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DTAP overview

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Development, testing, acceptance, and production (DTAP) is a multi-phase method for software testing and deployment. The four letters in DTAP indicate the following frequent steps:

- Development
- Test
- Acceptance
- Production

Let's have a look at the configuration of the DTAP stages in Application Workspace first. After you've logged in into Application Workspace, navigate to **Manage** > **Portal** > **Portal Settings**.

In the **Packages** section, you will notice that *Development* and *Production*' are mandatory, *Test* and *Acceptance* are optional stages. If you don't want to use the Test and Acceptance stages, all you have to do is disable them here.

> The Test and Acceptance stages are available only when you have a Release and Patch Management license.
> Packages can be modified only in the Development stage.
> When a package in the development stage is being distributed/installed/launched then both distribute and install action sets will be executed forcefully every time the package is triggered. The configured action set frequencies will be ignored.

Stage deployment and priority

Each stage of a package can be deployed to an identity. This allows you to control which identities have access to specific stages on a per-package basis. Which stage gets deployed to the identity is determined by:

- The package entitlement, which can be a user, user collection, group, device, device collection or context.
- The priority of the stage. The lowest stage is Development and the highest stage is Production.

Scenario 1

User1 is directly entitled to PackageA in the Production stage.
User1 is also part of a device collection that has PackageA assigned with the Test stage.
In this scenario, the Test stage version of the package will be deployed to the user, as it is of a lower priority.

Scenario 2

User 2 is directly entitled to PackageB in the Test stage.
There is no version of the Package in the Test stage, but there is a version in the Acceptance stage.
Because the Test stage is empty, the higher one, in our case Acceptance stage, will be deployed to the user. If the Acceptance stage were to be empty also, the Production stage would have been deployed.
In our scenario, the priority of stages has no influence, as we need to deploy the latest version of a package, that is closest to the production stage.

Release dashboard

The Release dashboard is displayed on every screen of the **Releases** section of a package.



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Keep in mind that you can carry out a number of dashboard-related actions:

- Select – Selecting a stage will display the entries related to the package version pertaining to that stage. The colour of the selected stage is a darker shade of blue. As you can see in the image above, the Acceptance stage is selected.
- Edit – By double-clicking on a stage, the **Edit release** dialog box will open where you can edit the name and description of the package version pertaining to that stage.
- Move
  - You can move stages by drag and drop and overwrite other stages. Observe in the image below that the colour of stages changes while hovering the Development stage over them. Green means the stage will be overwritten and red means that the stage will be skipped and cancelled.
  - In the image below an * is displayed in the development stage, meaning it has pending changes. Once you drag and drop the version to another stage, Application Workspace prompts you to insert a name and description for the new version. Once you click **Confirm**, the changes are automatically saved and the version is incremented by 1.
  - Depending on the screen where you land, moving stages behave differently:
    - In **Overview** you can move and overwrite and no new version is created.
    - In **Shortcuts**, **Variables**, **Filters**, **Actions** – adding, deleting or editing an entry in the Development stage creates a new version, incremented by 1.



For more information about all DTAP stages and what cancelled and archived versions of a package are, see Packages.