



Business challenge

Customers expect reliable, innovative services from their bank. To ensure it could deliver, a pan-African bank wanted to gain greater insight into its over-complicated application landscape.

Transformation

It is easy to let IT complexity get out of hand as operations grow, and this can get in the way of corporate agility and efficiency. This pan-African bank took a stand, teaming up with Blue Turtle Technologies to roll out IBM Application Discovery to gain new insight into its application landscape, enabling savings of USD20 million.

Business benefits

USD20 million

saved by resolving issues with credit card transactions

Eases

compliance by revealing opportunities to increase security

Enhances

customer service by enabling more agile development

A pan-African Bank Cutting through complexity and identifying efficiencies to save millions of dollars

Headquartered in South Africa, this large banking company operates in more than 15 African countries and offers a full range of banking services.

“IBM Application Discovery enabled us to realize savings of more than USD20 million.”

— Managing Director of Application Development

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Seizing opportunities

As the continent's demographic make-up changes, Africa's young population and growing labor force has set the scene for strong economic growth into the future. As a result, the African banking sector offers a world of opportunity—and competition is rife.

To retain and grow market share, banks cannot disappoint customers who expect rising levels of reliability and innovation from providers. For one pan-African bank, an over-complicated application landscape was limiting how quickly and easily it could adapt its operations.

“With IBM Application Discovery, we can support a greater number of software releases, allowing us to deliver new services to our customers faster—a valuable advantage in today's ultra-competitive banking industry.”

—Managing Director of Application Development

The Managing Director of Application Development for the bank, elaborates: “The IT application landscape hosted on our IBM® z Systems® platform is the backbone of the business, supporting the full range of banking solutions that we offer. We are committed to continuously

improving the efficiency, cost-effectiveness and quality of the IT applications we provide to the business. However, the environment had become very complicated, making it increasingly difficult to achieve this aim.”

With limited insight into applications running on the z Systems platform and how they interconnect, it was difficult for the bank to understand how changes to one could impact the others, or spot opportunities to optimize performance or security. To prevent it losing customers to competitors, the bank looked for a solution that would give it the visibility it needed.

Gaining a deeper view

By teaming up with IBM Business Partner Blue Turtle Technologies to deploy the IBM Application Discovery solution, the pan-African bank enabled much greater transparency and control of its application landscape.

“Following a successful proof of concept exercise, Blue Turtle Technologies helped us deploy the solution within just six months,” says the spokesperson. “We use it to analyze more than 85 percent of our application landscape, which includes our core banking systems, COBOL, CICS, Assembler, and Java-based applications.”

Using the tool, we can look at applications in multiple programming languages, and even perform cross-application comparisons for development, testing, quality assurance, and production.”

The bank undertook 150 analysis projects driven by IBM Application Discovery across six operating environments and multiple databases, revealing a number of opportunities for optimization.

“We now have a much better understanding of how applications are linked and used, so we can deliver better functionality to our users,” comments the spokesperson. “Also, we can see the impact of upgrades, maintenance and new developments, helping us make better decisions about how best to change our IT environment to meet emerging needs. The ability to drill down

to the root cause of performance issues makes it easier to stop them happening again.

“The improved documentation is another big change. We can now capture more knowledge internally, enabling us to depend less on external contractors; this also means we can interact more seamlessly with third-party suppliers.”

Saving millions, adapting faster

Armed with deeper insights into its application landscape, the pan-African bank has been able to roll out improvements to IT delivery that generate substantial returns for the business.

“IBM Application Discovery enabled us to get to the bottom of what was causing a problematic transaction in our credit card business portfolio,” says the spokesperson. “As a result, we were able to realize savings of more than USD20 million. By helping us to continually spot opportunities to raise performance and boost efficiency, we expect there will be further cost-saving opportunities in the future.”

The solution is also playing a role in simplifying compliance, as the spokesperson explains: “We can use IBM Application Discovery to get an immediate view of the relative security of different applications, uncovering weak points so we can address them faster. Consequently, we can reduce our exposure to risk and make it easier to satisfy compliance requirements.”

Critically, the bank can use the new knowledge of its application landscape to drive more effective development. By enabling it to respond to new demands from the marketplace with greater speed and ease, the solution helps the bank to outmaneuver its competitors.

The spokesperson concludes: “The key advantage of IBM Application Discovery is that it gives us greater predictability: changes or additions to our IT landscape do not hold the uncertainty that they did before. We can now support a greater number of software releases, allowing us to deliver new services to our customers faster—a valuable advantage in today’s ultra-competitive banking industry.”

Solution components

- IBM® Application Discovery
- IBM Workload Automation
- IBM z Systems®

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Take the next step

To learn more about IBM z Systems solutions, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: ibm.com/systems/z

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