



Highlights

- Preserved COBOL assets and reduced COBOL licensing costs
- Provided the modern technology advantages of Java
- Insured cross-platform portability and Web-enablement
- Enabled easy transition from CGI programs to Java servlets for Web programming needs
- Offered enhanced graphical user interface (GUI) capabilities

i-Modulas Modernizes ERP Software

Protects COBOL assets, offers Java technology for innovative multi-platform SaaS Offering

i-Modulas Software knew it was becoming increasingly important to offer Java technology and a user-friendly GUI with the company's trusted ERP software, yet remain platform independent. Both modern technology and multiple platforms were going to be necessary for the company to continue growing; without these options, customers might turn to other ERP software vendors. As the company considered options, it found that only Veryant's isCOBOL™ Application Platform Suite (APS) was able to help retain i-Modulas' valuable legacy COBOL applications and offer its customers the modern technology advantages of Java on multiple platforms.

SaaS helps rental businesses and project-driven organizations

i-Modulas Software BV offers specialized ERP software for rental companies and project-based organizations. The software provides fast and accurate insight into business processes, financial records, inventory, purchasing, sales, service management, and project administration.

Using a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model, i-Modulas offers an Internet-based software rental option to insure that complex organizations with multiple offices, warehouses, and other facilities can provide the right information for hundreds of employees to work together simultaneously. The software's modular structure also enables independent work for individuals or small groups. Access via the Internet means that all necessary employees, whether at their home location or traveling, have easy, instant access to current, important data.

The i-Modulas software suite consists of several modules: i-Modulas Basic for financials, i-Modulas Desk for retail and rental businesses, i-Modulas Sales, i-Modulas Rental, i-Modulas Project, and i-Modulas Mini-Office for personal productivity.

Modern ERP software necessary for company growth

i-Modulas had been planning to modernize its software by adding Java technology and offering users a friendly GUI to represent text-based information in an easier-to-understand format for viewing business data. Originally using character-based COBOL, the software was platform independent, which was important for i-Modulas to appeal to a greater share of the ERP software market. However, the company really wanted a solution that was platform independent, provided access via the Internet, offered a friendly GUI, and would enable a speedy migration.

When i-Modulas looked into options to meet these needs, it found that most solutions tied the software to a specific platform. However, the company did not want to trade platform

independence for modern technology. Winning new customers without a solution that met all of its stated criteria would be much more challenging.

As an interim step, the company used ACUCOBOL-GT® to offer Web integration, but because the ACUCOBOL thin client model only supported Windows, i-Modulas had to rely upon an outdated terminal emulator to run on Linux. It was costly for the firm to put extra staff resources into maintaining different platform deployment options with the software.

Using ACUCOBOL-GT also restricted i-Modulas to using dated CGI technology for Web programming. i-Modulas found CGI programs to be slow and resource intensive because they require significant memory and processing resources to execute.

When i-Modulas learned that isCOBOL APS could support a character-based interface and meet all of its needs, the company knew it had found the right solution. isCOBOL technology enabled i-Modulas to quickly move from using cumbersome CGI programs to 'next generation' Java Servlets for its Web programming needs. Java Servlets provided i-Modulas a stateful, multi-threaded solution that improved end user response times across the Internet. In addition to meeting i-Modulas' stated criteria, Veryant offered a very easy-to-use and affordable solution that would provide a stable future for the company's software.

Veryant helps i-Modulas reach goal

The i-Modulas application consists of 200 online COBOL programs and 200 batch COBOL programs, with 200 files, 500 screens, and 1.8 million lines of code. The applications support functions such as planning, sales, rental, accounting/finance, buying, equipment maintenance, shop management, and customer service, in a variety of industries, including financial services, retail, construction, equipment manufacturing, and more.

The company easily completed the migration to isCOBOL and had its first users online within a year. Today, all users are on the Java technology. Most of the modernization project was accomplished by an i-Modulas developer, who was trained by Veryant's technical specialists. The company is deploying several modules of isCOBOL APS: isCOBOL™ Compiler, isCOBOL™ IDE, isCOBOL™ Runtime Environment, isCOBOL™ Debugger, isCOBOL™ Server (thin client and distributed processing), and isCOBOL™ ISAM Server.

"I love the Debugger. After migrating to Java, I expected to have to debug Java code," explained van Oevelen. "I was amazed when I started debugging my first isCOBOL programs and found out I could continue to debug in COBOL, something I've been used to for 30 years."

i-Modulas reached its goals of cross-platform application portability, Java technology, an improved GUI, and now enjoys easier installation of software. Van Oevelen said the Veryant team has been very helpful and very responsive.

"By using isCOBOL APS, we can offer SaaS without having to install proprietary software and platform-specific client software. In addition, Veryant lets us update our existing applications and development products very affordably."

- René van Oevelen, software architect, i-Modulas Software BV



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