# Die Harder or The Best Way to Integrate ACRs and Innovation Packs for Oracle Siebel

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**Introduction**

Oracle has introduced an Innovation Pack Strategy with Siebel 8 to move from long release cycles of new features and high cost of major upgrades to shorter release cycles and to enable customers to make use of changed or newly available functionality in Siebel without the need to upgrade the application. This session is about showing a 2-way approach how to take over these new functional advantages on highly customized applications. The approach combines an automated bottom-up technical with a top-down functional process analysis to identify affected objects in a customized application and to estimate the required Level of Effort to apply the changes to your Repository, Schema and seed data as well as new or updated Seed Data.

**Purpose of the session**

The purpose of the session is to show you a way to adapt Oracle Innovation Packs or single ACRs to your customized Repository with the 2-way approach to mitigate risk and cost based on our lessons learnt.

The session will give you an experience report or inside view about the challenges and risks during the merge of an Innovation Pack to a highly customized Siebel application repositories.

**What are Innovation Packs or ACRs and how can they support your business?**

Innovation Packs give customers the opportunity to include new out-of-the-box functionality in Siebel without the need to do major upgrade of the application at the same time.

Instead of major upgrades it's possible to merge selective industry-specific functionality to your application.

**Oracle's road map to success for Innovation Packs and ACRs**

The Siebel CRM investment strategy for clients is the adaption of annual Innovation Packs (iPacks) which are going to ship every $2^{nd}$ half of each year to provide functional and non-functional innovations and enhancements frequently. Beside that every $1^{st}$ half of each year a Fix Pack is shipped including bug fixes and certifications. Innovation Packs and Fix Packs (FP) are shipped for Siebel

8.1.1.x and 8.2.2.x until Siebel 8.3.0.x is going to be released officially by Oracle as combined product line.

Beside that Oracle is also providing Approved Change Requests (ACR) for different industries which will be bundled in the following Innovation Pack but which can be meanwhile also installed to gain advantage of new functionality, like for example Promotion Groups in the Telco industry or in general improving AIA support for Siebel.

**Motivation for this presentation**

During the last years IBM developed and customized one of the biggest Siebel CRM applications in the world with customer specific requirements which leads to a highly customized application. For this application the challenging task was to include some new industry specific functionality provided by Oracle within Innovation Packs or single ACR's.

IBM developed a unique approach to identify upfront the project affected objects within the repository which are changed and/or used by the Innovation Pack or ACR.

This approach allowed IBM to do a detailed planning regarding timeline, effort and risk before the actual project will start and gives the customer the option of a better planning of the project.

**What can be used out-of-the-box to analyze the impact of applying an Innovation Pack or ACR to a custom Siebel Repository?**

An Innovation Pack or an ACR are not more and not less than Seed Data and Repository changes to an existing vanilla or custom Siebel Repository. That means that the existing *Import from Archive* in Siebel 8.1.1.8 or earlier releases functionality which is available in Siebel Tools can be used for that exercise to decide if existing configuration shall be overwritten, merged or changes not imported. The import wizard is changing with Siebel 8.1.1.10 (Incremental Repository Merge – IRM[1] or Innovation Packs Deployment Wizard) and will then also include the view on what is going to be changed in Workflows but without merge functionality.
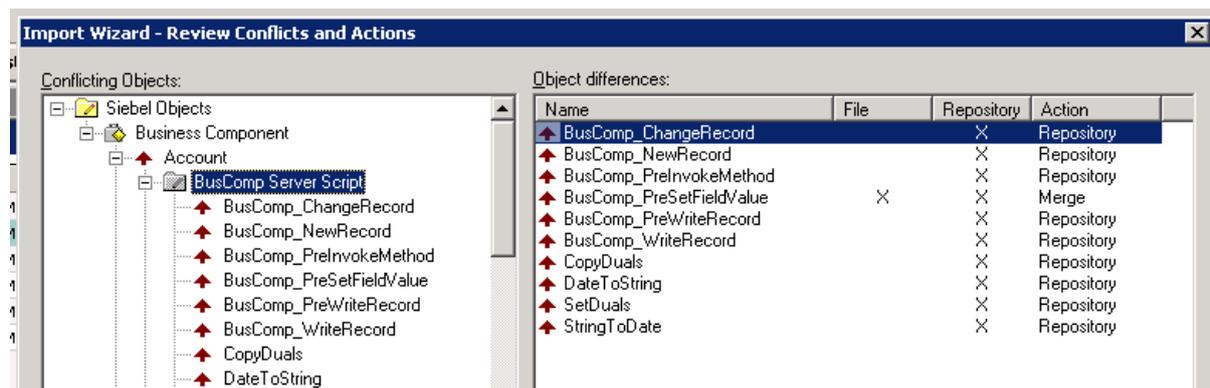


*Illustration 1: Siebel Import Wizard*

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[1] For more details see http://www.oracle.com/us/products/applications/atg/siebel-tools-irm-1915961.pdf

Though going this way either with the old or new wizard is quite hard to go through the logs to assess the impact and to provide adequate estimation for applying the Innovation Packs or ACR and makes only sense for only minor customized Siebel applications.

**Bottom-up**

The technical approach uses a result set of affected objects from a Vanilla local database with applied ACR/Innovation Packs and compares the affected objects with the custom Repository including possibly affected objects (with virtual upgrade ancestor set in Application Usage Map).
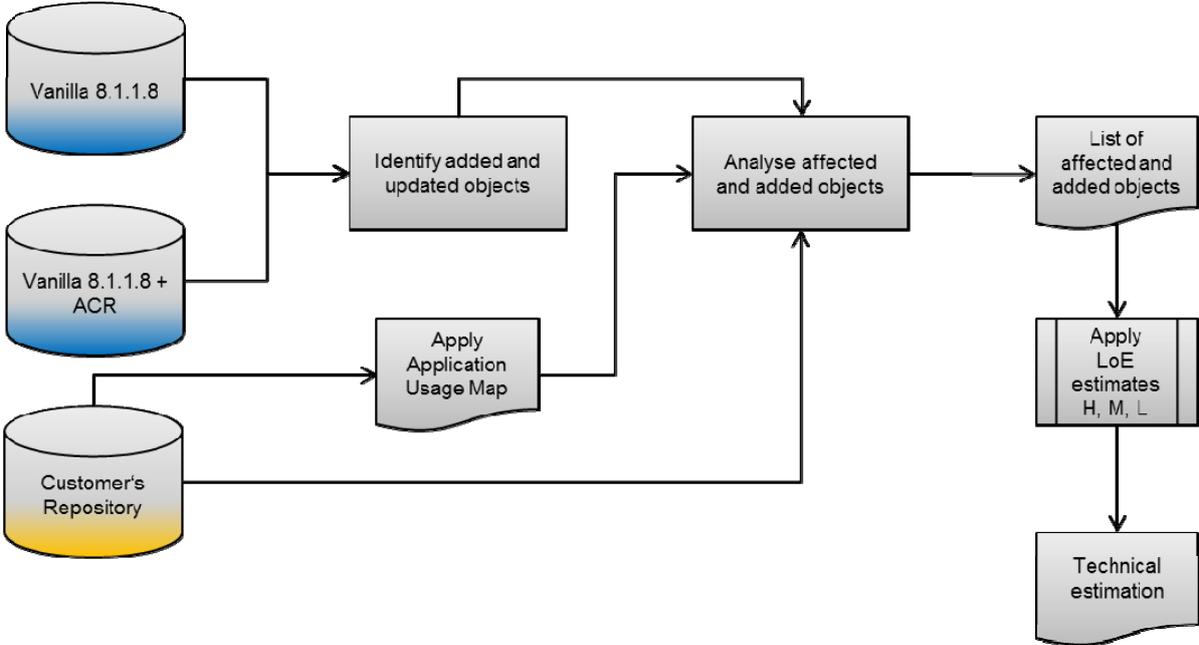


*Illustration 2: Flow of the technical approach*

This approach presents all affected and possibly affected objects in one Excel list for better review and estimation purposes.

**Technical challenges while applying Innovation Packs or ACRs**

One of the most important technical challenges while applying Innovation Packs or ACRs is to avoid existing configuration be overwritten or to identify that. The tool output mentioned above clearly states what has been created, updated or deleted by the Innovation Pack or ACR.

**Overview of Added and Modified Siebel Repository Objects**

Analysis completed 07.03.13 on SAMPLE vs. Siebel Vanilla 8.1.1.8 + ACR 471, 500 (tables) and 620

| Project Name (CRM-T) | Type | Name | Status | Uptake Action | Merge Direction | Level of Effort | Added Count | Removed Count | Modified Count | Total count of changed objects |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Order Entry | APPLET | Order Entry - Line Item List Applet (Sales) | Modified | 1 - Merge | 1 - CRM-T | 1 - Low | 5 | 0 | 5 | 10 |
| Eligibility Compatibility | APPLET | Product Compatibility Matrix List Applet | Modified | 1 - Merge | 1 - CRM-T | 2 - Medium | 15 | 0 | 20 | 35 |

*Illustration 3: Excel containing affected and possibly affected objects*

**Functional challenges while applying Innovation Packs or ACRs**

In addition to the described technical challenges of the Innovation Packs or ACRs merge, there are also functional challenges which must be addressed during the project.

The session will also give an overview how to deal with these in combination with the technical ones and how this and what differences exist with regards to conventional functional requirements.

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