannot rapidly deploy new releases into your production environment. So, AB Suite is being designed with full DevOps capabilities in mind in order to support the rapid deployment of software. Plus, AB Suite can help you take advantage of modern architectures

by enabling you to rapidly optimize and ready your applications for these infrastructures, eliminating the bottlenecks that typically happen when you need to deploy an existing application in cloud or mobile environments.

And, integration with the [ClearPath® fabric-based infrastructure](#) means you can automatically leverage the environment's advances in performance, as well as its ability to seamlessly connect Microsoft Windows® and Linux® environments, to further enhance your applications. In this way, you'll be better positioned to keep them aligned with evolving business needs.

Charting a Path Forward

AB Suite 5.0 delivers significant capabilities that enhance developer productivity and simplify application deployment to a variety of target environments, but it's certainly not the end of the improvements we envision for the solution.

You can expect to see further improvements that make existing AB Suite models easier to update, allowing developers to quickly deploy applications to different infrastructures – making it possible to further increase productivity and flexibility, while lowering costs and simplifying ongoing maintenance. We are also exploring the integration of rules engines and other third-party tools to help you accelerate application modernization and digital transformation initiatives.

Rapid testing is an essential ingredient in any agile development environment, so you can expect to see new capabilities in the area of automated testing. We'll leverage our integration with Microsoft TFS to expand the testing tools and options available to AB Suite developers, with the goal of helping you deliver greater software quality and rapidly and confidently deploy new releases. >>

And then there's the fabric. Fabric architectures offer the benefits of enhanced application performance via the use of high-speed interconnects. As more applications become hybrids of components running on various infrastructures and environments, AB Suite will help optimize the deployment architecture of applications to maximize fabric and performance benefits. The goal will be to allow you to flexibly intermix Linux, Windows, and ClearPath applications in whichever combination makes most sense for your business.

For example, you could keep a database in the ClearPath environment, while the rest of your AB Suite application resides on a Windows partition within the fabric infrastructure. Or, you could reverse the order – the choice is yours. Regardless of the route you choose, your application will benefit from the exceptional performance delivered by the high-speed interconnects within the fabric – all while AB Suite masks the intricacies of the environment.

With the capabilities available in [AB Suite 5.0](#), we're already well on the way to bringing these goals to life. AB Suite 5.0 is the first deliverable in our next generation of AB Suite development products. By bringing the full power of the Microsoft TFS development environment to our customers, and enhancing it with the powerful productivity and DevOps capabilities, we aim to simplify application development and modernization for the mobile and cloud-based world.

Overall it's an exciting time to be in the IT industry, and AB Suite will continue to deliver the functionality needed for developers to keep up with the rapid pace of change.

I encourage you to challenge our consultants to show you all the ways AB Suite 5.0 can enhance your existing EAE and AB Suite applications, as well as improving the productivity of new development projects.

Important Update: Changes to the Subscription Process

We've combined our newsletter and mailing list subscriptions, making it easier for you to connect with us and stay on top of the latest news and innovations from Unisys. Please be sure to re-register via the links below.

Sign up here for the Developing *Agility* newsletter and updates on all things Agile Business Suite.

Sign up here to subscribe to ClearPath Connection and receive the latest ClearPath related news.

Building a Bright Future with AB Suite

By Marijn Wegh, Program Manager and IT Manager, Achmea



The leading insurance provider in the Netherlands, Achmea provides its customers – nearly half of all Dutch households – with health, life, and non-life insurance. Throughout our history, we have built a strong reputation for helping our customers make better informed decisions about their health, risks, and financial futures.



This commitment to our customers' well-being pervades all aspects of Achmea's operations – including IT. Take our application IKAZ, for example. IKAZ handles the administration of all healthcare

policies and claims from the various providers, like doctors, dentists, and hospitals, Achmea works with each day.

It's a fairly complex application with over 30,000 function points, 1,600 Specs, 600 reports, and more than 2,000,000 lines of logic. More than thirty developers, eleven engineers, nine designers, and roughly five systems operations personnel work on IKAZ, over 3,000 end users interact with it daily, and it handles anywhere from 2,000,000 to 4,500,000 electronic transactions each day. IKAZ runs on a ClearPath Libra 790 system.

Clearly, IKAZ holds mission-critical importance to Achmea. In order to continue to keep it as an integral, effective tool for our staff and customers, we asked our long-time partner Unisys to evaluate IKAZ and offer recommendations for how to evolve the application.

This analysis revealed several important insights. To minimize risk and increase efficiency, we needed more automation in the areas of version control and release management. And, we also had to modernize our development practices

for many reasons, including being able to better integrate with Achmea's internal Microsoft Competence Center. The Microsoft Competence Center supports the majority of Achmea's applications, so it was important to make sure they could do so for IKAZ, as well.

In light of these needs, we determined the time had come to migrate IKAZ from Enterprise Application Environment (EAE) to Agile Business Suite.

Making the Migration Happen

The first step in our migration effort was a proof-of-concept (PoC) exercise performed with Unisys in September 2012. The PoC focused on a few key reports and Specs, and helped us confirm that performance and functionality would be as expected when we transitioned to AB Suite. It was a valuable effort, as it helped our management feel comfortable with the move.

The migration effort began in earnest in May of 2013. As with any migration, ours was all about testing.

We tested every aspect of the AB Suite environment – key areas of functionality, batch performance, and systems operations, to name a few. >>

Although we had several internal teams responsible for running these tests, Unisys – and project manager Boris Maltha and his team in particular – played a key role in every aspect of the migration. In this way, the entire project was very much a collaborative effort – and one that made our partnership grow stronger.

We worked closely with Unisys global and local teams throughout the migration. While I was initially worried about response times with such a widely dispersed group, that issue never came up. I never had the feeling our Unisys contacts were far away. In fact, the world felt really small during this project.

Reaping the Benefits of a New World

We went live on AB Suite on June 20, 2014. The production environment delivered exactly as promised – business leaders didn't report any issues or problems. Overall, they were very satisfied with the outcome.

Our development team noticed a dip in productivity immediately after we went live, but that disappeared once they became accustomed to working in AB Suite. Now, they greatly enjoy the modern environment and appreciate how easy it is to develop new capabilities within the AB Suite environment. At this moment, we have a performance issue concerning the debugger, which is often used by our development team, but we are working closely with Unisys to solve this problem.

Plus, the team is looking forward to exploring many of the new functions in AB Suite – like object-oriented programming – they don't use today.

The migration also helped us more closely align with our internal Microsoft Competence Center by giving us a development environment based in Microsoft Visual Studio®. Testing Microsoft Team Foundation Server (TFS) and establishing a plan for its implementation helped in this regard, as well.

This spring, we plan to use TFS for version control and source management and to further automate release management. We'll also use TFS to meet regulations that require us to tightly control our releases and make clear exactly what's going into production.

Leveraging TFS is just one of the things we are excited about with AB Suite. We are also looking forward to using AB Suite to attract younger developers who are familiar with modern development environments based in Visual Studio.

All in all, our migration proved to be very valuable. We significantly modernized our development capabilities and established a strong foundation for future innovations. I'd recommend migrating to any organization that's been debating it. Just be sure to test often, educate and train your development staff, and set realistic expectations with business leaders, and you'll surely be as successful as we were.

Keep it Current: The Importance of Staying Up to Date on AB Suite Releases



If you look up the phrase “status quo” in any number of online dictionaries, you’ll find that it typically refers to “the existing condition or state of affairs.” It’s become shorthand for any time we talk about keeping things the way they presently are.

Sometimes that’s a good approach. But other times, it’s better to keep moving forward.

If you are currently using Agile Business Suite 2.0 or AB Suite 3.0, then it’s time for you to move forward – to a more current AB Suite release. Here’s why.

In AB Suite 3.0, we began to integrate the solution with Microsoft Team Foundation Server (TFS) – enabling access to TFS version control. With [AB Suite 5.0](#), this effort has been completed. Now, for example, when you check-in a change, you can automatically trigger a Build and even start a unit test. If the Build or test fails, the change is not checked in.

There have been numerous developer productivity enhancements in AB Suite 4.0 and 5.0 – all intended to make using the solution easier and more intuitive. For example, in AB Suite 4.0 we enhanced the “Synchronize Class View” feature. And in AB Suite 5.0, you can easily learn about an element via the new “Find all References” feature.

And thanks to the wizards introduced in AB Suite 5.0, just starting a new project or importing a model into AB Suite is much simpler. Plus, with the new [Client Framework functionality](#) in AB Suite 5.0, we’ve made it easy to develop state-of-the-art user interfaces (UIs) using your preferred technology, all while retaining an optimum level of integration with your AB Suite application.

Bigger is Better

When it comes to these recent releases, bigger is certainly better. AB Suite 4.0 significantly increased limits for the MCP environment – by orders of magnitude in most cases. And for our Windows clients, the AB Suite 5.0 Windows Runtime is now 64-bit, providing improved memory capability for large applications.

Of course, each release of AB Suite adds support for newer versions of Visual Studio and other underlying software, giving you automatic access to a range of updated capabilities. Moving to the latest AB Suite release offers other benefits, as well.

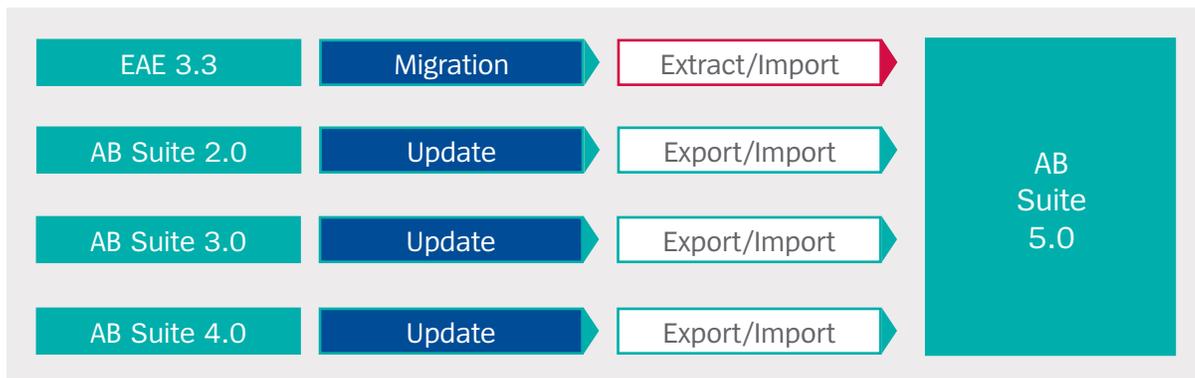
Starting with AB Suite 4.0, we revised our process for providing hot patches and IC Releases. ICs are now delivered more frequently and replace hot patches. So when you move to a later 4.0 or 5.0 IC Release, you get all the fixes that have been provided to date. It makes moving easier and less risky because you’ll have the ability to use all the fixes, as well as any added later for other clients, in your current IC Release level.

That said, you still may think moving to a more current feature release is a big effort. While there certainly is work involved, we have made the process as simple as possible. >>

For example, you can upgrade your AB Suite 2.0 application directly to AB Suite 5.0 – or any major feature release in between. In Windows, moving your production database forward is as simple as pointing the updated Runtime at the existing database. And, migrating your model to the updated model database in AB Suite Developer is a simple export and import – conversions are handled automatically.

So, now's the time to get current on AB Suite releases – especially with Phase 1 support for AB Suite 2.0 and 3.0 ending in March and June 2015, respectively. If you want to discuss upgrading, please contact us at ABSuite@unisis.com and we'll be glad to help.

Getting to AB Suite 5.0



Engineering Corner: Boosting Developer Productivity in AB Suite 5.0

By Jim Nichols, Lead Engineer, Unisys

As a developer, when it comes to what keeps me productive, my mantra is quite simple: I want to be able to quickly “get to where I need to be,” so that I can “see what I need to see,” and “do what I need to do.”



Agile Business Suite 5.0 continues the trend of introducing features that help me meet these goals, specifically by taking advantage of capabilities within Visual Studio and introducing new functions into AB Suite Developer.

AB Suite 5.0 introduces new wizards that minimize the steps and time required to set up a project, access a new or existing model, and even begin work using the new Client Framework functionality. Simply select File>New>Project, and under Templates/Agile Business Suite, select “Applications” to see the list of wizards. Right from the start, AB Suite makes it simple to do what you need to do.

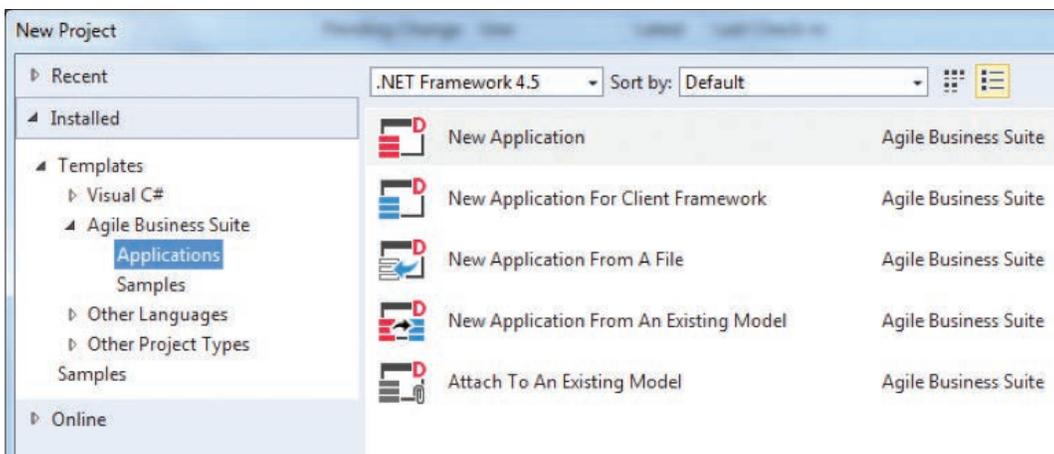


Figure 1. The new wizards offered in AB Suite 5.0.

Additionally, AB Suite 5.0 includes new icons that allow you to determine, at a glance, the stereotype of an element. This is a great time-saving feature for AB Suite developers – it’s no longer necessary to select an element in the Class View window and then check the stereotype in the Properties window. The new icons clearly reflect the stereotype, making it easy to quickly see what you need to see. >>



Figure 2. The stereotype icons available in AB Suite 5.0.

Need to quickly find and change a particular Visual Studio option? No problem – just go to Tools>Options and take advantage of the newly added search box. Simply enter the name of the option you would like to check or change, and the list will be immediately filtered down to what you need. In this way, you can quickly get to where you need to be, see what you need to see, and do what you need to do.

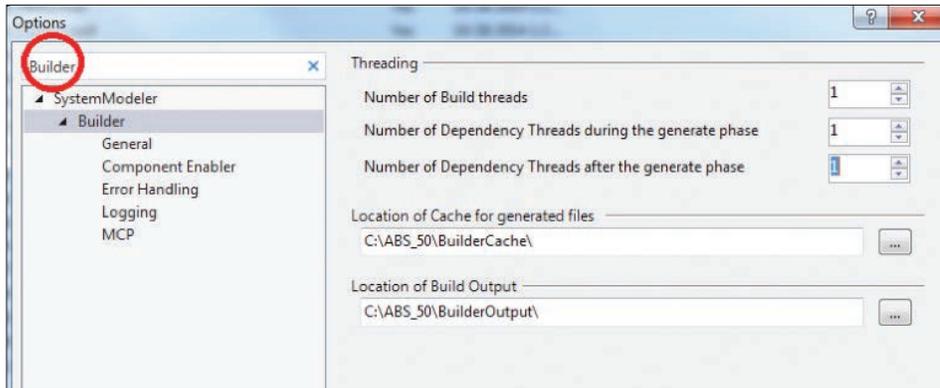


Figure 3. Filtered results delivered via the new search functionality.

Previous versions of AB Suite allowed developers to determine what elements were defined the same as a given element or inherited their definition from that element, and even see all the places where the element was used. However, getting to this information required you to navigate through multiple tabs in the Documents window, such as the Properties and Dependencies tabs.

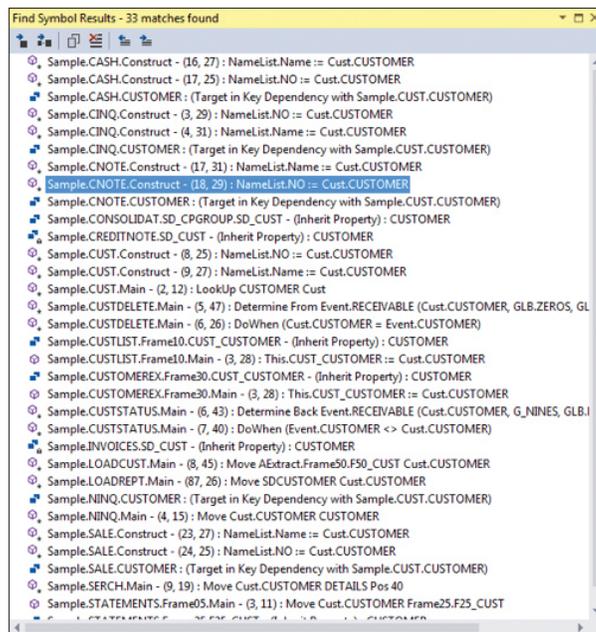


Figure 4. A result from the “Find All References” search.

Now, AB Suite 5.0 introduces a new capability that streamlines access to this type of information. In the Class View, simply right click an element, choose “Find All References,” and you will see matches related to inheritance, AutoLookup dependency, event set, and occurrences in logic – all in a single window. Selecting an entry in this window will then take you to the specified area. Again, you’ll find it easy to see what you need to see and get to where you need to be, so that you can do what you need to do in a timely manner.

Finally, if you want to more fully embrace Application Lifecycle Management, you can now take advantage of the build and test capabilities within Visual Studio to supplement the source control integration that has been available in AB Suite for several releases. Our Automated Test Tool (ATT) now creates C# Test Projects – where the recordings are automatically converted into C# routines – enabling full Microsoft Team Foundation Server

integration. We have also implemented the MSBuild capability, which utilizes the Team Foundation Build (TFBuild) feature to help you create processes that automatically build and test your application. To put it simply, more automation is possible with AB Suite 5.0, allowing you to focus on the application in a more productive way.

AB Suite 5.0 is now available. If you use AB Suite today, we hope you will explore and take advantage of these new features. If you have yet to make the move to AB Suite, now’s the time! We want developers to be as good as they can be using AB Suite, and that includes becoming as productive as possible.

Important Update: Changes to EAE Version Control Capabilities



In March 2014, we published a Customer Technical Bulletin (CTB #6716) announcing that Phase 1 support for the UREP-based EAE version control capability will end on June 30, 2015.

Since source control remains a vital application development process for EAE users, we realized the importance of providing a more current version control facility to replace aging technology in the underlying EAE version control infrastructure.

So in 2012, we began implementing a replacement that uses the Microsoft Source Code Control (SCC) API in Enterprise Application Developer. This new interface was then tested using three third-party version control products:

- Microsoft Team Foundation Server
- Apache™ Subversion, an open source option
- IBM® Rational® ClearCase®

We introduced the replacement product offering in phases as hot patches in 2012. The complete solution was incorporated into EAE IC Release 3.3.3300, which was delivered in September 2013. In May 2014, some refinements were added in EAE IC Release 3.3.3310.

If you are using the legacy, UREP-based EAE version control product today, here are some key points to consider:

- The time to plan your migration from the legacy product to its replacement is **now**
- You will likely need to modify at least some of your release management processes to accommodate the new capability

We are offering an EAE Version Control Migration Workshop to help you plan the move and start the process. Please contact your Unisys account executive or email diane.mcgonigle@unisys.com to learn more about this service.

AB Suite, Visualized



You'll be seeing this image a number of places. As our new, signature visual representation of Agile Business Suite, it will accompany many of the communications we distribute to the EAE/AB Suite user community throughout the year.

So, we wanted to formally introduce you to the image and describe what it means to us.

We view it as a metaphor for the way the two core elements of AB Suite – the developer and production environments – come together in a single solution.

AB Suite Developer glues together different products and standards to create a powerful, open, easy-to-learn, easy-to-use environment for developers. It incorporates a number of products from Microsoft, including Visual Studio, SQL Server®, Team Foundation Server, Windows Presentation Foundation (WPF), Windows Communication Foundation (WCF), and more.

And, several Unisys solutions – such as Enterprise Database Server for ClearPath MCP, Enterprise Output Manager, and the ClearPath ePortal software – further enrich the environment.

These components come together in the final, production-ready solution your developers create. As a combination of objects, the final AB Suite solution contains the main AB Suite code, as well as C# code for web services, front ends, screen definitions, and the like.

And, as the new image shows, these many objects work together to form a solid, integrated, hybrid solution that delivers optimal business benefits to our worldwide user base.

Info Center



New additions to our libraries of How To documents, white papers, and other useful information include:

- **Demonstration:** Importing model with configuration filter in AB Suite 4.0 **(New)**
- **Demonstration:** Importing model with configuration filter in AB Suite 5.0 **(New)**
- **Demonstration:** Using Single Debugger Configuration **(New)**
- **How To:** Understanding Client Framework Generation **(New)**
- **How To:** Install Visual Studio 2013 for AB Suite 5.0 **(New)**
- **How To:** Install SQL Server 2014 for AB Suite 5.0 **(New)**
- **How To:** Migrate Models Under Source Control from AB Suite 4.0 to 5.0 **(New)**
- **How To:** Use Registry Keys with Windows Runtime **(Updated)**
- **How To:** Configuring Firewalls for Networked AB Suite Windows Runtime **(Updated)**
- **Utility:** TrackerStats (a utility that captures statistics about AB Suite on Windows runtime systems) **(Updated)**

To view these and other resources, simply go to public.support.unisys.com and choose “Documentation” in the “Public Information” box located on the left-hand side of the screen. No special login is needed.

We also encourage you to view the list of available [AB Suite training courses](#). These courses are a great educational resource and include a lot of graphics, interactivities, simulations, and demonstrations with voice-over narration.

And for even more training and educational resources, please visit the [Unisys Education & Training web site](#) and check out the [AB Suite Course Catalog](#).

In addition, please be sure to check out the latest [press release](#) about AB Suite 5.0.

Future functionalities are provided for information only and specifications are subject to change without notice.

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