The Enterprise Suite: Supporting Business Critical Application Modernization

Delivering mainframe application modernization with confidence
Unprecedented Challenges

As global events have proved, application modernization—or AppMod—is not just possible, but necessary to compete in a digital world. The chances are that since the pandemic began you have already switched to a more flexible, remote way of working. Your previous working practices, and IT operations, were outdated overnight.

So, it can be done. Now the key is to add the extra yards that will take you further along the path to full digital transformation. Because that is where the goal of accelerating the rates of change, application delivery and reducing provision costs, lies; creating a future enabled IT organization ready for innovation, able to maximize the opportunity in every challenge. Version 7 of the Enterprise Suite can help.

Whether you are already on track for transformation, or still on the starting grid, now is the time to press the accelerator. Because in the perpetual race for relevance, standing still is reversing by another name.

Modernization Matters

Rapid change can be expensive and risky. Multiple studies, including work by analysts IDC\(^1\), underline the eye-wateringly high failure rates of “rip and replace” IT projects. In that context, reusing the unique, business-critical core applications and data you have enhanced repeatedly over time makes business sense. In other words, consider not replacing, or rewriting—but modernizing, using a pragmatic, low-cost, low-risk transformation model.

Analysts agree. The recent Micro Focus-sponsored IDC InfoBrief summarized\(^1\) their view: “Modernizing investments in core mainframe and other existing systems for DX and innovation is vital across applications, process strategies, and infrastructure.”

Modernization, as a term, includes many technical and operational changes. Our comprehensive modernization capabilities resolve the three key challenges of core IT modernization:

- **Application**—use low-risk innovation such as process automation, APIs, web services and managed code models that support composite application delivery, to increase application value.
- **Process**—sync application delivery speed with the pace of change. Tap into the power of rapid analysis and agile development to enable continuous testing and accelerate delivery.
- **Infrastructure**—with greater connectivity, flexibility, and security, organizations can rapidly deploy applications across host, server, cloud and containers, insulating IT from a future change strategy.

Key Next Steps on the Modernization Journey

Each modernization journey is different, shaped by the unique business situation and technology strategy, but every modernizing organization must factor in application, process and infrastructure change.

Recent market and customer input identified three trends as CIO success criteria for digital-ready enterprise systems:

- **Application Modernization for innovation**—Execute important application changes and support API initiatives to expose and integrate trusted functionality as new services.
- **Process Modernization for speed**—Quickly establish the steps needed to understand, identify, execute and test crucial business system changes, and new functions.
- **Infrastructure Modernization for flexibility**—Maximize the opportunities offered by cloud computing and containerization to deploy new business services rapidly, cost-effectively, and flexibly.

This list reflects a core ethos—to build on strength; adapting, evolving and innovating with proven business systems to accelerate positive business outcomes. All three run like a thread through the latest release of the Micro Focus Enterprise Suite.

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INFRASTRUCTURE MODERNIZATION FOR FLEXIBILITY
Traditionally, the IBM mainframe has been the go-to source for enterprise-scale computing. Very little technology can achieve the same standards of reliability, availability, serviceability, and performance at scale. Even today, the latest Z mainframe servers support many of the world’s most successful organizations with astonishing capabilities. Growing market evidence proves that mainframes often sit alongside other environments to create a hybrid corporate computing solution. This new flexibility is driving a wider reassessment of the best enterprise deployment model for core business systems.

The rapidly changing nature of business requirements, such as reaching new geographies or markets, is also affecting IT strategy. Organizations looking to enable a blended, hybrid infrastructure while finding additional mainframe MIPS understand the need to re-examine their platform deployment strategy.

For some, the economics are such that they favor a scale-out approach, where multiple commodity servers run parallel workload deployments, instead of the traditional scale-up method of consolidating workloads on a single, large-scale platform. For these organizations, mainstream cloud computing offers a new perspective on performance, cost and scalability.

The Enterprise Suite deployment engine, Enterprise Server, offers deployment options in the context of maintaining reliability, availability and serviceability. Applications can be deployed to alternative platforms with minimal effort, reducing risk and cost.

BETTER PROCESSES ENABLING FASTER APPLICATION CHANGES
If they are to enable fast application deployment, enterprise-class, scalable deployment environments, regardless of platform, need dedicated, specialist expertise to build, maintain, and modernize them.

To respond quickly to change, and be productive across the full range of technologies, contemporary IT needs adaptable processes, tools, and—crucially—a workforce with the skills to adapt to different development environments and tools. Mainframe developers and their possible successors are typically in limited supply.

While understanding traditional mainframe tools is a steep learning curve thankfully the forgiving syntax of COBOL or PL/I enables Java and C# devs to re-skill over time. Sharing tools across the full range of business technology enables a flexible and adaptable development team.

Mainframe applications can—and should—be as efficient, functional and accessible as those on other platforms. Achieving this requires highly functional developer experiences and a fully integrated backend toolchain to automate key tasks, such as requirement management, source control, assessment, build, and delivery.

HOW APPLICATION MODERNIZATION ENABLES FUTURE INNOVATION
One industry report\(^2\) blames ‘integration challenges’ for holding back digital transformation initiatives for 85% of IT organizations. The expectation for modern IT is one of highly connected composite applications offering excellent levels of collaboration and integration, but innovation is difficult and deployment can be delayed by long regression tests when applications are this massive and complex.

Application modernization demands two things:
1. An understanding what can and needs to be changed.
2. Tools to assist in making those changes.

Those who manage core COBOL systems understand the sheer size, scale and complexity of the applications involved. They appreciate the application value lies in the business processes and services they deliver, but poor understanding of both application and processes can mean low levels of code reusability or repurposing. Enterprise Suite enables an understanding of the application complexity and gives a view into the impacts of any changes planned. These same tools can enable newer developers to understand how the “business rules” are captured in the code and become productive much more quickly.

\(^2\) https://resources.mulesoft.com/ty-report-connectivity-benchmark.html
Once the desired changes are identified, the next step is to implement those changes in a non-disruptive way. Rather than undertaking the expense and the risk of rewriting large amounts of working code, Enterprise Suite enables “code slicing” so you can focus on just those portions of the massive application that will provide the most value to the business. The ability to create REST APIs from COBOL code, integrate into Java and .NET and even deploy into containers further expands the usefulness of long-reliable applications.

Enterprise Application Modernization from Micro Focus

Our track record and credentials in enterprise modernization creates a unique and comprehensive capability.

- We can help streamline development and delivery activities by 40%, using contemporary technology, DevOps agility and unrivalled flexibility.
- We have delivered 1,000+ modernization projects, supported by a major global partner network and the Micro Focus Modernization Maturity Model—a framework for the planning and implementation of a modernization journey.
- Devs can now deploy COBOL and PL/I applications in a native or managed code environment, and across all major supported platforms on the market unchanged.
- Works for all core applications and major data stores. Take your database variants into both mainframe and distributed worlds.
- Rest assured with certification of virtualized and cloud environments including AWS and Azure, and containerization, including Docker and Kubernetes.
- Customers have achieved 50%–90% reduction in IT operations costs and a performance improvement of up to 50% for batch and online transactions.

Enterprise Suite Products

- Application Analysis—Enterprise Analyzer
- Application Development—Enterprise Developer for Z
- Application Testing—Enterprise Test Server
- Application Deployment—Enterprise Server

For more information visit—www.microfocus.com/en-us/products/enterprise-suite/overview

Learn more about Micro Focus’ Modernization solution—www.microfocus.com/amc—and the added value the Enterprise Suite 7.0 brings to the process here: www.microfocus.com/enterprise