

Financial Services Outsourcer

Micro Focus helps improve business operations and customer service, while reducing cost.



Challenge

Providing outsourced life and pensions services to high profile brands means that the FS outsourcer's treatment of its clients' customers reflects directly on the client and their reputation. They have to rigorously explore every opportunity to improve its operations and service offerings as well as reduce cost and increase productivity wherever possible. This strategy to improve IT efficiencies and customer service led them to work with Micro Focus. With Micro Focus® solutions, this financial services outsourcer chose to leverage its IT assets by moving existing business critical applications and data from a mainframe system onto more a flexible and cost effective environment.

“The Micro Focus Enterprise solution was proven to deal with the specifics of our highly complex environment. This track record made working with Micro Focus solutions an obvious choice for us to improve operational efficiency and reduce our total cost of ownership, while mitigating risk and delivering the highest levels of service our clients demand.”

IT PROJECT DIRECTOR

Financial Services outsourcer

Solution

Prior to selecting Micro Focus, the IT Project Director explored the viability of alternative approaches to re-hosting and invested in an internal project to rewrite some of its Mainframe applications to Java. “Compared to re-hosting, rewriting in Java took eight months longer, cost around £500,000 more, and was much more difficult,” he explains. “A rewrite to Java introduced an unacceptable element of business risk and involved re-training existing staff in Java. We want to serve our clients well by providing innovative, flexible and cost effective IT services with as little disruption to business as possible.”

The project to re-host this financial service outsourcer's business applications required careful planning and execution as its environment included over 116,000 active life or pensions policies under management. Equally, its environment consisted of both batch and online components. Around three million lines of PL/I required some update in order to successfully port to the new target environment—a process that was largely automated through a Micro Focus PL/I pre-processor solution. The applications' online components used CICS and required some 73,000 lines of Assembler/CICS code, providing key functionality within the pensions system, to be converted to COBOL/CICS. In addition, around 80,000 lines of COBOL code, along with 42,000 lines of JCL were moved with very little change using the COBOL and JCL support within the Micro Focus Enterprise Server® solution.

At a Glance

■ Industry

Financial Services

■ Location

UK

■ Challenge

This Financial Services outsourcer is committed to delivering the highest standards of customer service, while at the same time facing the challenges of operating in a very competitive environment. They have to rigorously explore every opportunity to improve its operations and service offerings as well as reduce cost and increase productivity.

■ Solution

Micro Focus helped this organization optimize its mainframe investment through leveraging a core business asset—its applications. By moving its business critical apps and customer data to a more flexible environment, this outsourcer improved IT flexibility while managing cost and established a future platform for new innovation.

■ Results

- + Batch time improvement of 300 percent
- + Reused business rules held within existing PL/I code
- + 70 percent reduction in TCO

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Results

A 16 day batch test run was executed as part of User Acceptance Testing where it was found that a batch job which had previously taken 45 minutes to execute now took just 13 minutes, over 300 percent faster, on the new Windows Server environment.

While performance improvements were very valuable, of equal importance was successful and positive end user adoption. As the IT Project Director explains, “The people involved in this project have worked with a mainframe for more than 30 years and when we talked about moving our applications to a distributed architecture, they were initially concerned that existing functionality, data, and performance remained the same. Using the Micro Focus Enterprise solution meant that they didn’t need to worry, as the original applications were moved in their entirety and without change.” He continues, “The business continued to benefit as no intellectual capital within the applications was lost and IT costs got impressively smaller and smaller.”

Particular requirements increased project complexity, but as the IT Project Director said, “Having proved the success of re-hosting in terms of it being a safe, low risk approach that delivered increased IT flexibility and valuable

cost savings, the door is open to move additional application workloads into a similar distributed environment.” The success of the project has established the Micro Focus Enterprise solution as a proven model for re-hosting mainframe applications and the success of this project is now attracting significant interest from other clients.

He concludes, “The Micro Focus Enterprise solution was proven to deal with the specifics of our highly complex environment. This track record made working with Micro Focus solutions an obvious choice for us to improve operational efficiency and reduce our total cost of ownership, while mitigating risk and delivering the highest levels of service our clients demand.”

The partnership with Micro Focus means that the organization can extend this proven solution to a range of other prospective clients and establish a ‘Center of Excellence’ for optimizing Mainframe applications. The pragmatic approach to modernization has seen a 70 percent reduction in total cost of ownership while improving application performance and with no loss of functionality or precision. As importantly for its insurance clients, this IT project was completed without any adverse impact to existing business operation.



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