

# A US-based healthcare company gets ahead of a growing claims volume

*IBM modernization strategy helps improve application performance by up to 20 percent*

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## Overview

### The need

To accommodate a growing volume of healthcare claims, this organization needed to optimize and modernize IBM® CICS®-based application workloads on its IBM System z® servers.

### The solution

The business worked with IBM to analyze its systems and create a roadmap of incremental enhancements, starting with simple, low-risk actions and progressing to more complex activities.

### The benefit

The company improved CICS-based application performance by 10–20 percent and reduced the cost of processing claims, positioning it to handle growing numbers of claims.

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This US-based company provides a diverse portfolio of health and well-being services. It relies on a claims processing application to support its operations. This application was handling the organization's existing claims volume, but changes within the healthcare marketplace, particularly around government healthcare initiatives, were expected to drive up that volume.

## Preparing for growth with modernization

A technology manager within the organization anticipated the growing demands on the company's claims processing systems and took action. "I knew there would be an increased workload on our systems, but I also knew there had been enhancements to IBM software and hardware over the years that could help us address the issue," says the manager. He created a modernization strategy for the organization's two IBM zEnterprise® EC12 servers running IBM CICS-based application workloads to improve application performance and help accommodate the growing claims volume.

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*By modernizing its claims processing environment, the business is ready to handle an increased claims volume. "We made our applications more efficient, so we're able to repurpose some of that saved processing power for other workloads," says a technology manager at the company.*

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## Improving performance by using optimization

The manager and his team engaged IBM for a workshop on System z integration architecture to identify the limitations of the company's systems and develop a roadmap to address them. The team used IBM software, including the IBM CICS Interdependency Analyzer for z/OS® and IBM CICS Performance Analyzer for z/OS applications, to better understand the company's environment and obtain performance metrics. The roadmap began with low-risk activities, such as recompiling COBOL programs with the latest compiler and implementing CICS Thread Safety methods, and progressed to more complex solutions. These included using IBM CICSplex® System Manager software for greater resiliency and using the rules decision tool to promote greater flexibility and business logic reuse.

The CICS Interdependency Analyzer for z/OS application helped the team identify resource interdependencies and affinities. The CICS Performance Analyzer for z/OS software helped analyze online systems' performance and measure the impact of systems changes.

The IBM team then recommended moving the online applications to an architecture based on the principles of open transaction environment (OTE) and Threadsafe. This architecture helps:

- CICS applications make better use of the mainframe
- CICS applications run more processes in parallel, increasing work throughput
- Existing applications, particularly those that access external resources, perform better by consuming fewer mainframe resources
- The already rich set of capabilities offered by the CICS application programming interface (API) operate more efficiently by providing application interfaces supplied by other software components and helping CICS applications use the interfaces

Using IBM CICS Configuration Manager for z/OS software, the company automated manual tasks, reducing potential errors. The organization then recompiled its mission-critical software using IBM Enterprise COBOL for z/OS software to improve performance.

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## Solution Components

### Software

- IBM® CICS® Configuration Manager for z/OS®
- IBM CICS Interdependency Analyzer for z/OS
- IBM CICS Performance Analyzer for z/OS
- IBM CICS Transaction Server for z/OS
- IBM CICSplex® System Manager
- IBM Enterprise COBOL for z/OS
- IBM Operational Decision Manager

### Servers

- IBM zEnterprise® EC12
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## Automating business rules processes

The IBM team also deployed IBM Operational Decision Manager software to help automate business rules processes. Decision processes were embedded within applications scattered throughout the company, producing duplication and inconsistency, and modifications required IT staff involvement. With the Operational Decision Manager application, decision assets are centrally located and easier to reuse. Plus, business owners, rather than IT staff, can create or modify them.

## Cutting costs, increasing capacity

By engaging IBM to modernize its CICS environment, the company increased its claims processing application's efficiency, effectively lowering claims processing costs. "We made our applications more efficient, so we're able to repurpose some of that saved processing power for other workloads," says the manager. The business is now better positioned to handle the expected claims volume increase.

Following its threadsafe optimization, the organization reduced CICS CPU usage by approximately 10–20 percent. With Operational Decision Manager software, the company made its decision assets more reusable and empowered employees to create and update their own decision services, enhancing speed to market.

## For more information

To learn more about modernization solutions for CICS environments from IBM, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website:

[ibm.com/software/cics](http://ibm.com/software/cics)



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