

**BUSINESS PROBLEM:**

Limited resources and continued sky-high maintenance fees for its mainframe software reduced the level of flexibility of its financial systems.

TULANE UNIVERSITY

"ROI within twelve months, ongoing annual cost savings of over \$240,000, improved performance, simplified architecture, and legacy data consolidated into our strategic database. I think we can say this project was a resounding success."

[Dr. John Lawson, Vice President for Information Technology and CIO, Tulane University]



TULANE UNIVERSITY

UNLOCK AND MIGRATE TO RELATIONAL DATABASES

Micro Focus and Move2Open Help Tulane University Unlock Vital System From IBM Mainframe

PRODUCT SOLUTION

Micro Focus Net Express®

Micro Focus Application Server™

SUMMARY

Tulane University is a premier research-based academic institution located in New Orleans, Louisiana. Throughout its eleven schools and colleges, almost 12,400 students are enrolled in Tulane's graduate or undergraduate programs in law, medicine, architecture, engineering, and liberal arts and sciences, among others.

Like any other organization, Tulane's financial systems are an important part of the institution. For this reason, the Budget Development System (BDS), which is used by every department to build budgets for the upcoming financial year, both salary and non-salary related elements, is critical to the university's operations. Similar to many institutions, Tulane was experiencing a period of limited resources and the continued sky-high annual maintenance fees for its mainframe software reduced the level of flexibility of its financial systems. The university knew a change was in order. Facing a fast-approaching deadline for its maintenance contract renewal, as well as a looming due date for 2004 budget submissions, Tulane had to act fast and smart to come up with a solution. A language conversion, database migration and a move to Windows proved to be the answer.

CHALLENGES

The BDS system was originally written in IDEAL over a decade ago and all the critical data used during the budget planning process resided within Datacom.

Tulane selected Move2Open (M2O), a leading legacy migration specialist based in Oxford, England, for its ability to convert IDEAL to Micro Focus COBOL and to migrate from Datacom to relational databases. However, in order to rollout a fully-operational system before the university's 2004 budget submission deadline, the project had to be completed prior to the school's upcoming maintenance renewal for the IDEAL/Datacom technology from Computer Associates (CA). "Failure to meet this deadline would have meant either \$250,000 for an additional year of maintenance or \$35,000 per month, so missing the deadline was not an option," said Mary Walsh, Director of Software Applications Services. "This only gave us twelve months to accomplish the migration."

"Time was of the essence in this project. We were extremely impressed with the speed of M2O's conversion and the team's ability to meet our tight timeframe."

[Mary Walsh,
Director of Software Application
Services, Tulane University]

The prior replacement of other systems utilizing CA-Datcom across the university, including the implementation of Oracle® Financials to replace the school's old financial reporting system, was causing the integration of the BDS data to become more and more problematic, demonstrating a need to consolidate the BDS data into an Oracle database. In addition, the university wanted the migration to be as seamless as possible to minimize the level of disruption experienced by the staff.

SOLUTIONS

With the university's larger business goals in mind, M2O recommended the conversion of the BDS IDEAL application code into Micro Focus COBOL to run on Windows, where Micro Focus Net Express could be used to maintain and extend the application going forward. In doing so, Tulane would have a scalable, flexible and, most importantly, lower cost system to run this critical operation. No small task considering Tulane had to simultaneously move from CA-Datcom to Oracle.

Using its Ideal-2-COBOL (I2C) tool, M2O successfully converted CA-IDEAL 4GL code to Micro Focus COBOL, including SQL code to access Oracle and using other capabilities within M2O's conversion suite they extracted the data from Datcom and loaded it into Oracle. In parallel, Tulane staff converted JCL to Windows batch scripts.

Effectively, in a single project the BDS was converted from its proprietary origins to standard COBOL accessing a contemporary relational database and moved from an IBM 9672 (219 MIPS) z/OS mainframe to a dual Intel CPU server running Windows 2003.

In order to ease the transition for staff members, M2O was also able to maintain a consistent character interface with a similar look and feel to the previous system. Furthermore, Tulane was able to easily incorporate the changes into the ongoing educational program for BDS to ensure both novice and expert users were properly trained on the new system.

"Although we have not established any formal metrics, it appears we are experiencing a three to four fold increase in the speed of the mainframe's batch processes."

[Gary Valence,
Technology Services Application
Analyst, Tulane University]

RESULTS

Tulane went live with the first stage of the new system on January 5, 2004, successfully enabling users to begin budget planning on January 10, 2004. This cut over has effectively delivered a cost reduction of more than \$240,000 per annum and the university is projecting a return on their investment into the conversion and migration project within twelve months.

The migrated system, running on Micro Focus Application Server, has also provided significant performance improvements with key BDS batch processes, executing three to four times faster than on the IBM mainframe.

“Like many private institutions, Tulane was struggling with a technology infrastructure that was locking them in to high cost maintenance fees and hindering data consolidation. However, utilizing our Conversion Suite technology, we were able liberate the system by moving it to a more flexible and cost-effective platform.”

[Huw Price, Managing Director, Move2Open]

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