SOLCORP

HPES Insurance Services

SOLCORP migrates its insurance policy system to Microsoft .NET

Challenge
SOLCORP sought to expand its customer base by deploying a low-cost, low risk solution for its mainframe-based INGENIUM policy administration system.

Solution
- Micro Focus Server for .NET
- Micro Focus Net Express with .NET

Highlights
- Reduced maintenance and operating costs
- Increased performance, scalability, agility and flexibility
- Lower hardware and software costs by moving to Windows from the mainframe
- Improved performance, better resource utilization and greater online availability

“Micro Focus and Microsoft have helped us position INGENIUM to a wider range of customers without sacrificing the security or scalability we enjoy on the mainframe version, which many of our customers continue to use. It truly is the best of both worlds.”

Blair Goulet,
Senior Vice President, Strategy and Global Initiatives, SOLCORP

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SOLCORP, now HP Enterprise Services Insurance Services, provides software solutions and consulting services for the life insurance and wealth management industries. Its solutions are designed to help its customers – insurers with worldwide offices and high policy volumes – reduce their administration costs.

Conscious of customer pressure and rising IT costs, SOLCORP sought a way to improve the performance of its flagship product, INGENIUM®. Allowing customers the option of standardizing on the low cost, high-performance Windows platform would eliminate the need for servers specifically for their policy administration systems. According to industry analyst Celent Communications, SOLCORP INGENIUM “boasts top notch scalability matched by few competitors.”

Customers considered Windows enterprise-ready
SOLCORP’s INGENIUM is a high-performance, Web services enabled policy administration system that scales to high volume environments, providing robust, full function processing for an extensive range of life and investment products.

As a policy administration system supporting the entire life-cycle of a contract, from the acquisition of new business to final settlement, INGENIUM contained over one million lines of proven COBOL and DB2 mainframe code. Although INGENIUM was already running across a range of platforms, including mainframe IBM OS/390 and UNIX platforms, many customers felt that Microsoft® Windows was enterprise-ready and wanted to have a Windows version of INGENIUM. Keen to address its customers’ demands, SOLCORP responded by working with Micro Focus to reuse, migrate and benchmark INGENIUM on Windows and .NET.
System running in parallel on both mainframe and Windows

Using the Micro Focus technology enabled SOLCORP to provide its customers the best of both worlds with INGENIUM. With the system running in parallel on both the mainframe and the Windows and Microsoft .NET environment, SOLCORP found itself able to open up options for its customer base and expand into new markets.

SOLCORP selected Micro Focus for the migration because of the high level of support for mainframe code, focus on performance and the ease and flexibility of the tooling. Together, they have achieved performance and scalability on Windows with INGENIUM that enables SOLCORP’s customers to deliver high volume, low cost products and process large numbers of new contracts per day.

Minimal code changes

Working together SOLCORP, Microsoft and Micro Focus moved the INGENIUM application from the DB2 mainframe database architecture to Micro Focus Server and Microsoft SQL Server architecture. The mainframe COBOL dialect support in Net Express with .NET meant that migrating the batch DB2 mainframe to Windows and SQL Server involved changes to less than 100 lines of the one million lines of COBOL code. The migration of a similarly sized online application to managed COBOL code running under the .NET framework was achieved with changes to less than one percent of the code.

Using Micro Focus enabled SOLCORP to deliver an agile system with a high degree of interoperability with other systems, and to integrate and extend INGENIUM into the .NET Framework using Net Express with .NET to provide support for managed COBOL code.

The open design of INGENIUM.NET means that in addition to a Web interface, COBOL business functionality can be accessed through published APIs, ACORD XML, and Web services. The architecture of INGENIUM.NET uses Web services to invoke the core COBOL-based INGENIUM code from the Java-based PATHFINDER component.

“INGENIUM exposes all of its functions as Web services, and this ability to unlock the core COBOL business processes is invaluable for a contemporary insurance system. With Web services we can provide simplified integration with customers, distributors and other business partners.”

Steve Eaton,
Vice President of Marketing,
SOLCORP

INGENIUM.NET brings the same scalability that the system is known for on its UNIX and mainframe platforms. Data access, which is critical to most COBOL business systems, was a key issue. SOLCORP, Microsoft and Micro Focus worked closely to ensure maximum performance and scalability for data access including optimizing the behavior of bulk fetch/insert SQL requests. The resulting improved performance delivers multiple benefits including a reduced batch window, improved resource utilization, and greater online availability.
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.