Sitecore Project Life Cycle

Development
> in which the features or modules are being built

Build
> or *Integration* in which the implementation is put together as a single testable package

Testing
> in which the features or integrated package are tested against the specifications

Deployment
> in which the package is ultimately deployed onto the production environment

What to focus in each cycle

1. Development
   a. Setting up a development environment
   b. Local deployment
   c. Version Control
2. Build and integration
   a. Building your solution
   b. Integration
3. Testing
   a. Managing Tests
   b. Unit tests
   c. Integration, Acceptance or other automated testing methods
4. Deployment
   a. Deployment strategy
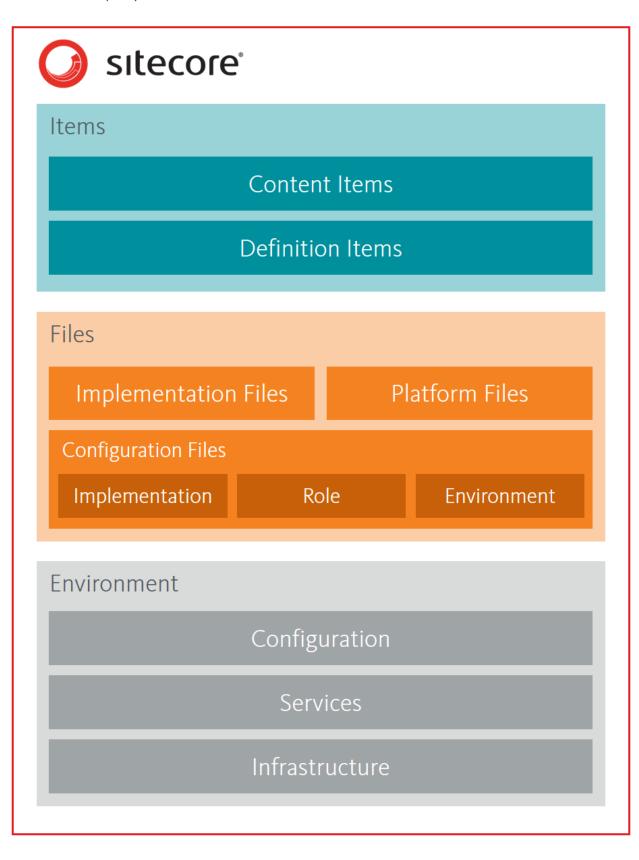   b. What to deploy and to where

What to deploy

Figure: Parts of a deployed Sitecore instance

The diagram above breaks down the overall parts of a typical deployed Sitecore instances, and highlights some of the data types and configurations to consider. The following describes the diagram in more details. Ownership in the table means that a change in the given environment always takes precedence – and therefore will overwrite changes in other environments.

Items

What is it: Items in the Sitecore databases (core and master)

Content Items

What is it: The content that is displayed on a website or other digital channel, and settings that affect the behaviour of a website or another digital channel. This content can be edited by content authors.

Owned by: Production

Direction: Typically moved from production to other environments for testing. Some items might initially be created in development and deployed to production in an install-once process.

Definition Items

What is it: Sitecore data items that configure the implementation and that have a direct relationship with the presentation and business logic in the code, for example templates, fields, layouts, placeholders etc.

Owned by: Development

Direction: Installed as part of application deployments from development to QA and ultimately production.

Files

What is it: Files on disk on the servers

Implementation Files

What is it: The implementation specific files, for example assemblies, views, CSS and JavaScript files.

Owned by: Development

Direction: Installed as part of application deployments from development to QA and ultimately production.

Platform Files

What is it: Vendor specific files, i.e. files that are installed as part of a standard module

Owned by: Development

Direction: Installed as part of application deployments from development to QA and ultimately production or as part of the initial configuration of the environment.

Configuration files

What is it: .config or other files that configure the system.

Implementation

What is it: Configuration that sets up the functionality, but that is application wide

Owned by: Development

Direction: Installed as part of application deployments from development to QA and ultimately production.

Role

What is it: Configuration that sets up the instance as a particular Sitecore instance role, for example a delivery, management or xDB processing server.

Owned by: Deployment

Direction: Set up by the deployment process as part of the configuration of the installation. Any individual role configuration files can be managed in Development as part of the implementation.

Environment

What is it: Configuration file changes relating to the specific running server or specific environment, for example connection strings, server names, domains etc.

Owned by: Deployment

Direction: Set up by the deployment and managed in the specific environments.

Environment

What is it: The infrastructure needed for running the Sitecore and the application.

Configuration

What is it: Server or environment specific configurations such as network, DNS, hosts file changes, machine.config etc.

Owned by: Deployment

Direction: Set up as part of the initial deployment process. Can be automated but often is not.

Services

What is it: Related services running in the environment or on the instance server, for example operating systems, IIS, SQL servers, Windows Services etc.

Owned by: Deployment

Direction: Set up as part of the initial deployment process. Can be automated but often is not.

Infrastructure

What is it: The underlying server, virtual or physical,

Owned by: Deployment

Direction: Set up as part of the initial deployment process. Can be automated but often is not.