Government Agency Minimizes Risk of Conversion Project with NetCOBOL

▍BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The mission of the Washington State Department of Licensing (WADOL) is to ensure public safety and welfare through vehicle and driver services. Additionally, it is responsible for securely collecting over $3.4 billion in revenue annually. To support its daily operations, WADOL relies on a mature set of applications.

These applications, developed over 30 years, were comprised of close to 1.5 million lines of COBOL code. They accessed thousands of files, leveraged large databases, managed hundreds of user interface screens, and were managed by over 50,000 lines of job control language.

WADOL knew it needed to improve its operations, but upgrading its proprietary environment would involve an expensive transformation and increase costs by over $500K annually.

OVERVIEW

CLIENT
Washington State Department of Licensing (WADOL)

CHALLENGE
Converting 1.5 million lines of COBOL code to .Net platform

SOLUTION
Adaptigent Distributed Fujitsu NetCOBOL

Furthermore, internal and external analysts were warning WADOL that its operations could be at serious risk if it delayed implementing a replacement or migration plan. Fortunately, migrating from its existing platform would address several challenges WADOL currently encounters.

The mainframe's maintenance costs were becoming prohibitively expensive and in terms of usability, flexibility, and reporting capabilities, it was falling behind other platforms. Independent Software Vendors (ISVs) had also ceased developing add-on tools for the platform, further limiting its utility. Moreover, the necessary workarounds were cumbersome, leading to redundant work and inefficiencies.

> *"The beautiful part of the solution was the ability to take our current COBOL code, some which is over 20 years old, and remove the screen and data interfaces and port that to Windows using Fujitsu Software NetCOBOL without changing any of the business logic."*
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> **- CIO, Washington State Department of Licensing**

SOLUTION

WADOL decided that the time had come to move to a Windows-based infrastructure and determined that Adaptigent™-distributed Fujitsu Software NetCOBOL would offer the highest probability of success.

By using Fujitsu Software NetCOBOL, WADOL could maximize the use of its existing COBOL code, minimize changes, and, consequently, reduce risk. The target platform was .NET, and Adaptigent's NetCOBOL was the only COBOL compiler that produced .NET MSIL code without charging runtime fees.

The solution needed to:

- Migrate the remaining 35 applications to Windows/SQL Server.

- Use .NET-compliant COBOL.

- Perform the migration quickly with the lowest possible risk.

- Allow user interfaces and reports to retain their format, style, and navigation.

- Ensure all applications operate within an aggressive timeline.

RESULTS

Leveraging NetCOBOL, WADOL was able to reduce risk and preserve their investment in existing business logic by compiling COBOL code on the .NET platform. This retained their simple maintenance routines through a centralized infrastructure without the need to deploy client-side components. It also eliminated the need for further hardware investments in their legacy system.

In addition, the absence of runtime fees associated with NetCOBOL meant that WADOL could eliminate significant ongoing operational costs. Leveraging newer technology platforms also meant that one-off workarounds were no longer necessary, allowing them to access a broader range of utilities and tools, thereby making their applications more flexible.

The strategic use of NetCOBOL also facilitated better systems integration, streamlining processes that were previously reliant on makeshift and often cumbersome workarounds.

By adopting a more cohesive and integrated approach, WADOL not only simplified its operational workflow but also enhanced overall system reliability and performance.

This move towards a more unified system architecture has positioned WADOL to rapidly adapt to future technological advancements, ensuring that their systems remain robust and scalable.

OUR SOLUTION:

- Eliminated the risk of a large-scale full code conversion project.

- Saved over $1 million in annual hardware and software costs.

- Decreased dependence on outside contractors.

- Improved systems integration and eradicated inefficient workaround processes.

ADAPTIGENT