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Case Study

The National Government Employee Pensions Board (SPV)

Increasing IT agility and improving collaboration with OpenText.

Overview

The National Government Employee Pensions Board (SPV) was established in 1963 and is one of Sweden's largest providers of pension services. It is responsible for administering the pensions of over 800,000 public service employees and pensioners, and employs 400 people.

Challenge

SPV operates in a highly regulated and specialized environment. During the late 1980s a mainframe environment was introduced which now hosts 25 different COBOL-developed systems containing more than 5,500 programs. OpenText™ Mainframe Express tool was successfully used for continuous system development. Mats Bergman, System Developer for SPV, explains: "With eight major product releases each year, development and testing is a continuous process. Limited mainframe capacity meant application testing could only be done late in the development cycle when fixes tend to be more expensive. In recent years we have started to use a Visual Studio-based development environment for our Web services and front-end applications. We wanted to introduce a common toolset for all our developers and exploit the latest COBOL mainframe compiler functionality which was not available on Mainframe Express."

"Using the Micro Focus (now part of OpenText) solutions has increased our confidence in the quality of our production releases and we are able to include more enhanced functionality in each release we issue."

MATS BERGMAN
System Developer
SPV

Solution

As SPV used Mainframe Express as part of its development process, it looked to Micro Focus™ Enterprise Developer by OpenText™ for z Systems to provide the latest mainframe compatibility and a modern Visual Studio-based IDE. It meant the two development teams could share the same toolset. Microsoft Team Foundation Server (TFS) provides off-mainframe source code management and is closely integrated with Visual Studio.

Instead of using valuable mainframe capacity required to support the day-to-day running of key applications, Micro Focus™ Enterprise Test Server by OpenText™ enables SPV to perform a variety of pre-production testing on low cost commodity hardware, avoiding unnecessary cost and delay.

SPV
Statens tjänstepensionsverk

At a Glance

- **Industry**
  Government
- **Location**
  Sweden
- **Challenge**
  As a successful Mainframe Express user, SPV was familiar with the benefits of developing off mainframe; not only in terms of developer efficiency but also mainframe MIPS savings. However, as SPV developed many of its distributed applications in Visual Studio it was looking at unifying development tooling. It also wanted to use the latest IBM Enterprise COBOL compiler on the mainframe and could not do this with Mainframe Express.
- **Products and Services**
  Micro Focus Enterprise Developer
  Micro Focus Enterprise Test Server
  Mainframe Express
- **Success Highlights**
  + Increased development team collaboration with a unified development toolset
  + Improved product quality through more extensive and frequent code testing
  + Closer collaboration with business testers
  + Introduced an agile, parallel, development process

> **"Using Enterprise Developer for z Systems in our parallel development processes means that code changes can be released on the mainframe and our Windows environment simultaneously, supporting an agile development cycle, using Enterprise Developer, TFS and TeamCity."**
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> **MATS BERGMAN**
> System Developer
> SPV

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OpenText CEO Mark Barrenechea's blog

Bergman comments: "We upgraded from Micro Focus (now part of OpenText) Mainframe Express to [Micro Focus] Enterprise Developer for z Systems and [Micro Focus] Enterprise Test Server, to implement a continuous integration environment, using TeamCity to build a test server environment. We now use the same development technology across the teams and have a test environment at our disposal at any time resulting in shorter test cycles and higher code quality."

The development team makes code changes and checks the code into TFS. TeamCity is then used to build the changes as part of the continuous integration process and deploys the changed code to a test server environment for testing purposes.

Source code control has moved from the mainframe to an open environment and TFS is integrated with TeamCity to support parallel COBOL and .NET development.

Results

With most of the development and testing done in the Windows environment, the mainframe environment can now entirely focus on the "heavy lifting" involved in running the day-to-day SPV business. The same development and testing process is used across the COBOL and .NET development teams, leveraging modern tools. Using Enterprise Developer makes developers more efficient and it allows SPV to use the latest IBM Enterprise COBOL dialects on the mainframe.

Bergman comments: "Our developers are very comfortable in the Windows environment and it makes it easier for us to attract new talent into the team. Using [Micro Focus] Enterprise Developer for z Systems in our development processes means that code changes can be released on the mainframe and our Windows environment simultaneously, supporting an agile development cycle, using [Micro Focus] Enterprise Developer, TFS and TeamCity."

Now that testing does not consume mainframe capacity, more extensive and frequent tests can be done, as Bergman explains: "We could not test all of our code at the same time and our business testers would only be involved at the end of the development cycle. With our new Micro Focus (now part of OpenText™) environment, as soon as a code change is created it can be tested and our testers are often working on different releases in parallel, it's an iterative cycle. The process has brought our business testers much closer into the development cycle. As we prefer to fix problems early on rather than when we are about to go into production, the whole testing process is much less stressful for everyone involved."

He concludes: "Using the Micro Focus (now part of OpenText) solutions has increased our confidence in the quality of our production releases and we are able to include more enhanced functionality in each release we issue. In the future [Micro Focus] Enterprise Test Server will be used to provide mainframe test harnesses to our .NET developers, allowing them to test their changes earlier in the cycle, off-mainframe. We also plan to introduce test automation to further streamline our processes and reduce the time it takes to develop and test application changes. The Micro Focus (now part of OpenText™) solution has exceeded our expectations."

Learn more at
www.microfocus.com/opentext

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