



## South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company (SCFBMIC)

Mainframe Application Modernization project provides significant gains in efficiency and \$620,000 savings per year for insurer SCFBMIC

### Highlights

- Savings of \$620,000 every year
- Excellent response times in the Micro Focus environment
- Scalability and ample capacity for new applications
- Contemporary development tooling increasing productivity substantially
- Doubled capacity of testing environment to drive up quality while keeping costs down

“Micro Focus has given us the tools to modernize without dumping the significant application investments we have made over the years. Instead, it has helped us get extra mileage out of them. An operational saving of \$620,000 each year is a major contribution to our bottom line.”

**Bert Young,**  
 Vice President of Information  
 Technology, SCFBMIC

### Challenge

South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company (SCFBMIC) had consolidated its IBM mainframe application environment in the past, but business pressures made it essential to take that optimization process a step further. It had to reduce annual operating costs significantly, increase its service throughput and do this in a way that would not impact business continuity.

### Solution

- Micro Focus Enterprise Analyzer
- Micro Focus Enterprise Developer
- Micro Focus Enterprise Server
- Microsoft SQL Server

### About SCFBMIC

SCFBMIC is an insurance provider which focuses both on farmers and on those outside the agricultural sector, offering everything from home insurance to commercial and automobile coverage.

In the early 90s it consolidated its IBM mainframe based business applications on to one central environment operated by Southern Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Company (SFBCIC) of Ridgeland, MS., but pressure was on to explore other options to optimize costs further and determine how its investment in Microsoft technology may play a part.

SCFBMIC’s core applications were for policies, claims and administration – with around 2,900 programs in the total inventory, serving 80 different locations and 600 users.

In addition, billing systems, which were maintained by SFBCIC, needed to be considered in this optimizing exercise, creating a significant workload.

### The need for agility

The pressures of stiff competition in a challenging economic environment dictated SCFBMIC’s need to reduce costs while increasing business agility and improving the ability to adopt new solutions, particularly web-based services. At the same time the SCFBMIC management recognized the need to preserve the many years of proven and valuable COBOL logic running in the business.

With a wealth of database, .NET and web services expertise already in place, the company also decided it would ideally like to move data that was currently within its DB2 database to SQL Server. After extensive research and investigating the market for suitable solutions, it turned to Micro Focus to help. By seeing how the full power of the Windows environment could be exploited, it could now realize its mainframe application modernization strategy.

**A pragmatic approach**

SCFBMIC’s applications provided a service to 80 different locations and 600 users. The project involved migrating 926 million records/rows of data and thousands of programs, as well as replacing the hardware, operating system, on-line system, database, job scheduling and print solutions.

SCFBMIC chose Micro Focus’ mainframe solution as its new environment, with Micro Focus Enterprise Server providing the new deployment environment for applications, while Microsoft SQL Server hosted the data on a separate database server.

Response time is excellent in the Micro Focus environment, and Micro Focus Enterprise Server and SQL Server are keeping up with all requests.

Thanks to the expertise of the Micro Focus team, the implementation went smoothly and Bert Young, Vice President of Information Technology at SCFBMIC, has nothing but praise for Micro Focus.

“It’s a very fast environment and the SCFBMIC team is happy with the improvement to its efficiency”, says Young

**Benefits throughout the business and across departments**

The SCFBMIC development team will now perform all its batch COBOL and online COBOL/CICS development and maintenance using Micro Focus Enterprise Developer. This product provides a modern IDE built on Microsoft Visual Studio and offers a highly productive development environment for its mainframe application subject matter experts. It has helped streamline traditional development processes and enabled the sharing of resources and practice among a wider development pool.

The team will also use Micro Focus Enterprise Analyzer to explore how applications are truly structured. This will help to rationalize 600 further programs and eliminate data sets that are not used. It will also identify ways to boost application efficiency and flexibility, as well as ensuring the company is not working on redundant code.

Young says: “Micro Focus has given us the tools to modernize without dumping the significant application investments we have made over the years. Instead, it has

helped us get extra mileage out of them. Increasing ROI is always a plus. And so are the major cost savings we are starting to enjoy. An operational saving of \$620,000 each year is a major contribution to our bottom line. We are very satisfied with how the move to our strategic environment went with Micro Focus tools. The company was able to address our key business needs quickly, help us become more efficient and bring costs down.”

“We are very satisfied with how this project developed with the Micro Focus Windows based technology. The company was able to address our key business needs quickly, help us become more efficient and ultimately bring costs down.”

**Bert Young,**  
Vice President of Information  
Technology, SCFBMIC

“The new systems not only provide a platform for the provision of new services alongside our proven COBOL programs, but our visual programming tools will also greatly speed up development. One of the reasons for this strategy around our business applications was to increase business agility. Micro Focus has given our team the tools it needs to create new, contemporary, solutions. We like the tools – and I believe that customers will also like the new solutions we can now create.”

In addition to the benefits of adopting Windows servers for production and Windows workstations for development teams, the company found there were additional benefits related to testing capacity throughout the development and testing organization.

The cost of adding new servers is now really affordable. SCFBMIC has been able to double the processing capacity needed for application testing enabling it to perform many more testing cycles at the pace they require. This removes those testing bottlenecks they could not previously afford to address.

“On the mainframe we could not afford to run a parallel Quality Assurance (QA) environment or development environments because of the DASD requirements and time to run batch. The table below describes the vast improvements we have enjoyed as an additional benefit we had not really anticipated” said Young, “and we have seen improvements in our service levels, testing quality, and productivity of both developers and QA staff as a direct result.”

Operating System	Environment	CICS Program Testing Capacity	Batch Program Testing Capacity	Data Capacity
z/OS	Development	70% - Critical Applications Only	No batch test environment, no scheduled batch run	Data copied from production as needed by developers
Micro Focus	Development	100% program coverage	100% program coverage, automated scheduled batch environment.	Full production data environment by accessing Integration data environment
z/OS	Integration	N/A	N/A	N/A
Micro Focus	Integration	100% program coverage	100% program coverage, fully scheduled batch environment.	Full production data environment
z/OS	QA	70% - Critical Applications Only	Limited to critical daily applications, partially scheduled batch system.	10% of production data available, data copied from production as needed by developers
Micro Focus	QA	100% program coverage	100% program coverage, fully scheduled batch environment.	Full production data environment

**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.

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