

CASE STUDY: IMP

**IMP MIGRATES TO WINDOWS
ACHIEVING ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE,
BUSINESS AGILITY AND SAVINGS IN
EXCESS OF €1.2 MILLION ANNUALLY**



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CHALLENGE

Increased market challenges from new and old competitors meant that IMP had to look for new ways to innovate its business, while at the same time reducing IT management costs. Improvements in operational efficiency were necessary in order to deliver new capabilities faster, and to support business growth.

SOLUTION

- Micro Focus Studio
- Micro Focus Server

BENEFITS

- Cost savings of more than €1.2 million per year, allowing further investments in the core business
- Increased batch performance by 50% reducing the risk for batch processing bottlenecks
- 20% faster transaction processing time, improving end user experience when browsing and ordering products online
- Increased system capacity threefold, minimizing incremental budget requirements to support future growth

THE CUSTOMER

IMP (International Masters Publishers) is a business to consumer company that creates products to inspire and inform its customers. IMP was founded in 1972 and is headquartered in Malmö, Sweden, with operations in 36 countries. For over 30 years, it has published high quality collections for the home and family in more than 20 languages. Customers browse and order products online or over the phone and deliveries are made via mail order.

THE CHALLENGE

Growing competition in the publishing industry from both incumbent players and new entrants in the digital space makes it critical for companies to improve operational efficiency while reducing IT management costs in order to re-invest resources into the core business.

IMP's in-house developed ERP application, COPS (Customer Oriented Production System), ran on a very expensive 400 MIP IBM z/OS mainframe, running at 95% capacity to support worldwide operations 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The system, which consisted of 1000 online programs, 7500 batch jobs and 4600 batch programs processed over 700,000 online transactions per day.

Furthermore, COPS relies on one database server handling 36 production databases

and adding to the complexity, publications are printed in a diverse range of languages, including Italian, Russian, Japanese, Polish, and Swedish.

Over 400 users, across all time zones, rely on COPS to do anything from customer data management, accounts receivable, order fulfilment, and inventory management. Therefore, any downtime in the system would have a serious impact on business operations all over the world.

With only one hour downtime every 10 years, IMP was satisfied with the reliability of the system, but needed to find a lower cost alternative providing the business agility needed to deliver new capabilities faster. The extremely high cost of the mainframe was limiting IMP's ability to invest in innovation and business growth.

THE SOLUTION

When IMP looked to the future of the application, several requirements surrounding the choice of new technology were imperative. The company wanted to move to an agile open environment capable of providing efficiency improvements at the same time as reducing IT management costs. Furthermore, IMP chose not to replace the system with a packaged solution because this would require IT staff to spend a tremendous effort on software customization.

"We selected Micro Focus amongst other vendors because it was the lowest risk, most cost-effective solution for migrating our business critical application off the mainframe to the Windows platform."

Kenneth Larsson,
of Global application, Global IT, IMP

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“We’re very impressed that the performance on the Windows platform is better than the mainframe. In addition, we are achieving savings of more than €100,000 per month and an outstanding ROI. ”

Kenneth Larsson,
of Global application, Global IT, IMP

“Microsoft and Micro Focus technology enabled IMP to improve system performance and provides a robust Windows 2008 platform which supports their business needs, now and in the future. ”

Lars Mikaelsson,
BDM, Microsoft

Working with Micro Focus, IMP decided to migrate its existing COPS application off the mainframe to Windows Server 2008 while keeping the intellectual property within its COBOL code intact. Central to the implementation project were Micro Focus analysis tools alongside Micro Focus Studio Enterprise Edition. Micro Focus Server Enterprise Edition facilitated the deployment of the application on Windows server.

THE RESULT

IMP, now completely off the mainframe, has reduced the annual costs of the COPS system by €1.2 million while at the same time increasing system capacity threefold, minimizing incremental budget requirements to support future needs. The company has therefore achieved its goal of putting in place a modern, flexible platform capable of supporting business growth and innovation.

In addition, the transaction processing time is at least 20 percent faster, improving the user experience when browsing for products online, while batch performance has increased by 50 percent, reducing the risk for batch processing bottlenecks.

Furthermore, developer productivity will improve significantly as the new development environment is easier to use and provides a much more efficient platform for testing and debugging. New capabilities will be delivered significantly faster than was possible using mainframe tools.

An unexpected benefit of the migration process was that IMP was able to identify redundant programs, significantly reducing the size of the inventory IT needs to support.

During the project, IMP reduced the number of batch programs by 60 percent, scheduled batch jobs by 40 percent, and online programs by 15 percent. This has resulted in reduced system complexity and an optimized application portfolio, enabling IT to become more responsive to business needs.

Finally, as the migration did not require any changes to the core programs, IMP retained the business logic developed over the past 30 years, preserving and enhancing the competitive differentiation inherent in these programs.

THE FUTURE

IMP will be able to implement a reliable business continuity and modernization plan by saving 50% of the mainframe management costs. The company expects to re-invest these resources in the core business, supporting the delivery of quality products to the international customer base. With a Windows server solution, IMP has also gained flexibility and capacity for business growth, while ensuring a sustainable IT infrastructure, independent of mainframe skills shortages.

ABOUT MICRO FOCUS

Micro Focus, a member of the FTSE 250, provides innovative software that allows companies to dramatically improve the business value of their enterprise applications. Micro Focus Enterprise Application Modernization and Management software enables customers’ business applications to respond rapidly to market changes and embrace modern architectures with reduced cost and risk.

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