
Alfabet FastLane 11.6 IR

Alfabet FastLane release 11.6 IR (**Innovation Release**) continues Alfabet's journey to provide an easy and joyful end-user experience aimed to remove the barriers of adoption in the user community. The functional scope of Alfabet FastLane release 11.6 IR has been extended and new functionality has been integrated in the user interface to further ease data maintenance and analysis. With Alfabet FastLane 11.6 IR, you can make informed business decisions about your IT architecture based on up-to-date and accurate data. Out-of-the-box analytics address business questions that provide meaningful insight to your IT architecture and the interdependencies of applications and technology in the business.

Alfabet FastLane release 11.6 IR is available as a cloud-based application and accessible via Microsoft® Edge®, Chrome™, Firefox™ 109 and higher, and Apple® Safari® web browsers. No system set-up is required. Minimal configuration allows you to extend the indicators, roles, and custom attributes that reflect your company's needs. You can begin straightaway.

Alfabet 11 introduces a completely overhauled, clean, modern, and intuitive user interface:

- Standardized navigation provides immediate access to your favorites and your most recently touched objects and ensures you can quickly get your hands on all IT assets captured for your company's business, application, information, and technology architectures. Easy search capabilities allow you to find any IT asset or business question in your repository directly in the home page. Breadcrumbs enable you to understand your navigation path as you move through Alfabet FastLane and allow you to easily return to a view you were working with at any time.
- Powerful and smart data workbenches enable you to capture and maintain your data as a single source of truth in the company. Sorting and moving columns in the data workbench as well as advanced filtering options gives you the control to see the data how you want to see it, and global filters ensure that you don't need to repeatedly set the same filters in other views in Alfabet FastLane.

Every data workbench includes a data table - where you decide which data is relevant for you at the moment - and additional out-of-the-box graphics that allow you to visualize your data according to your needs. Graphic visualizations can be sliced-and-diced via filter settings to show content from various perspectives. These visualizations can then be exported or added to a content repository and later displayed in content areas throughout Alfabet FastLane. Out-of-the box visualizations include matrix reports, Gantt charts (timelines), portfolio charts, bar charts, pie charts, doughnut charts, and line charts. Preconfigured analytical reports are also available for some data workbenches to address a fixed thematic scope that visualizes the dataset specified in the data table.

- Enhanced data capture and editing capabilities ensure users can enter and maintain data with only a few clicks. Object creation is straightforward. The **New** button is prominent and easy to understand and only a few attributes like **Name** are required to create an asset in the new streamlined editor. All other information is entered directly in either the data workbench or content area. When the user clicks in the field, a relevant selector opens and the user can specify the value or values in case of the definition of an attribute of the type `Reference Array`. Data workbenches also support the simultaneous update of multiple data entries at once (bulk update), simplifying the efforts of keeping data up-to-date and accurate.
- Data quality assessments are available throughout Alfabet FastLane to ensure decision-making is based on reliable and precise information. Each user has a dedicated view listing data quality rule issues for the assets that they are responsible for with links that open the location where the data quality issue can be fixed. Right after the data is changed, directly affected data quality rules will be immediately recalculated and data quality scores updated in the user interface.

Dedicated data quality reports are available for all data workbenches and business questions. In content areas, data quality issues in attribute groups are highlighted with a colored border around the field. Issues occurring in views are visualized with hints about potential issues. Users can click the data quality severity link to see detailed information about what can be done to fix the data quality issues and where to fix it.

Some preconfigured data quality rules are set to active per default to get you going with the most common business questions. Administrative users can activate and deactivate the data quality rules provided by Software AG and create new data quality rules for their company's IT portfolio. Furthermore, administrative users can also configure that emails are sent at regular intervals to either authorized users or users with specified roles listing their data quality rule violations. The email provides links that open the location in Alfabet FastLane where the issue can be resolved.

- Analytics focus on the most business-relevant questions in order to help you know where to focus change efforts to execute your company's strategy. Business questions are out-of-the-box visualizations that provide answers about the as-is state of your application, technology, and investment portfolios. Each business question includes analytics that provide answers to your most critical issues as well as views that allow you to understand and update the relevant data. Global filtering ensures that the same filter is applied to all views in the context of a business question. Business questions are grouped to help you focus your efforts:
- **Governance:** Establish governance of your IT assets with business questions that address responsibility and accountability for IT assets and where to focus your change efforts. Typical business questions include **Who is responsible for our assets?** and **What should we be focusing on?**
- **Transparency:** Gain transparency of your IT portfolio with business questions that provide insight about the as-is landscape, architectural dependencies, and technical debt. This includes questions like **What are our architectural dependencies?**, **What is our technical debt?**, and the new business question **What is our OPEX distribution?**
- **Rationalization:** Rationalize your application landscape using business questions to identify functional redundancies in your IT and understand how to eliminate the complexity of architectural dependencies without endangering critical business areas. Examine the business questions **What are our investment/retirement candidates?** and **What are our cost drivers?**, and the new business question **What is the status of our rationalization plan?**
- **Roadmapping:** Plan your application roadmap using business questions that enable your company to coordinate IT change efforts so change is efficient and fast. This includes analyses such as **What is our application landscape?** and **What is our target architecture?**
- **Risk:** Assess risk to your business with analyses that support business and IT innovation with the confidence of better compliance, decreased risk to critical applications, and knowledge of the potential impact of IT security issues on critical business areas. Review the business questions **How will IT failure impact our business?** and **Where do we use sensitive data?**
- **Cloud Migration:** Manage migration to the cloud with business questions that focus on making your migration to the cloud fast and reliable and help you to identify cloud candidates in alignment with your migration strategy. Explore the business questions **What are our cloud focus areas?** and **What is our cloud migration strategy?**
- Customizable content areas allow users to decide on the layout of the analytics and data they see. Content areas are available throughout Alfabet FastLane to present analytics about the IT architecture as a whole as well as detailed information about each asset in the IT portfolio. Users can add views, data workbenches and their graphic visualizations, attribute groups, cards showing KPIs, and any content they save to the content repository. The saved content can be added to an existing content area or even to a new content page that the user creates.

Users can slice-and-dice data in a content item that is based on a data workbench to understand data from different perspectives. They can change the content item directly in the content area, whereby it will be automatically saved based on the new settings. They can also drill-down to the content item based on a data workbench, change the filter settings and save the view. In both cases, the changed content item can be restored back to its original settings if needed. Saved content pages and content items can also be shared with other users.

Each user can decide on the layout of a content area so that it is optimal for their screen size and to reflect the information relevant to their needs. Entire tabbed pages in a content area can be hidden from view and the layout of embedded views in a tabbed page can be customized by changing their size, moving them around via drag-and-drop, or removing them from view in the tabbed page. The layout of a content area is automatically saved in the user's context settings and will be displayed in future sessions. Hidden business questions can be individually brought back using the **Add Content** option on the **Analysis** page of a business question.

- Custom properties can be created for all object classes in Alfabet FastLane to capture the data relevant to your company. Custom properties are called "generic attributes" in Alfabet. An administrative user can create multiple generic attributes for a class and make those generic attributes available to the user community in attribute groups in the content area. Users can then set values for the attributes in data workbenches and the content area of the class that you create the generic attribute for.
- Preconfigured cards showing KPIs are provided by Software AG and can be included in any content area. Additionally, portfolio administrators can create cards based on indicator types to display metrics with a single number or multiple numbers that users can implement in their content areas. In addition to numbers, cards can include icons and texts. Additionally, users have the flexibility to create their own cards in the context of a data workbench. These cards can display a single metric based on record count or numeric values. Each card shows a Rescan button with a tooltip explaining when the last update of the indicator occurred. Users can update the indicator at any time.
- Enhancements to diagrams in Alfabet FastLane make it easier for users to create and visualize the application landscape of their assets. Additional diagramming capabilities support the creation of storyboards and ArchiMate viewpoints.
- Preconfigured user profiles allow the right user to access the right functionalities and the right data. The following user profiles are available with Alfabet FastLane:

- **Portfolio Admin**

This user profile is for superusers who are responsible to carry out administrative tasks. It provides exclusive access to views that are required for user and account management, data import for all relevant IT assets, and the customization of role types to capture responsibilities for IT assets and custom attributes that are relevant to your company's data requirements. Administrative users can also create cards based on indicator types that users can add as KPI cards to content areas, specify default content areas for their user community, and create custom themes to change logos and UI colors to address their company's branding. This user profile also provides notifications and log information about maintenance jobs that run in the background.

- **Portfolio Manager**

This user profile is for users who are responsible to input and maintain data relevant for IT portfolio management. It provides access to analytics based on relevant business questions and to the data workbenches that allow that data to be maintained and understood in detail. Users with this profile have read/write permissions to all objects that they have authorized access to via the user group definition.

- **Portfolio Analyst** (formally **Viewer**)

This user profile is for users who are interested in seeing up-to-date analytics about the IT portfolio in order to understand the most business-relevant questions and make informed strategic decisions. Users logging in with this user profile have read-only access permissions to all business questions and can see the detailed data for all objects that they have authorized access to via the user group definition.

- **Application Manager**

This user profile is for users responsible for capturing and maintaining data relevant for the application portfolio management.

- **Technology Manager**

This user profile is for users responsible for capturing and maintaining data relevant for the technology portfolio management.

- Alfabet FastLane provides out-of-the-box integration with Eracent's IT-Pedia ® to support the import of product data from IT-Pedia's comprehensive IT product library. IT products from IT-Pedia's model catalog as well as the **My Products Catalog** can be imported as components to the Alfabet FastLane repository. The import also supports merging of IT-Pedia model catalog information to existing components or vendors. Product lifecycle and vendor information are imported to ensure that end-of-life information about technologies is up-to-date and accurate.

Typically a scheduled batch job will run daily in the background to synchronize components imported from IT-Pedia with IT-Pedia products. You can also trigger the synchronization on an ad-hoc basis at any time. Duplicate components can be merged to a selected master component. The master component will remain in the repository and the other components will be deleted. Any local components, platform elements, or IT capabilities assigned to the deleted components will be moved to the new master component. Once components are merged, the changes can be pushed back to the **My Products Catalog** in IT-Pedia via the **Synchronize with IT-Pedia** option. These capabilities ensure that your technology portfolio is based on a reliable data source and minimizes IT risk to the business.

- The Alfabet FastLane RESTful services have been enhanced.
 - The Alfabet FastLane online help includes the information about the Alfabet FastLane RESTful services.
 - The preconfigured reports to export data via the Alfabet FastLane RESTful services have been renamed. The prefix SAG_ has been removed from all file names. The new names are provided in the web-based online help. Customers who have set up their integrations to extract data from Alfabet using REST API must update their interface systems to continue using the API services.
 - A filter has been added to the reports for export of object data. Export can be limited to objects changed after a specified date. Details are given in the documentation.
- Alfabet FastLane's data capture approach allows you to initially import large amounts of data and update gaps manually at a later date decreases the initial workload and allows you to derive value quickly. A **Data Roundtrip** view provides an easy-to-use visualization of the meta-model and how object classes stand in relation to each other. Here you can select the object classes and references that you want to capture data for as well as generate and import the XLSX files with the data.

Please note that Google Sheets™ is currently not supported for XLSX files used in the context of the **Data Import** functionalities. XLSX files that are opened in Google Sheets will fail when imported to Alfabet.

- Alfabet FastLane provides an agile data capture approach that allows an administrative user to import large amounts of data about the assets in the IT portfolio to Alfabet FastLane and update gaps manually at a later date. The **Data Roundtrip** view provides an easy-to-use visualization of the entire meta-model or just the parts of the meta-model that you are interested in and helps you to understand the relationships between object classes. You can select the business questions that you immediately want answers to and export XLSX files to capture data for the necessary object classes and references. Relevant colleagues can provide information about the enterprise's assets in the XLSX files and return the file to the administrative user who can import the data to the Alfabet FastLane database.

Users must have a spreadsheet program available to process the XLSX files. The same XLSX file that is exported from Alfabet FastLane must be used to capture and import the data to Alfabet FastLane. Please note that Google Sheets is currently not compatible with the exported XLSX structure, but solutions are being investigated.

- An in-product context-sensitive help is available via the Help button in the user interface. Context-sensitive content is available for business questions and class-based content areas in Alfabet FastLane release 11.6 IR. Links in the context-sensitive help to the Alfabet Help Center open the web-based online help for end users and portfolio administrators. The context-sensitive help as well as the web-based help are available in English only.
- Alfabet FastLane release 11.6 IR provides multi-language support. Users can render the user interface in English, German, French, Polish, Portuguese, and Arabic. Please note that there are some known limitations in the right-to-left display of the Arabic user interface with this release. Multi-language support of the user help will be available with release 11.6.

Alfabet FastLane release 11.6 IR is an **Innovation Release** and thus has a Standard Maintenance duration and Sustained Support of six months. For an overview of the support phases at Software AG, see https://em-power.softwareag.com/rz_images/SAGSupportPolicy_Final%20%282%29.pdf

Curious for more? Contact us at: https://www.softwareag.com/en_corporate/platform/alfabet/alfabet-fastlane.html

Have thoughts, suggestions, or ideas for Alfabet FastLane ? Let us know at <https://alfabet-software-ag.ideas.aha.io/>.

What's to come

We are diligently preparing the necessary capabilities to migrate existing customers to Alfabet release 11.6.

Known Limitation: For cloud customers who are migrating to Alfabet FastLane release 11.6 IR, please note that the technical names of content areas, data workbenches, business questions, and some views were changed due to technical reasons. This may have an impact on favorites (bookmarks) as well as content items added to the content area in earlier releases. If you find that the target of a favorite or content item no longer opens in Alfabet FastLane release 11.6 IR, please recreate the favorite or add the content item to the repository again.

The following documentation is available to understand installation, migration, and configuration for on-premise customers and cloud customers. Please note that this is BETA documentation and will be replaced with official documentation in future releases:

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- *Technical Requirements for Alfabet 11.6*
 - *Overview of Changes for System Administrators*
 - *BETA: Installation Guide*
 - *Overview of Changes to Alfabet Expand*
 - *BETA: Solution Configuration with Alfabet Expand*

This documentation is available in our web-based online help available in the Alfabet Help Center. A link is also available for a PDF version of the Technical Requirements.

Service and support

Should you have any questions or require additional information about Alfabet FastLane, please contact Software AG Support.

Please open a ticket in the Empower eService for any service request as well as all non-standard support incidents such as training requests, scripting, or data integration:

<https://empower.softwareag.com>

When you submit a ticket for a service request, you should include the main release number and patch version of your Alfabet FastLane product. This information can be accessed by clicking **Help < About Alfabet**. Tickets will be recorded and transferred to the relevant team.

Empower eService also includes:

- tracking ticket statuses
- local telephone numbers for support.

In addition to the local support telephone numbers, you can use the following toll-free number:

+800 2747 4357