

Accela Fall 2021 Release

What's New in Version 21.2 of the Platform and Civic Applications

Accela is pleased to announce the Fall 2021 release for our customers and prospects. This release includes updates and enhancements to our Civic Platform, Accela Mobile, Accela Citizen Access, Accela Insights, and Civic Application products.

As with all Accela's releases, the Fall 2021 release was driven by feedback and input from our customers, including established needs and also the "new normal" requirements introduced with stay-at-home and public safety mandates in recent years.

The focus of this release was to:

1. Continue to help agencies improve operational agility, and ability to adapt to change
2. More easily derive high quality insights and intelligence from their process data
3. Provide increased flexibility in SaaS environments to better support the software development lifecycle (SDLC) requirements of agencies
4. Continue work to offer the most engaging and useful interfaces for citizens

The Civic Platform V21.2: Azure and Self-Hosted

Accela has heard from our customers their priorities are now more about agility and resiliency than before. To fulfill this need, we have included new capabilities in the Civic Platform to make it easier to configure and deploy new solutions faster.

New Configuration Manager

Accela's Configuration Manager is part of the administration tools offered with the Civic Platform to help agencies manage their configurations across environments and projects. Used by both SaaS and on premises customers, it is a powerful tool with rich capabilities to **import**, **export** and **delete** configuration files, which include record types and other configuration settings and information across environments.

This new tool replaces *Data Manager* and can migrate approx. 150 different configuration elements in a more intuitive and intelligence methodology, helping agencies create more agile development and deployment operations.

The new Configuration Manager includes:

- > Advanced filtering capabilities to make is easier to select the record types desired for an import or export job.
- > When importing configurations, it can block things that can be harmful in a new environment, including EDMS standard choices, report settings, and payment adapter settings
- > Enhancing logging so admins can better determine what was imported and what was not
- > Automatic checking for dependencies when deleting jobs
- > Removing the dependency on MS Silverlight, allowing for broader use of browsers including Chrome or Edge

Microsoft Office 365 Integration

Both SaaS and self-hosted customers will see stronger support for Office 365 in Communication Manager. This is a broadly used email server environment, and V21.2 makes is easier to choose Office 365 as a dropdown in the email configuration screen, as opposed to previous setup method which required additional steps.

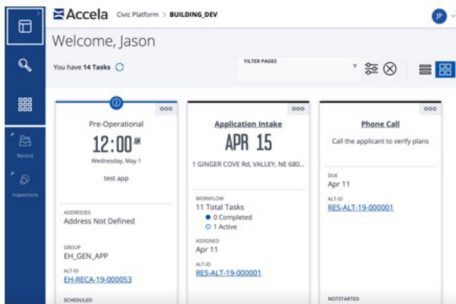
Staff Login Screens

The back-office staff login screen has a fresh new look with V21.2. This includes an enhanced header display where staff can easily see which environment instance they are logging into, such as DEV, SUPP, TEST or PROD. In a service pack release scheduled for shortly after the release, the background image can be set up to distinctly identify the environment instance as well.

V21.2 Enhancements for SaaS (Azure) Customers

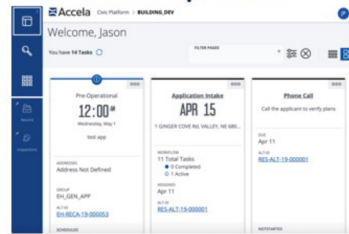
With the need for solution agility and configurability comes the work to develop, implement, test, and train on various configurations and solutions within SaaS environments. For this reason, we have introduced the availability for additional non-production environments for our Azure-hosted customers.

Production

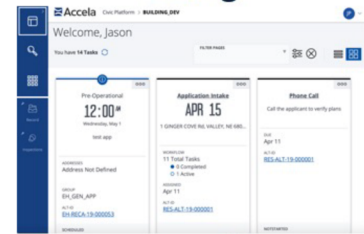


Non-Production

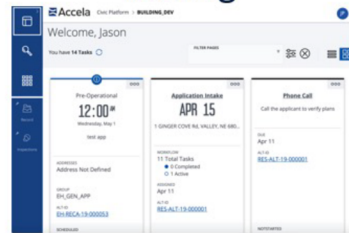
Development



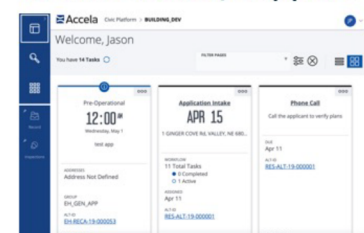
Testing



Training



Maintenance/Support



Previously, Accela offered three environments for our customers, including **Support** (also often used for development), **Test** (often used for training) for non-production functions, and a **Production** environment for deployment to end users.

Feedback from customers was a need for additional non-production environments for situations such as dispersed IT resources, situations where agencies might be training on certain aspects of a solution while configuring others, multi-phased projects, and other requirements driven by a customer's specific Software Development Lifecycle (SDLC) methodology.

With V21.2, Accela will be offering, at an additional charge, an unlimited number of non-production environments to meet these needs, adding flexibility and efficiency when developing and deploying new configurations or solutions.

Above is a diagram of a typical set of functions across multiple non-production environments.

New Features for Accela Insights

Accela Insights is Accela's advanced reporting and data visualization tool for our SaaS customers. It is built on Microsoft's PowerBI platform, and customers can build powerful and comprehensive data visualizations, dashboards, and reports using their data to communicate insights that end users understand. With the Fall 2021 release, we are providing significant updates and enhancements to this platform.

Pre-built Dashboards for Civic Applications

Our Civic Applications are pre-configured solutions built on the Civic Platform and focused on specific domain areas for state and local governments. With the Fall Release, Accela is pleased to announce pre-built dashboards across our Civic Applications using Accela Insights. For customers, this means if they are deploying our Civic Applications for building permitting, environmental health, business licensing, or any one of our other Civic Applications, they can use dashboards created specifically for that use case at no additional fee. These dashboards reflect our deep domain knowledge of these specific areas, and save time and money in deployment, and ensure agency staff are receiving the most value from their process data.

Other New Features in Accela Insights

There are many other updates to Accela Insights with the Fall Release, including:

- > An "Import Dashboards" feature which provides ability to move dashboards more easily across all environments, including Test, Supp, and Prod. It also shows additional context around the dashboards such as who created them, who last edited them, when they were last edited and how many times they have been ran.
- > A "My Dashboards" feature to enhance the way admins deploy dashboards and reports to end users and how those dashboards are accessed and consumed
- > Many other updates to make Accela Insights more productive, more intuitive, and easier to administer

Updates to Accela Mobile

With V21.2, Accela has improved Accela Mobile to improve security and usability. Specifically, these updates include:

- Support for Single Sign On and Multi-Factor Authentication, ensuring agencies can implement these same security capabilities for their mobile users that they have for back office users
- Improvements in how documents can be added or manipulated in Accela Mobile, including new markup capabilities options for photos, and upload of file types aside from images and videos, allowing users to attach PDF and other file types to a record or inspection
- Ability for users to create new records based on an asset or an intersection, instead of just address or parcel location
- Improvements in overall stability, performance, and usability

Updates in Accela Citizen Access (ACA)

Agencies are always looking for ways to improve the citizen's experience, and Accela has improved ACA to meet those needs.

With V21.2.2, ACA includes an optimized public user registration process for users using different mobile devices and a streamlined registration process. It also uses Accela's Oxygen design system which includes an updated look and feel and includes accessibility updates that meet WCAG 2.1 guidelines.

The contact management functionality has also been redesigned to support the collection of multiple contacts required for permits and licenses. This redesign smooths the flow (pageflow) and makes it easier for applicants to understand the requirements and input the contact information for different types of contacts.

Finally, with V21.2.2, citizens can now enter multiple addresses, parcels, and owners as a part of the application process for large projects such as a strip malls or multi-family residential housing.

Accela's Civic Applications

Civic Applications are Accela's pre-configured solutions built on the Civic Platform. They are designed to help agencies deploy solutions more quickly and cost effectively than custom-built solutions and are easier to support and maintain over time.

For the Fall Release, we are enhancing the user interfaces across all Civic Applications and providing new versions of Service Request Management and Environmental Health Civic Applications.

Premium Citizen Experience in All Civic Applications

Premium Citizen Experience is Accela's dynamic user interface technology that allows agencies to develop agency-wide and department-specific websites quickly in a low-code/no-code environment. It allows them to:

- Provide information to citizens about services offered by agency
- Ensure a more efficient interaction using pre-qualification questions
- Create a menu-driven and guided citizen experience
- Integrate seamlessly with Accela Citizen Access for the deeper form fill, payment, and document submission and review functionality

With V21.2 Accela is offering pre-built content for the Premium Citizen Experience department-level interface technology for all Civic Applications solution areas. This means pre-built content and configurations, saving agencies significant effort as they no longer need to configure those elements by scratch. Accela's Premium Citizen Experience is available to all customers for an additional fee.

Civic Application for Environmental Health V3

Accela first launched its Environmental Health Civic Application in January of 2019, and since then, we have expanded the functionality to include a full set of record types and other pre-built components in the solution.

For the Fall 21 release, we are focused on supporting our Decade customers, and their migration from that platform to the new V3 of the Civic Application. Features to help these customers includes:

- Data conversion tools which dramatically speed the time it takes to convert and import existing data from Decade into the Civic Application
- A system that converts the reports used by these Decade customers to the Civic Application in SSRS. This means they do not have to rebuild their reports when they migrate, saving time and money
- Several other features which ensure parity with capabilities they had in Decade

Decade customers can gain significant value by moving to the Civic Platform, including increased back-office functionality, a complete citizen form fill system with ACA, and mobile clients which were not offered with Decade's Envision Connect. This release reduces the time and cost, so they have a feasible and attractive way to make the transition.

Service Request Management V2 – Essentials and Extended

The Civic Application for Service Request Management has three functional levels, including Essentials, Extended, and Enterprise versions which include differing capabilities and price points to meet the needs of specific customers.

This Civic Application has been available for a short time in the Essentials version, which provides an informative and engaging user interface for citizen requests, which can capture information about the request, and then send it to other systems needed to process service delivery.

With the V2 version of SRM we are adding the “Extended” version, which includes the rich process automation power of the Civic Platform. This means our SRM system can not only capture the information from the citizen but provides the workorder management and other “back end” functionality as well. It includes a robust workflow to process the requests, integrations to other systems, management of the service delivery through other departments such as Maintenance or Public Works and includes mobile functionality for work crews or inspectors as needed.

Summary

Given the dynamics of the recent past, and the impact they have had on government agencies, the priorities we consistently hear are agility and resiliency. To Accela, this means ability to configure and deploy new and modified solutions quickly and efficiently. It also most often means deployment via SaaS, so that no matter what happens external to the agency, citizen facing service delivery solutions will always be available.

The Fall 2021 Release reflects this new reality. It is designed to ensure faster development and deployment of new solutions, reconfiguration and modification of existing ones, and better experiences for both back-office employees, field workers, and citizens alike.

For more information on the Fall 2021 release, please contact your Accela Account Executive.