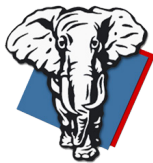


## CEP SOLUTIONS:

### VISUAL COBOL OFFERS 80% COST SAVING OVER REWRITE ALTERNATIVE

Delivering new functionality, faster, with a modern development environment



**CEPSOLUTIONS**  
Software e Servizi per la gestione di paghe e stipendi

URL: [www.cepsolutions.it](http://www.cepsolutions.it)

Industry: Software

Country: Italy

#### Highlights

- 50% increased application performance
- 80% cost savings over rewrite alternative
- Preserved full competitive advantage
- Modernized and integrated software development environment
- Leveraged existing development skills

“The team love the new development features within Visual COBOL, including the ability to work with COBOL alongside modern languages such as C#. Application debugging is so much easier with Visual COBOL and after the upgrade we are now seeing application performance improvements of 50% which is great news for our customers.”

**Rosanna Villani,**  
Development Director, CEP Solutions

#### At a glance: CEP Solutions srl

CEP Solutions develop automated payroll processing software. With over 30 years' experience in delivering payroll application software, CEP Solutions offers a complete package for both businesses and consultants. The solution allows maximum flexibility and opportunity for business customization making it the ideal solution for those who don't have much time for HR and payroll management.

#### Solution:

- Micro Focus Visual COBOL for Visual Studio
- Micro Focus COBOL Server

#### Challenge

CEP Solutions' core application offering, SIOGERE, is an HR and payroll service. It has been in operation for over 30 years and is used by employment consultants and small and medium businesses all throughout Italy. SIOGERE, accessible via client/server technology, is subject to heavy regulatory compliance, making it a business-critical application for CEP Solutions. This system was built on Micro Focus COBOL using Micro Focus Net Express and Server Express for application development and maintenance.

CEP Solutions wanted to modernize its application infrastructure as Rosanna Villani, Development Director, explains: “We needed to move from a 32bit to a 64bit environment in order to meet our customer's business requirements. This would also enable us to develop a new online interface for our clients and offer web application access, ultimately positioning us to grow our market share. We looked into various options, including rewriting our existing application in C++ but with decades of vital functionality built within our systems, we estimated that this would cost us €2 million--too much to justify. We also evaluated alternative COBOL solutions, but these just didn't offer the level of functionality we needed. We found these alternative COBOL offerings unreliable and prone to many technical problems. In certain cases, they just didn't offer the level of functionality we needed. We noticed functional and quality issues during the debugging and compilation process, which ultimately eliminated these alternative COBOL offerings as viable solutions. Upgrading our application environment with Micro Focus would give us the capability of reusing our existing systems while adding new modern functionality for our customers. This approach would minimize any risk to the

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business and with Visual Studio skills already in place within our development team, we could maximize our existing skillsets and be up and running very quickly."

### Reusing business rules with Visual COBOL

Following industry best practices for development, CEP Solutions conducted a thorough analysis of its application code, identified potential problem areas, and then moved its application into Visual COBOL for quality assurance testing and eventually user deployment.

CEP Solutions was able to reuse the majority of its application logic and through the use of modern development tools within Visual COBOL, introduce a standardized development methodology. Visual COBOL's integration with existing .NET applications also provided improved IT architecture flexibility.

The move to Visual COBOL was completed in three months, 75% faster than originally anticipated. Villani comments: "Moving to Visual COBOL was a really smooth process for us. Because our development team was already familiar with Visual Studio, we could use existing skills for the modernization initiative and accelerate time to delivery for this project."

### Competitive advantage maintained

Visual COBOL has enabled CEP Solutions to reach new potential market segments with a modern, web interface. SIOGERE has seen decades of development investment and this move has successfully preserved this asset within a high performance and highly scalable new environment, aligned to the overall IT strategy. The first step towards delivering a new user interface has been made setting the groundwork for future application modernization initiatives. With Visual COBOL, the application can now access customer data that resides within an index data file system via a Web services architecture. Data can also be accessed via industry standard format, XML, which was not possible in the previous environment.

### Visual COBOL has future-proofed the

### business

Villani is pleased with the quick adoption of Visual COBOL by the development team: "The team love the new development features within Visual COBOL, including the ability to work with COBOL alongside modern languages such as C#. Application debugging is so much easier with Visual COBOL and after the upgrade we are now seeing application performance improvements of 50% which is great news for our customers."

CEP Solutions applications are web-accessible and the company is now looking into mobile application delivery as well. As a result of implementing Visual COBOL, CEP Solutions is more agile in its response to new business requirements and in servicing its customers.

### Cost-effective, low-risk implementation

Villani concludes: "Working with Micro Focus we were able to modernize our core application, leverage existing development skills and maintain our competitive advantage built up over many years. Visual COBOL has provided a fast, cost-effective and low-risk path to success. The alternative would have been many times more expensive and introduced high risk to the business. We have improved our IT architecture flexibility and integration capability while providing online access to our customers. We are very pleased with the support we've received from Micro Focus during our journey to Visual COBOL."

### 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, Testing and Management software enables customers' business applications to respond rapidly to market changes and embrace modern architectures with reduced cost and risk.

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

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