CUSTOMER

Bank of Ireland

bankofireland.com

INDUSTRY

Financial Services

CHALLENGE

Maximize efficiency of mainframe processes to control costs and avoid operational risks

SOLUTION

S Compuware **Strobe**®

iS Compuware **iStrobe**®

RESULTS

- Proof of value exercise found savings sufficient to pay for software costs

- Processing time slashed from three hours to 15 minutes in one case

- Deferred annual upgrade by six months

Strobe Pays for Itself Before Proof of Value is Complete

Business Challenge

The recovering economic climate means that most companies are now looking for ways to control operational costs. One organization that is ahead of the game is the Bank of Ireland, which is already successfully using Compuware's Strobe and iStrobe to analyze and optimize its mainframe processing.

A couple of years ago, the bank launched an initiative to improve its control of operational IT costs, particularly those associated with mainframe resources. At the same time, it needed to address an operational risk: that some of its batch processes might in the future start to take too long, so that, for example, overnight runs could potentially affect daytime processing.

Like many large organizations, Bank of Ireland had a body of legacy systems, some of which had become less efficient over the years. Philip Browne, the bank's application support group manager, said, "We knew that if we could analyze our mature processes in sufficient detail, we would be able to eliminate some inefficiencies and costs arising from the way the code was written, or from the way the code was interacting with the machine."

"The case for an initiative like this is even more compelling in the current economic climate. We're very happy that we started using Strobe when we did."

— Philip Browne, Application Support Group Manager

Solution

Already a satisfied user of several Compuware products, including Abend-AID, File-AID and Xpediter, the bank decided to try Compuware's application performance management solutions Strobe and iStrobe.

The bank worked closely with Compuware to run a proof of value exercise and found that it liked the way the products worked. Browne explained why: "Strobe identifies inefficient processing quickly and presents it simply via iStrobe. It also highlights instances of inefficiency that traditional analysis couldn't find. In fact, the proof of value exercise alone identified sufficient savings to pay for our use of Strobe and iStrobe." In many cases, these savings could be achieved through such simple steps as updating DB2 access paths or "tweaking" SQL statements.

Compuware

With some initial on-site support from Compuware, the bank's team soon found that they could easily use the tools themselves. Browne commented, "Compuware's involvement definitely added value: as well as showing us how to use the tools, the consultant helped us assess our operating system setup, and identified some efficiencies that we might otherwise have overlooked."

Results

The Bank of Ireland began using Strobe in connection with a particular resource-intensive application, but has now broadened the agenda, making Strobe part of an optimization program that addresses the entire application portfolio.

Although this work is ongoing, the bank has already achieved substantial savings. Browne said, "Strobe has allowed us to find a number of 'gems'—instances where we can make major improvements to specific processes. For example, we've reduced the processing time for one overnight batch process from three hours to 15 minutes. In another case, a process was consuming five minutes of CPU time and we were able to get that down to 30 seconds."

As a result, the bank has been able to reduce the frequency of MIPS upgrades. "Last year we were able to defer the annual upgrade by six months, and we're hoping to defer the next one by a year. That means savings both for the bank and for our infrastructure support partner," said Browne, explaining the bank and partner have worked closely together to plan, execute and deliver the improvements.

As well as saving money, Strobe's successes mean that the bank has been able to meet its other objective: avoiding the operational risk associated with processes taking too long to run. There is now no question of overnight processes interfering with daytime ones, and the bank intends to keep it that way by making Strobe use part of its continuing drive to ensure that all systems run as efficiently as possible.

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The Bank of Ireland is in the fortunate position of having addressed application efficiency before it was forced to. "We felt that, as a matter of good practice, we should tackle the efficiency issue sooner rather than later, and Strobe became an integral part of that program," Browne said. "The case for an initiative like this is even more compelling in the current economic climate. We're very happy that we started using Strobe when we did."

To learn more, please visit: **compuware.com/strobe.**

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