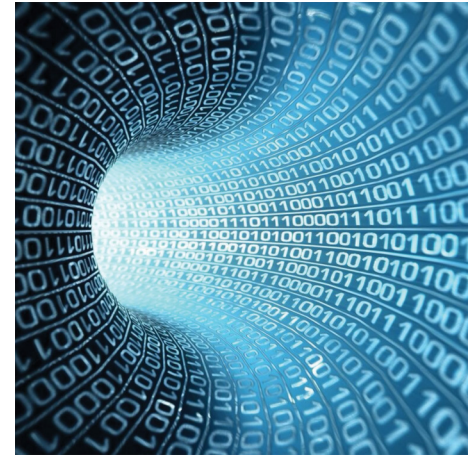# Rainer Obermeit Planungs- und Daten- technik (Obermeit)

Return to ACUCOBOL leads to tenfold performance improvement for ERP System.

Overview

Rainer Obermeit develops and supplies an ERP system for companies that deal in imports and exports. OfficeReady covers all the import and export-specific requirements for an inventory control system—a comprehensive solution featuring sale and purchase contract management, scheduling and deadline tracking, warehouse management, preliminary and post-costing, a handheld-based storage system, interfaces for compliance audits, financial accounting interfaces, commission accounting, etc. The OfficeReady system also supports multiple languages and currencies, has multi-client support capability and warehousing along with transit and drop shipping functionality.

> **"Moving from ACUCOBOL to an alternative solution cost us 500,000 euro. After that, we stopped counting. The decision to go back to Micro Focus (now part of OpenText) was vital to the success of our business."**
>
> **OLIVER WESTFEHLING**
> Chief Executive
> Obermeit

Challenge

The OfficeReady ERP suite from Obermeit is a modular software solution developed for organizations dedicated to import and export. It currently serves more than 40 global companies. Like many independent software vendors (ISVs), industry reputations are won and lost on the strength of their software solution and the reliability and performance of the business application. Delivering highly-available, fault-free solutions is a key corporate objective for Obermeit.

Around 2008, in order to comply with a new, post-acquisition corporate strategy, Obermeit decided to move from OpenText™ ACUCOBOL-GT, part of the OpenText™ *extend* portfolio, to an alternative OpenText™ COBOL dialect from another vendor. This was intended to give Obermeit direct access to the Java platform and enable them to deploy the OfficeReady ERP system to the Java Virtual Machine (JVM). In reality, the new COBOL environment caused numerous and significant business problems for Obermeit.

"This switch turned out to be a serious mistake, which cost us at least 500,000 euro. Once we reached this figure, we stopped counting." says CEO Oliver Westfehling. Recalling the events of this prior project, he went on to explain; "after the initial rollout, we soon realized there were

At a Glance

■ **Industry**

High Tech

■ **Location**

Germany

■ **Challenge**

Obermeit needed to address stability and performance problems it was experiencing following a move from ACUCOBOL to an alternative COBOL dialect, representing a significant customer satisfaction issue.

■ **Products and Services**

extend

■ **Success Highlights**

+ 10x greater performance over alternative COBOL solution
+ Superior application availability to alternative solution
+ Increased satisfaction with development tools
+ Exploiting new business opportunities with optimized product

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serious issues with the new ERP system and underlying technology platform. OfficeReady performance was reduced by up to 10 times from previous, ACUCOBOL-GT levels.

We also had frequent user reports of stability problems, including up to 10 system outages every day. Any outage is unacceptable so this represented a significant customer satisfaction issue for us. We struggled with this new ERP environment for several years and went to great efforts to overcome these issues but in the end, we were simply unable to sell our ERP product, using this technology platform, to new customers. The move away from ACU had clearly cost us greatly and the only way forward was to return to a proven solution, ACUCOBOL-GT".

Solution

Obermeit therefore chose to fully reintroduce ACUCOBOL-GT as the underlying technology solution supporting its ERP system early in 2014.

Before the final transition, Obermeit conducted detailed comparative tests for three months. These tests examined the operational health and quality of the ERP application utilizing both COBOL variants, while closely monitoring performance. The ERP application, running under ACUCOBOL-GT, demonstrated much higher performance levels than the alternative COBOL solution. These results unequivocally vindicated the decision to change technology platforms.

The transition occurred without any major problems; a few minor data conversion issues were quickly resolved and no program or code base changes were necessary. On average, it took one to two days per customer to switch underlying technology platforms supporting its ERP package.

Results

"ACUCOBOL has brought us a large number of functional improvements," explains Rolf Ahlrichs from the Programming Department at Obermeit, "not least in the areas of application debugging, compiling, bug tracking and update options." Overall, this greatly simplified the maintenance and development of the ERP application.

Other advantages include clear performance optimizations—in sample comparative tests, ACUCOBOL delivered a one-third performance improvement over the previous COBOL derivative. Handling complex, extensive data volumes such as Excel spreadsheets with a million rows, a tenfold increase in performance was obvious. Furthermore, all programs now start immediately, an improvement on the previous 10 to 15 second delay.

System failures no longer occur using ACUCOBOL and outages are a thing of the past. The technology platform change has therefore also led to a significant increase in customer satisfaction.

"We are completely satisfied with Micro Focus (now part of OpenText™) ACUCOBOL-GT," says Oliver Westfehling. "We have also been impressed with Micro Focus (now part of OpenText) service and support. Short response times and access to highly skilled experts are crucial for us. We're very happy to renew our relationship with Micro Focus (now part of OpenText) and ACUCOBOL-GT."

By moving to ACUCOBOL-GT, Obermeit has ensured that its ERP application delivers high levels of availability, performance and customer satisfaction. With the new system now fully launched, Obermeit believes OfficeReady can now be promoted once again to new customers.

Learn more at
www.microfocus.com/opentext

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