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Veryant makes platform independent ERP software a reality for Rech Informática

COBOL-to-Java technology provides cross-platform portability and modern user-interfaces with a single application code base

Long a leader in business management software, Rech Informática (Rech) wanted to offer customers more options and continue expanding its business by increasing market appeal. The company determined that the best way to reach these goals was to modernize its proven ERP software, but it needed to do this without creating high risks for itself or its customers. Rech selected isCOBOL™ Evolve from Veryant to help enhance its software into a solution that offered modern user interface capabilities, enhanced data access, and added flexibility while protecting its long-time, valuable COBOL business logic investments.

Modernized management software solution needed

Rech Informática Ltda. is an application development company that provides SIGER, an ERP solution for integrated business management. SIGER offers a wide range of operational and management tools for multiple business functions, including accounting, purchasing, billing, inventory, manufacturing, human resources and more. Written initially in Micro Focus COBOL, the solution has been in use for more than 20 years by companies in industries as varied as metallurgy, chemicals, footwear manufacturing, and accounting who use SIGER to eliminate rework and consolidate information for better decision making.

Rech wanted to modernize SIGER and broaden its appeal. The software innovator knew that making SIGER a multi-platform offering with a variety of data access options was important for it to fit into the long-term plans of a growing variety of corporate IT environments. Other goals for the software included adding remote access capability, enabling the use of thin clients, and providing updated user interfaces for new modules.

Evolutionary approach reduces risks

Rech's strategic direction has always been to improve product quality through the continuous evolution of its software. In addition to avoiding risk, Rech's evolutionary product philosophy helps preserve the company's considerable software business logic investments, as well as the expertise of its more than 40 developers.

Rech had already ruled out the possibility of completely rewriting SIGER because of the risk it presented. With more than 8.3 million lines of code, 3800 programs, 1200 database tables, 3500 user interface screens and thousands of graphic forms and report SIGER is a very large application. The risks from a rewrite were quite high. The ideal approach for the company was to maintain the existing system while new features were added, increasing both the power and quality of the software.

Upon thorough review, Rech realized it needed a faster, easier, and less costly option. The company's challenge was to identify an affordable COBOL solution that could meet its modernization goals with no disruption, minimal risk, and an evolutionary path to the future.

Highlights

- Modernized trusted ERP application with new thin client access options

- Enhanced user interface and data access capabilities while avoiding a risky application rewrite

- Provided cross-platform portability with a single code base

Veryant helps create modern ERP solution

Rech was introduced to Veryant's isCOBOL Evolve technology by BRIVI Latin America, a leading distributor of Veryant's isCOBOL technology in Latin America. isCOBOL software blends the optimized, business-oriented nature of COBOL with the openness, portability, and power of the Java platform. This enhances productivity and eases integration between legacy and new application environments. The isCOBOL™ Runtime Environment is 100 percent Java, so COBOL applications can be deployed across multiple platforms using a single code base.

"With isCOBOL, there are many open possibilities for developing solutions using isCOBOL resources and the Java platform. Taking advantage of opportunities that until now, were not possible, ensures growth." explained Sandro Silveira, the Rech analyst responsible for the development tools modernization project.

To address platform portability, Veryant offered Rech the isCOBOL™ Compiler, which is written completely in Java, and is 100 percent portable. This allows developers to compile programs on their platform of choice and then deploy to any number of environments. With this option, SIGER could be used in many more IT environments.

isCOBOL technology also provided Rech with the data access options and flexibility that many businesses now require. isCOBOL accesses popular databases such as Oracle, DB2, MySQL and Microsoft SQL Server via JDBC. Because Embedded SQL is converted directly into calls to the JDBC driver, there is no need to relink or recompile when moving between platforms; any supported RDBMS can be used without code changes or disruption.

In terms of user interfaces, Rech wanted to use thin clients, and Veryant's isCOBOL software again directly met the company's criteria. isCOBOL offers a thin client that can be automatically downloaded and run as a standalone Java program.

During Rech's modernization project, Veryant quickly added new features to isCOBOL that Rech was also able to take advantage of. One of the most important additions for Rech was support for conditional compilation syntax, which made it possible to isolate any differences in specific routines and allow a safe and gradual migration.

Rech shares modernization benefits with customers

The new version of SIGER is completely platform independent and includes portable GUIs, as well as updated user-interfaces. All Delphi routines in the software were also migrated to Java.

After the modernization project, the company phased it in at customer sites. All-in-all, Rech found isCOBOL to be the answer they had been seeking. The company expects to continue to evolve its software product, using isCOBOL as the means to keep the application modern and attractive to its customers.

"We found Brivi and Veryant to be ideal partners for their commitment, dedication, speed, and skills in providing new features, compatibility, and performance improvements that are helping to achieve all of our objectives ," said Rovani Marcelo Rech, Rech CEO. "I'm sure we would not find the same level of flexibility and innovation that we had with Veryant, with other partners."