

Development and test environments - on demand at the press of a button (That actually work!)

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“Works on my machine!”

“Fails most epicly on my test system!”

“Oh, wait... it works on CI but fails in Test env 3.”

Sound familiar?

These sorts of conversations are thankfully a thing of the past.

Wait, hold on - are you still having these sorts of conversations?

That’s probably because you are working somewhere where the development, test, production & CI servers are being created by people, painfully, once.



Alexander the Great cutting through the Gordian knot of a particularly gnarly micro-service deployment.

You set up your laptop, you pray to the god of operating system patches and upgrades and hope that nothing ever changes (ever). You're gonna be the last person in the team to take that new Mac OS upgrade - let the rest of the team run through those mine fields first.

And the test systems? Last time you asked for a new one of those your programme manager ended up on new & stronger heart meds.

Luckily, there are tools that can help.

Gitpod (<https://www.gitpod.io/>), for example, allows you to create a development environment every time you log on, or in fact whenever you want.

Gitpod has a number of useful features that together can make your lives easier. They are:

- It provides an easy to use development IDE (it's a web version of VS Code, one of the most popular IDEs in the world).

- A cloud based workspace with a command line terminal (Yes, Bash), and even a linux desktop if you need one.
- Configure your whole development/test environment with standard Docker & Docker Compose commands to be built and deployed anytime.
- Smooth integration with Github, GitLab or BitBucket. (Or you could even self host it)

Now that's a lot to digest. What it means in practice is that your team can create one template of how to set up your app.

You can then store that template in the code repository, along with the app and test code.

And when you need to fix a bug, code review a pull request or test the app you can just build the app and the whole supporting environment in the cloud and on demand (it takes seconds).

Tools like Gitpod have the potential to save teams a massive amount of time lost to misconfiguration, confusion and the laborious work of creating and keeping environments in sync. You don't realise how much time is lost in the setup and untangling of the Gordian knot that constitutes the average development environment - until it disappears.