Reveal a more youthful side to your COBOL code

— 12 ways to make it happen with Visual COBOL
Visual COBOL takes your development productivity to a better place

1. Power up your dev tools
We all have our favorite programming editors but there’s nothing like using a toolset which is specifically designed to give you the best COBOL experience. That toolset is Visual COBOL for Visual Studio or Eclipse: two IDEs which set the benchmark for software development. You’ll quickly appreciate why, since they make coding fast and more productive.

2. Make every keystroke count
As you code, it’s easy to make small mistakes which could throw up hundreds of errors when you begin to compile. Use the Visual COBOL editor and you’ll quickly find you make fewer mistakes – thanks to background compilation which immediately spots if you make a typo.

3. Smarten up your UIs
There’s no need to have a UI that looks out of date just because you’re developing a COBOL app. Why not try your hand at developing a .NET WPF or Java Swing application in COBOL? You won’t need to spend precious developer hours doing it by hand – the designer tools in Visual Studio and Eclipse make creating a 21st century UI a breeze.

4. Be Classy
Work in .NET or the Java Virtual Machine without having to write all your Object Oriented code in Java or C#. COBOL now has a rich set of OO extensions that make it perfectly suited to OO development and interfacing to your existing procedural code. Reuse the class libraries you create for a wide variety of different projects.

5. Turbocharge your searches
Sometimes, just finding where you need to make a change in your code is a chore. Visual COBOL makes searching your codebase faster in a variety of ways. As well as quick find and a regular expression search across your source files, you also have context sensitive search which tells you where a field is referenced or modified – all at the click of button.

6. Teach ‘em a thing or two
You can now use COBOL inside the same popular toolset that so many other developers use. This means your Java or .NET colleagues will have a much easier time picking up COBOL: it can take just a matter of hours. After that, you’re likely to create some converts as your peers see how good the COBOL engine is at crunching reams of data.

7. Remember, remember
You’re not dealing with just a few lines of code in your COBOL apps. So the bigger they get, the harder it is to remember field names and sections – you could have literally hundreds to choose from. Enter Visual COBOL: it acts as an aide-mémoire to your fingers, reminding you of data names even if you can only remember a part of them. It’s smart, fast and easy.
Discover just how easy and efficient it is—with Visual COBOL

8. Don’t reinvent the wheel
Save yourself time and trouble, because .NET and Java already include vast frameworks of code you can reuse in your own app. Need to display a message box, perform date arithmetic or display a localized message? What might have taken pages of code before can now be done in just a few lines with Visual COBOL.

9. Say hello to 21st Century COBOL
COBOL hasn’t lasted this long by standing still. As well as its rich OO extensions, take a look at the new XML, SQL and Unicode features in Visual COBOL. They’re there to help you bring apps bang up to date with industry standards.

10. Be multi-lingual
Visual Studio and Eclipse support literally dozens of different languages from open source to mainstays like C++, Java, VB.NET and C#. What's more, when you're working in .NET or the JVM, you can debug COBOL and any other language simultaneously.

11. Make modern dev your own
Now you’ve got your hands on a modern IDE, there are a wealth of other tools you can bring together. How about a source code control system to check out COBOL programs right from within the IDE? Or why not hook up a continuous integration server to validate that your source code still builds? Next stop – integrate automated test tools to ensure you’re not sacrificing quality. With Visual COBOL, there are so many ways to go.

12. Wrap it up as a service
Wouldn’t it be handy to wrap that piece of COBOL logic up into a nice consumable service for your customers to access from their apps? With Visual COBOL it takes little or no rework to create RESTful web services that expose your COBOL business logic to a whole new breed of clients.

Take an efficiency trial
There’s only one way to see how efficiently you can work in a modern development environment – take the free Visual COBOL trial. Discover just how easy and efficient it is to deliver real innovation, now and in the future.

www.microfocus.com/take-the-trial-here