

Bennetts & Octopus Deploy

 bennetts.co.uk

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- Ryan Hird, DevOps Engineer

Their Story

Bennetts is a bike insurance specialist and insures over 230,000 motorcyclists in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Established in 1930, Bennetts has over 200 staff, based in Coventry and Peterborough, providing competitive quotes to over 350,000 riders a year.

What was it like before Octopus?

In a word, painful. We were using Release Management (which I think was still called InRelease at that point).

How was Octopus able to help?

Before switching to Octopus we were using Microsoft's Release Management. We had a lot of issues with RM from maintainability / usability to a lack of customisation (email templates), auditability, or lack thereof and even fundamentals like knowing what was deployed where. Octopus has always been really easy to use and we don't need to go through any sort of onboarding or hand over when new members join the team as we did previously.

We had written all of our deployments as PowerShell scripts and run them via Release Management. When we moved to Octopus it was as simple as renaming the deployment script and setting a deployment process step to run it. It's safe to say initial setup was really quick. Being a financially regulated company audit trails are really important to us. Octopus has really clear easy to find records of everything and if it came to producing data for an audit our deployment details would probably be the easiest information to get out of the whole lifecycle. Another big win for us when we moved to Octopus was the use of agent based deployments.

We find this model works far better for us. It has also given us the ability to do things outside of just deployments that we weren't really expecting. A few examples of this are; using health checks to alert on disk space usage and certificate expiry dates, copying log files from machines rather than remoting on to them, recycling app pools when one of our apps had a memory leak and resetting the system time via PowerShell when the time on the server changed and prevented us from logging on to the server.