



Visual COBOL improves application performance by 75% for Lumbermens

How modernization made the difference for **Lumbermens**

- › 75% application performance increase
- › ROI within 24 months
- › Re-use of core COBOL business transactions
- › Standardizing on a single development environment: Microsoft Visual Studio
- › Improved development team collaboration and productivity



About Lumbermens Merchandising Corporation

INDUSTRY: Construction

CORE APPLICATIONS: Accounts receivable, accounts payable and general ledger applications

COUNTRY: USA

- › Lumbermens Merchandising Corporation (LMC) is a cooperative formed in the 1930s by several lumber dealers that wanted to buy more competitively and increase operational efficiency.
- › The corporation has over 365 shareholder companies and annual sales exceeding two and a half billion dollars.
- › Over one million invoices per year are processed from building material suppliers and billed to Lumbermens' member companies. Accounts receivable, accounts payable and general ledger applications are key to running the business.



The **challenge:** standardize and improve architectures

LMC's platform consisted of 300 COBOL batch programs and six online, user-driven applications, all hosted on a Unisys mainframe.

Although the mainframe provided a good platform and a stable OS, the operational costs for the platform were increasing, while other parts of the organization were running lower cost and modern Microsoft Windows platforms.

The challenge was to standardize and align LMC's enterprise architectures, and re-host its business applications from the Unisys mainframe while leveraging all the COBOL business logic that had been developed over the years.



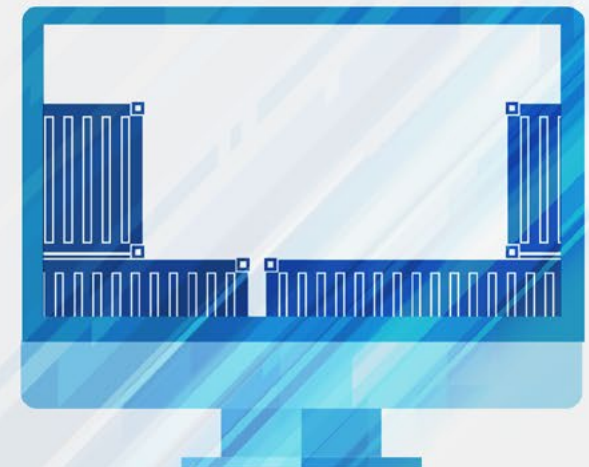
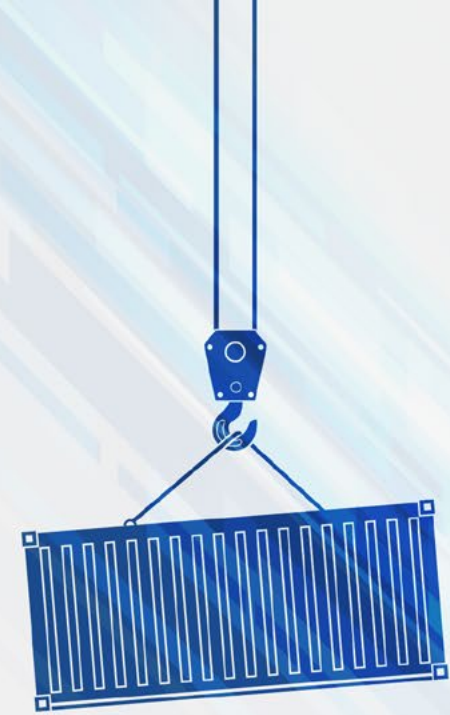
Solution: a single development platform

ORIGINAL PLATFORM: Unisys mainframe

APPLICATION RE-HOST TECHNOLOGY: Visual COBOL for Visual Studio, COBOL Server

APPLICATION RE-HOST PARTNER: Transvive

- A comparative performance test on both the current and target environments took 20 minutes to execute using the Unisys mainframe and 2 minutes using Visual COBOL. This gave LMC high confidence to move forward with the project.
- LMC brought development practices in line – standardizing on the Visual Studio development environment, giving its developers access to new innovative technologies.
- Functionality enhancements to applications were implemented to improve the end user experience, including new shortcuts and simplified user interface navigation.
- Every COBOL program and system was tested extensively, resulting in no interruptions to business operations throughout the delivery of the project.



Positioned for **future success**

“The Unisys platform wasn’t conducive to innovation at all. Everybody uses WinForms and Web applications and we wanted to bring that power and usability to our mainframe applications while maintaining years of business logic and without impacting the business operation.”

“We are seeing performance increases of up to 75%. Our business systems are running much faster in the Windows environment. Business transactions that once took hours to complete are now executing in only minutes. Implementing small, precision changes in both our COBOL application and in our database environment have led to big performance improvements. We are very happy with these results.”

Dave McCann

Programming and Operations Supervisor, LMC



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- › Read the complete Lumbermens success story in the [case study](#).
- › See how other companies are modernizing their [COBOL applications](#).