

CUSTOMER



INDUSTRY

Financial

CHALLENGE

With upgrades planned to newer releases of the z/OS operating system, the Pentagon Federal Credit union became concerned when the provider of its debugging tool couldn't guarantee the software would continue to work properly.

SOLUTION



RESULTS

- Accelerated root-problem identification
- Production concerns are resolved as quickly as problems are reported

# Xpediter is the First Line of Defense for Credit Union

## Business Challenge

The Pentagon Federal Credit Union (PFCU) was federally chartered in 1935 and serves members worldwide. PFCU serves more than one million members of the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense, defense-related companies and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. It is one of the strongest and safest financial institutions in the world, with more than \$15 billion in assets. The majority of its members enjoy worldwide service by Internet, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

When applications need to be up and running 24/7, time is crucial in problem resolution. Developers at PFCU need to quickly figure out how application source code works and how to fix it when it doesn't.

Like most companies in the banking industry, PFCU relies on Hogan financial applications (among others) as the mainstay for its day-to-day business operations. These applications are written primarily in COBOL with some Assembler code.

PFCU had established some aggressive growth objectives, including planned upgrades to newer releases of the z/OS operating system. But the credit union could not secure a guarantee from the provider of its debugging software that the tool it was using would continue to work properly with the proposed upgrades.

That wasn't the only concern PFCU had with the tool. There were numerous quirks and idiosyncrasies that developers had to contend with. For instance, the debugger wouldn't accept "Go Back"—a common coding statement that is used frequently in the Hogan application. PFCU's director of applications management Lou DeCarlo says, "Any program we wanted to test, we had to first go into the source code and change all the 'Go Back' statements to say 'Stop Run' instead. Then we could file the program. That was becoming a problem."

Software engineer Ron Tschida agrees. "You couldn't just compile a program source module," Tschida says. "You had to pull it down first, make a change to it and then test it. The problem is that once you change your source module in anyway, you potentially change the way it's working. What was happening was somebody would put in a 'Stop Run' and forget to take it out. The code then got into production and caused problems because Hogan requires the use of 'Go Back'."



## Solution

Tschida found the credit union's current debugging tool cumbersome to deploy. At his previous employer, he used Compuware Xpediter and suggested to management that they take a look at the product as an answer to the problems they were experiencing.

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"With Xpediter, we're literally closing the problems as fast as they're being written up."

— Ron Tschida, Software Engineer, Pentagon Federal Credit Union

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After checking out the tool and realizing that it was indeed a robust product and fully z/OS-compatible, director DeCarlo decided to purchase Xpediter as a replacement for the competitor's product. "Xpediter's a great debugging tool," he says. "It's already saved us countless hours of time fixing code."

Again, Tschida agrees. "Xpediter gives you a wider range of options when you're actually in the code running through a program," he says. "And I can personally say it's saved me numerous hours of effort trying to debug programs or processes." With Xpediter, PFCU's developers were able to compile a half dozen programs, walk through the process, easily pinpoint exactly what was happening and make the necessary code changes.

"You can get the data conditions once you get into the program to set up your exact situation—which saves you from having to go out and set up test conditions. That's a tremendous time saver," Tschida says of working with Xpediter.

According to DeCarlo, an added advantage is that Xpediter lets you visually see whether code is executed or not. "Have you ever finished a job and can't remember whether you went through a certain section of code or not?" he asks, rhetorically. "With Xpediter, you're sure."

Another advantage of Xpediter for the team at PFCU was the ability to debug a program that developers may not be familiar with. "Xpediter certainly helps you understand how the code's working. And because you know the flow of the program—especially if you didn't write the program—it helps you understand the whole logic flow," says Tschida.

## Results

Xpediter is now used on a daily basis at PFCU. "Since it's been installed, I don't think a day's gone by that I haven't used it," adds Tschida.

The tool has had a positive impact on productivity at the credit union as well. "If you look at deadlines being missed," says DeCarlo, "it's amazing. There are no deadlines missed anymore."

Even though a competitor's debugging tool was still occasionally being used—for instance, in the process of rolling out a new application—Xpediter is now used exclusively to fight the inevitable problems that occur in production. "With Xpediter, we're literally closing the problems as fast as they're being written up," says Tschida. "We figure out what needs to be changed, make the changes and turn it over."

The PFCU team says they'd highly recommend Xpediter to anyone who needs to debug programs quickly, accurately and on-the-fly. "Xpediter simplifies the debugging process," Tschida states. "And anyone who's in the business, who has to fight fires, knows that any tool you can trust to simplify the process is definitely worth looking into."

Xpediter's efficiency and time-saving abilities have made an impression at PFCU. "On one project," adds Tschida, "what would normally have taken me two to three days of work to put dumps in, took me only two hours. I walked through the program with Xpediter and changed some values as it went through—on-the-fly. You can do that with Xpediter—you don't always have to have the exact data conditions."

"Besides," adds DeCarlo, "it sure beats putting dumps into programs." Not to mention, forgetting to take them out.

To learn more, please visit: [compuware.com/xpediter](http://compuware.com/xpediter).

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