



# The Enterprise Guide to using GitLab



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# Introduction

Typical toolchains, made up of multiple solutions and third-party plugins, while sufficient for individual projects and teams, will struggle to scale across an enterprise. Procurement lead time, the effort of tool integration, onboarding engineers, and tool maintenance can all be tough, especially when multiplied across products and teams. Successful DevSecOps is key to helping your teams ship secure, stable software quickly and efficiently.

GitLab offers a powerful solution with enough breadth (and often, depth) to help teams iterate faster and work together to build high-quality, secure software faster than ever before – all while keeping complexity out of it. With GitLab you can start turning concepts into reality, without waiting for retooling. It's the market's most comprehensive DevSecOps platform – supporting your teams from planning to production and bringing all your insights together in the same place the work gets done.

And it offers so much more than simple CI/CD, with native value stream management, source code management, project management, and out-of-the-box security and compliance. Can you tell we're big fans?

In this guide, we'll walk you through the key benefits GitLab offers enterprises like yours, its core capabilities that address your organisation's needs – including agile planning, automated software delivery, and continuous security and compliance – and the various packages on offer.





Part one:

# Why GitLab?

## The only platform you need

GitLab is a one-stop DevSecOps platform designed for today's rapidly changing IT landscape. It gives enterprises all the tools and visibility they need to take an idea from planning and creation through security, testing, and governance to release. And it supports dev, ops, and security teams to deliver the needs of internal stakeholders and end customers.

With one single solution to manage and optimise each stage of the software delivery life cycle, it's much easier to speed things up, reduce costs, and make secure, resilient software. And it helps with collaboration, bringing teams together to work in harmony all in one place.

Beyond vendor and tool rationalisation, some big reasons enterprises are choosing GitLab over other DevSecOps tools are:

- Easier collaboration between teams
- Less risk and lower costs
- Getting to better software faster
- Simpler processes

## Leading the way

The depth and breadth of GitLab's features make it the most comprehensive platform on the market. And we're not the only ones who think so. In 2024, GitLab was named a leader in the [Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for DevOps Platforms](#) for the second year running – positioned highest on the 'ability to execute' and 'completeness of vision' axes. Being recognised as a leader means GitLab is executing successfully against its current vision and is well-positioned for tomorrow.

## Understanding the benefits

Let's take a closer look at why GitLab is loved by developers and trusted by businesses of all sizes, especially large enterprises.

### **A comprehensive platform**

GitLab contains everything you need for your whole DevSecOps lifecycle, so you can visualise what's going on without referring to multiple tools. And with platform-wide analytics, you have the data you need to understand and optimise your processes.

### **Simplify how DevSecOps gets done**

With one common set of tools used by your development, security, and operations teams across all lifecycle stages, DevSecOps is simplified for everyone – and can be scaled without introducing complexity. You can forget those annoying disruptions caused by less integrated third-party plugins or APIs and get on with what matters most.

### **Secure software, every time**

With each commit, GitLab scans for vulnerabilities and compliance violations, so it's easier to detect problems as they arise. You can rest easy knowing your software is safe and fit for purpose, while reducing the risk of errors making it to production.

### **Transparency to take control**

GitLab captures every stage of your software development life cycle automatically. This makes it really easy to keep track of who did what, when, and why. This level of traceability – from planning to approvals – makes audits and retrospectives much easier too.

### **Seamless scaling**

GitLab's flexible CI/CD pipelines support your needs, no matter the size of your organisation, with reference architectures that show you how to scale for installations with more than 50,000 users. You can also deploy GitLab into a public or private cloud, or on a Kubernetes cluster and scale horizontally too.

### **AI-based optimisations**

GitLab is always improving pipeline efficiency and resource management, and nowhere is this more clear than with the introduction of GitLab Duo. This feature uses machine learning to identify what's caused a pipeline failure, suggest fixes, and improve your CI/CD process. By leveraging AI, it helps cut down troubleshooting time, improve development efficiency, and provide actionable solutions.

## A more collaborative culture

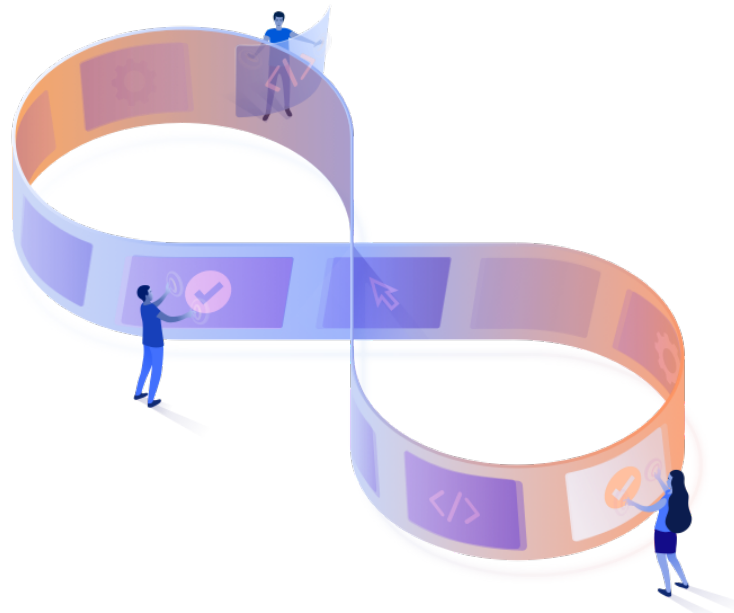
Effective collaboration leads to increased productivity, which is why working together is a core tenet of how GitLab was designed. Not only is GitLab's own [handbook](#) publically available and designed to ensure all company information is accessible to everyone it also allows you to introduce checks and balances, making it easy for your people to review code, carry out improvements, and approve changes.

## Better for your bottom line

Beyond process benefits, GitLab is also a sensible investment for your enterprise. According to a [2022 Forrester report](#) (commissioned by GitLab), enterprise-scale organisations in particular stand to gain significant cost savings by using GitLab, with an ROI of 427 percent. For example, the findings showed businesses\* with an annual revenue of \$60 billion, could potentially save include:

- \$48.3 million by more efficiently managing vulnerabilities because developers have greater visibility and understanding of what's going on.
- \$44 million by reducing the time spent building homegrown security tools, typically manually intensive tasks.
- \$39.9 million by reducing the time spent in each phase of the SDLC, enabling faster code development, better code, and better collaboration.
- \$29.1 million by reducing the number of defects through testing, scanning, and verifying code before it's released.

With so many wins for enterprises, GitLab is a strong contender to handle your DevSecOps needs. So let's explore some of the fantastic features it has to offer...



\*Organisation with 5,000 initial users, growing at a rate of 25 percent each year.



Part two:

## What can GitLab do for you?

Those benefits sound brilliant, right? But you're probably wondering how GitLab makes all those gains possible. Well, its smart capabilities are designed to support a number of key DevSecOps practices, including source code management, continuous integration, and continuous delivery.

Let's take a look at the features on offer across four core areas:

### **Agile planning**

### **Automated software delivery**

### **Continuous security and compliance**

### **Value stream management**

### **Agile planning**

GitLab was created with scaling in mind so your dev teams can work in an iterative, incremental, and innovative way to deliver increased value. If you're using a framework – from Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe) and Spotify to Disciplined Agile Delivery and Large Scale Scrum (LeSS) – GitLab can help your teams apply the relevant practices to plan and manage work with agility.

Whether you want basic issue planning, assigning, and tracking or Kanban-style project management, GitLab can help. You can organise work with labels, use merge requests to correlate work and make the most of boards and roadmaps to get optimal visibility over your workflow.

Program and portfolio management is made easy, too. With Epics, you can organise your business initiatives, tracking groups of issues that share a theme.

Subgroups are ideal for securely aligning teams and projects into programs. Some other features to look out for include:

- Issue boards let you keep track of issues across different products and visualise their progress all in one place.
- Burndown charts help you mitigate risks in real-time and visualise work that's happening in your current sprint.
- Wikis are great for keeping all your documentation in the same place as your code for easy reference.



### **Automated software delivery**

By automating software delivery, your teams can be more productive, getting features, updates, and new software out to customers more quickly. GitLab supports this faster, more efficient delivery in a number of ways. It also improves your developer experience by reducing context switching, making collaboration easier, and minimising repetitive tasks.

GitLab is geared to support the following automated practices:

- **Continuous change management** – by tracking and controlling every change to your source code and offering distributed version control for your global teams.
- **Continuous integration and verification** – build and test every change automatically, so you detect errors early and scale with parallel builds thanks to merge trains.
- **On-demand environments** – helping you build ephemeral test environments to minimise the risk of manual infrastructure configuration mess-ups and time-sucking click-ops for faster releases and faster recovery.
- **Continuous delivery with A/B testing** – with an automated release process, every change is ready to go, and disruption is kept to a minimum. You can even test changes on a subset of users to get their feedback first.

## **Tool integration for GitOps workflows**

GitOps has gained popularity for managing Kubernetes-based environments, making it easy for teams to quickly manage and make operational changes to infrastructure that can be peer-reviewed and version controlled. GitLab integrates with tools like ArgoCD to make your GitOps workflows a breeze.

While GitLab acts as the source code repository where your infrastructure and application manifests are stored, ArgoCD continuously monitors the repository and automatically applies any changes to your Kubernetes cluster. This means your cluster stays in sync with the state defined in your GitLab repository. You get auditable and repeatable declarative deployments, streamlined collaboration on infrastructure changes, and automated deployments, reducing manual intervention.

## **Continuous security and compliance**

Cloud-native applications have transformed software development for the better, but the added complexity of containerisation, orchestration tools, web APIs and other infrastructure-as-code elements leave software vulnerable and open to attack. Regulatory requirements go far beyond box-ticking – continuous software compliance is essential if you have any chance of managing risk outside of your code's own security flaws.

Luckily, with GitLab, this is built into your existing workflows, and you only have to manage one application for all your compliance needs. It gives you the confidence to commit, with automatic licensing compliance and security scanning built right in. And with automated policies and everything in one place, audits are so much easier to carry out. You can use labels to easily apply common compliance settings – or your own policy framework – to a particular project.

GitLab has also focused recently on incorporating Software Bill of Materials (SBOM), which improves transparency, helping teams track dependencies and detect vulnerabilities early. This growing trend is vital in ensuring software supply chain security, particularly given the recent increase of supply chain attacks.

GitLab uses CycloneDX SBOM for dependency scanning, which analyses your application's dependencies for known vulnerabilities in the dev phase of your application's life cycle. This way security findings can be identified, categorised, and compared between the source and target branches and you can proactively address risk before the code change is committed.

## **Value stream management**

It's never been more important for enterprises to identify and maximise flow in IT value streams – from ideation and planning to development and delivery. Providing stakeholders with visibility into every stage of the process, and actionable insights, helps identify inefficiencies and maximise customer and business value.

Because GitLab is where the work happens and where you can visualise it in action, it's uniquely positioned to help you understand and optimise your Value stream in context, identify where waste lies and eliminate it, and make data-led decisions to help improve flow.

### **GitLab's value stream management offerings include:**

**Single source of insight** – with everything in one place, you won't need to waste time figuring out where your value lies.

**Value Stream Analytics** – giving you actionable reporting for common workflows and metrics straight out of the box, with the option for customisation.

**Single-click drill down** – so you can focus on value and remove blockages as soon as they appear.

**The 4 key DORA metrics** – use these to benchmark your DevOps maturity internally against other teams or to compare with other organisations.

**Detailed insights** – with GitLab, you can understand issues/bug creation, time to merge, and triage hygiene to help you find and fix inefficiencies.

And that's only some of what GitLab is capable of. If it's starting to sound like a game-changer for your organisation, then the next step is to pick a package that's right for your needs. See the next page for the options available.



Part three:

## What packages are available?

As a growing or large enterprise, there are two GitLab packages to consider: Premium and Ultimate. Here we look at both to help you decide which makes more sense for your organisation.

### GitLab Premium

#### What is it?

One tier up from GitLab's free offering, Premium, will help you enhance your teams' productivity and improve collaboration. It's got features preparing you for enterprise scaling, like high availability, as well as some enterprise-level features – think priority support, live upgrade assistance, and a technical account manager.

With Premium, you get 50GB of storage, 100GB of transfer per month, and 10,000 compute minutes per month. It's available in both SaaS and self-managed deployment options.

#### Who's it for?

Premium is the perfect choice for scaling organisations on their way to becoming an enterprise. It's also a good choice for businesses with large numbers of users from multiple teams.

#### Key features

- Code ownership and protected branches
- Merge requests with approval rules
- Enterprise agile planning
- Advanced CI/CD
- Enterprise user and incident management
- Support



# GitLab Ultimate

## What is it?

Ultimate is GitLab's top package, so you get all the bells, whistles, and then some. On top of the Premium offering, you'll also find advanced capabilities, such as security risk mitigation, compliance, and portfolio and value stream management – helping you tap into all the benefits GitLab offers. Recent updates include GitLab Duo AI-assisted code suggestions as well as enhanced logs for auditing and ensuring adherence to regulations. You'll also get a customer success manager for tailored support.

Ultimate is also available in SaaS and self-managed deployment options. Compared to Premium, you get five times the amount of storage, transfer and compute minutes per month. And you also benefit from free guest user licences, ideal if you have users who don't use the system very much.

## Who's it for?

If optimising and accelerating delivery while staying ahead of the curve on priorities, security, and compliance are at the core of your business, then this package could be for you. Ultimate is the ideal solution for most enterprises developing software at scale.

## Key features

- Suggested reviewers
- Dynamic application security testing
- Security dashboards
- Vulnerability management
- Dependency scanning
- Container scanning
- Static application security testing
- Multi-level Epics
- Value stream management
- GitLab Duo code suggestions
- Enhanced audit logs



## Need help deciding?

Help is here! Adaptavist is a GitLab Select and Professional Services Partner on a mission to help you build and implement CI/CD systems that work for your organisation. Our full suite of services are designed to maximise your investment in GitLab so you can get the most out of this powerful tool.

If you're interested in seeing what GitLab could do for you, but aren't sure where to start, then our expert consulting and managed services are just the ticket, helping you to accelerate your DevOps journey. They include:

- DevOps consulting to assess your maturity and scope out the right requirements to strengthen DevOps capabilities across your organisation.
- GitLab implementation to help you design and set-up CI/CD pipelines and run toolchains with your own unique customisations.
- Cost-efficient GitLab migration to bring data from existing systems and tools together in one seamless platform.
- Integration support to connect your existing toolsets to GitLab.
- Integration with major cloud providers, including AWS (we're an AWS Advanced Tier Consulting Services Partner and AWS Solution Provider), Azure, and Google Cloud, supporting your multi-cloud or hybrid cloud environment.
- Training sessions to get everyone from system admins to end users up to speed on GitLab and its capabilities.
- Managed services, leveraging our years of experience to take the pressure of infrastructure management off your people so they can focus on outcome-based work.

Want to try GitLab for yourself with a little help from Adaptavist?

Sign up for a free trial today and see what all the fuss is about.

[Get ready for GitLab](#)

Gartner, Magic Quadrant for DevOps Platforms, By Manjunath Bhat, Thomas Murphy, Joachim Herschmann, Daniel Betts, Chris Saunderson, Hassan Ennaciri, Bill Holz, Peter Hyde, 5 June 2023.

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## We're The Adaptavist Group, experts in agile transformation

We help organisations transform to continuous change being their business as usual. We do this by supplying technology, providing advice, and delivering change through modern, iterative approaches to development, deployment, and application lifecycle management.

Adaptavist is Atlassian's largest platinum partner, supporting more than half of the Fortune 500. We are uniquely placed to provide our experience, expertise, and insight to help your business.

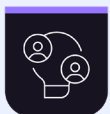
Whether you want training for your team, to build a software platform for your company, or to automate your existing tooling, we can help you. If you want to unlock the full power of Atlassian and transform your business at scale, get in touch with our team today.

**Ready to transform your organisation?**

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 GitLab

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