

Library Service Modernizes with iModernize

A library service company in Germany, ekz.bibliotheksservice, used iModernize (formerly ML-iMPACT) to modernize a 30-million-record database application to Microsoft Visual Studio and C#. The company realized huge productivity gains by deploying a solution that preserves legacy AS/400 assets, while simultaneously offering a new set of features provided by the Windows .NET platform.

Customer Profile

Ekz.bibliotheksservice GmbH is a German company with subsidiaries in Austria and France. Founded in 1947, ekz provides services and application software for public libraries. The ekz AS/400 application has been deployed in over 73 cities and currently manages a repository of over 600,000 books, with over 20,000 publications added every month.

Business Situation

In 2006, ekz began to investigate easy and low-risk solutions for modernizing its AS/400 application, written in

RPG code. The company's main concern was to maintain the same level of performance as on the AS/400, but it also identified several other goals, including:

1. A smart and user-friendly graphic user interface (GUI)
2. The ability to integrate with Microsoft Office products
3. Easy installation
4. A modern look and feel
5. Being open to future enhancements

The Solution

To address this situation and meet these goals, a full-service migration with automated testing was deployed using the iModernize (formerly ML-iMPACT) suite of products. The RPG-based application, which accessed more than 30 million database records, was converted to C# in a Microsoft Visual Studio environment.

Some of the limitations inherent in the AS/400 application included a "green screen" environment that is not very user-friendly, a means of control that is keyboard-oriented and a user interface that offers only limited colour choices.

"The entire look of the application results from the original architecture which is obsolete in today's environment," said Mr. Rene Hirsch, the CIO of EKZ. "Additionally, the application was quite brittle and difficult to integrate. These issues, combined with ekz's strategic decision to target the Microsoft .NET and Visual Studio market with this library application, suggested that we had to undertake a massive modernization initiative."

Migrating the existing application was the only feasible approach for ekz. Given the time-to-market goal, rewriting the entire legacy application for a .NET or Java platform would have taken too much time.

The modernization team used the iModernize migration tool to run initial diagnostics on the legacy code then convert the RPG and CL code to C#.

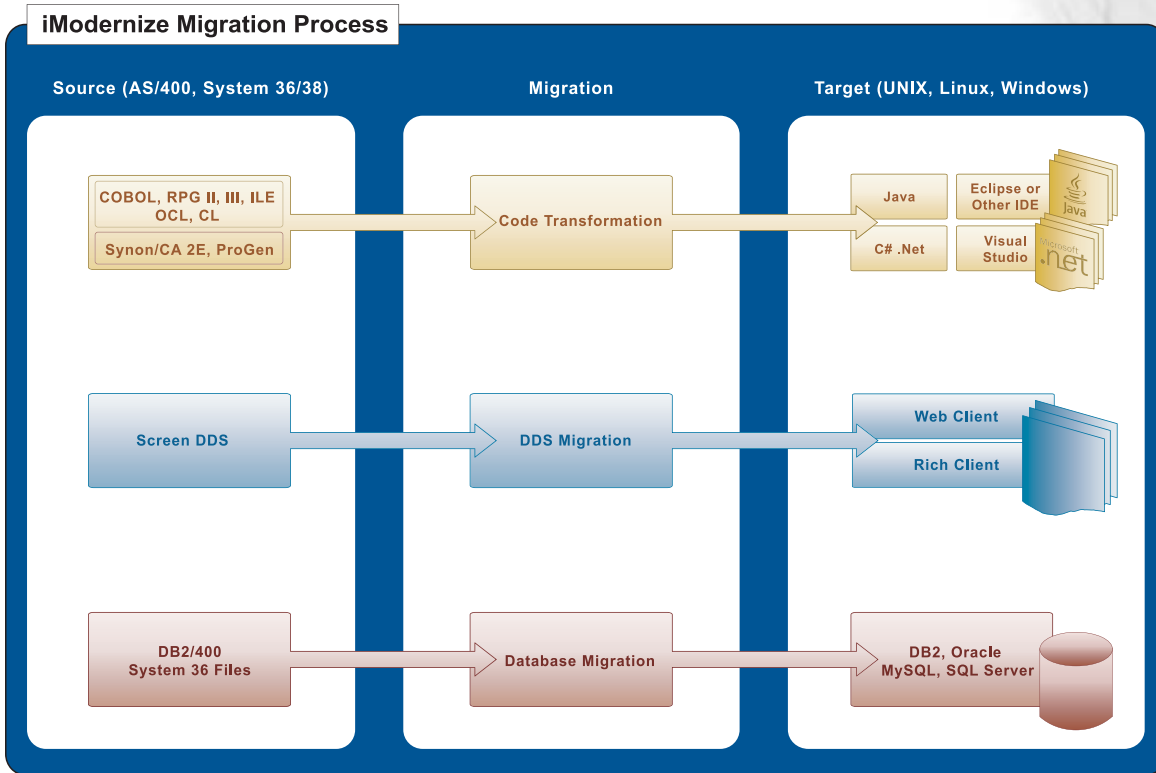
During the conversion process, iModernize migrated the AS/400 source RPG code to C#. In addition, all data could be optionally converted from DB2 to one of several target relational database types. The migrated software can access both the DB2 database as well as any other relational database. This gives customers the choice of using the AS/400 system as a database server for the migrated software, or switching to a SQL database as desired.

Customer Benefits

- User-friendly and smart GUI
- Integration with Microsoft Office products
- Developers can take advantage of modern software development on the .NET platform
- Easy installation with new look and feel
- Enhancements and additional functions
- Business logic of customer's trusted RPG and CL software is preserved

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- Savings of the capital invested in the development of the existing applications
- Further development and improvement of migrated software without limitations
- Ability to maintain one set of source code and repeat migrations to other platforms when required
- No re-training of the application users required



About Speedware

Speedware has been dedicated to helping companies modernize their business applications for over 15 years and enjoys a 100% project success rate. The company specializes in developing end-to-end modernization solutions that allow industry and government leaders to increase their business agility and reduce their operational costs. Speedware has been a leading provider of enterprise software solutions since 1976, offering a complete suite of legacy modernization, migration and application portfolio management solutions, business intelligence tools and application development solutions.

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