

CI/CD Pipeline

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Discussion

A CI/CD Pipeline coordinates automated activities that integrate, evaluate, build, package, release, or deploy changes to one or more [Artifacts](#).

The abbreviation **CI/CD** commonly refers to:

- Continuous Integration
- Continuous Delivery
- Continuous Deployment

A CI/CD Pipeline may perform activities such as:

- Retrieving identified Artifact revisions
- Validating controlled inputs
- Building software or [Machine Images](#)
- Executing tests
- Evaluating acceptance criteria
- Packaging release content
- Publishing Artifacts
- Performing [Infrastructure Deployment](#)
- Recording execution results
- Producing [Evidence](#)

A CI/CD Pipeline may consume:

- Source code
- [Infrastructure Configurations](#)
- [Infrastructure Blueprints](#)
- Build specifications
- Test specifications
- Policy files
- Deployment specifications
- Controlled parameters
- Secrets and credentials

A CI/CD Pipeline differs from an individual automation script:

- A CI/CD Pipeline coordinates an ordered set of activities and decision points
- An automation script performs one or more bounded operations within or outside that pipeline

A CI/CD Pipeline also differs from a [Version Control System](#):

- A Version Control System manages identifiable Artifact revisions
- A CI/CD Pipeline retrieves and processes those revisions through defined activities

Definition

automated workflow that coordinates the integration, evaluation, building, packaging, release, or deployment of identified artifact revisions

Source

Dido Solutions, Inc. and Jackrabbit Consulting, Inc.

Note

A CI/CD Pipeline does not require every activity listed in the definition to occur in a single execution.

The applicable pipeline may implement:

- Continuous Integration without delivery or deployment
- Continuous Delivery with a manual release decision
- Continuous Deployment in which an accepted change proceeds automatically to a target environment

The term **continuous** describes the capability to execute the workflow repeatedly in response to defined triggers. It does not require uninterrupted execution or immediate deployment of every change.

A CI/CD Pipeline does not by itself establish that an Artifact is approved, compliant, secure, or suitable for deployment. Applicable requirements, controls, tests, and acceptance criteria establish those determinations.

The term does not require a particular orchestration product, repository, build tool, deployment tool, hosting platform, or implementation technology.

Example

A CI/CD Pipeline retrieves an identified [Infrastructure Configuration](#) revision from a [Version Control System](#), validates its machine-readable representation, builds a [Machine Image](#), performs Infrastructure Deployment, and records the resulting Evidence.

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https://wiki.didosolutions.com/dido/99_annexes/annex-b-terms-and-definitions/c/ci_cd_pipeline

Last update: **2026/07/16 09:16**

