

# The Empire Life Insurance Company

Micro Focus® Enterprise solutions support a smooth move to a low-cost, distributed environment, boosting developer productivity and paving the way to DevOps.



### Overview

The Empire Life Insurance Company (Empire Life) is a Canadian life insurance and financial services company. Its mission is to make it simple, fast and easy for Canadians to get the investment, insurance and group benefits coverage they need to build wealth, generate income, and achieve financial security.

### Challenge

Like many other financial institutions, Empire Life depended on a mainframe to manage its insurance and investment policy administration systems. Over the years other environments had been added resulting in a highly complex production environment which was expensive to run and maintain.

Grace Kennedy, VP, Business Solutions Delivery with Empire Life, explains, "We felt

constrained in our plans to move towards more agile development and the need to respond to increasing business requirements. Although the mainframe is ultimately very scalable, this comes with a price tag that we just couldn't justify anymore. It was clear to us that we needed to move off the mainframe from a support simplification and cost perspective. However, with over 40 years of business intelligence residing on the mainframe, this was no easy undertaking and we needed to be completely confident of success."

Empire Life engaged with Gartner to define an RFP process. The selection criteria were a cultural fit with Empire Life, costs, experience in similar projects, and customer feedback. After a thorough market evaluation, Micro Focus was chosen as the partner to walk this journey with Empire Life.

### Solution

Micro Focus Professional Services closely engaged with the Empire Life teams to make the transition to a distributed environment as seamless and transparent as possible. A full application landscape analysis determined which applications would be eliminated and others to be migrated. Using Micro Focus Enterprise Developer® most of the code could be cleanly converted and deployed to the new environment using Micro Focus Enterprise Server®.

**"This has given us flexibility, development agility, increased team collaboration, and ultimately, a higher quality product and service for our customers."**

#### RICHARD CLEAVER

CIO  
Empire Life



### At a Glance

#### ■ Industry

Insurance

#### ■ Location

Canada

#### ■ Challenge

Simplify support and maintenance for a complex production environment, while achieving cost savings. Empire Life wished to move towards DevOps and needed to be more responsive to growing business requirements.

#### ■ Products and Services

Enterprise Developer  
Enterprise Server

#### ■ Results

- + 30 percent development productivity increase
- + Annual cost savings of up to \$1.5 million
- + Ready for move to DevOps
- + Higher quality product and service
- + Increased team collaboration

**“The new Micro Focus development environment has opened our eyes to so much opportunity. We are looking to move to a DevOps model with more end-to-end serviceability in the cloud. Our productivity has increased by 30 percent and we are more responsive to the business.”**

**JOHN VANZANTEN**

Senior Developer  
Empire Life

Contact us at:  
[www.microfocus.com](http://www.microfocus.com)

Like what you read? Share it.



Although productivity gains had not been a motivation for the move, John vanZanten, a Senior Developer with Empire Life, was pleasantly surprised. “Once we were live with Enterprise Developer it became clear that our development time had accelerated. The solution feels more Windows-like and our developers, including seasoned mainframe COBOL developers, were comfortable with it really quickly, finding it more intuitive and user-friendly. The development toolset is stronger and we all love the debugging capabilities. There is just no comparison at all with mainframe debugging.”

The data is far more accessible and easier to analyse for developers. The new modern platform opened the door to increase efficiency by introducing GitHub and JIRA, both fully integrated into the Micro Focus solutions. GitHub is used to automate source control which was a completely manual effort. JIRA is used to track bugs and issues. Integrating these functions directly into the development cycle has resulted in a higher quality product, with more control over the environments.

The partnership with Micro Focus was fully collaborative, according to Kennedy, “Micro Focus was always at the table with us as we moved through this process. Having completed the move, we realised the potential. We engaged with Nutanix to introduce a virtualised environment and improve our disaster recovery (DR) capability. As a result, our DR is now

drastically improved at a third of the price we previously paid.”

### Results

This was a large and complex project, with many integration challenges. The size and scale should not be underestimated, but the results are all the sweeter for it. The Empire Life commitment and project management was central to the success. Up to 85 people were involved in testing and benchmarking every single element of the new platform to ensure a smooth transition.

“The new Micro Focus development environment has opened our eyes to so much opportunity,” adds vanZanten. “We are looking to move to a DevOps model with more end-to-end serviceability in the cloud. Our productivity has increased by 30 percent and we are more responsive to the business. We are refining our processes to take full advantage of the scalability of our new platform.”

Richard Cleaver, CIO of Empire Life, concludes, “This was initially a cost-saving exercise. It has delivered; we are saving \$1.5 million every year. However, looking back on it, the cultural shift in making this move is far more significant than any cost saving. This has given us flexibility, development agility, increased team collaboration, and ultimately, a higher quality product and service for our customers.”