



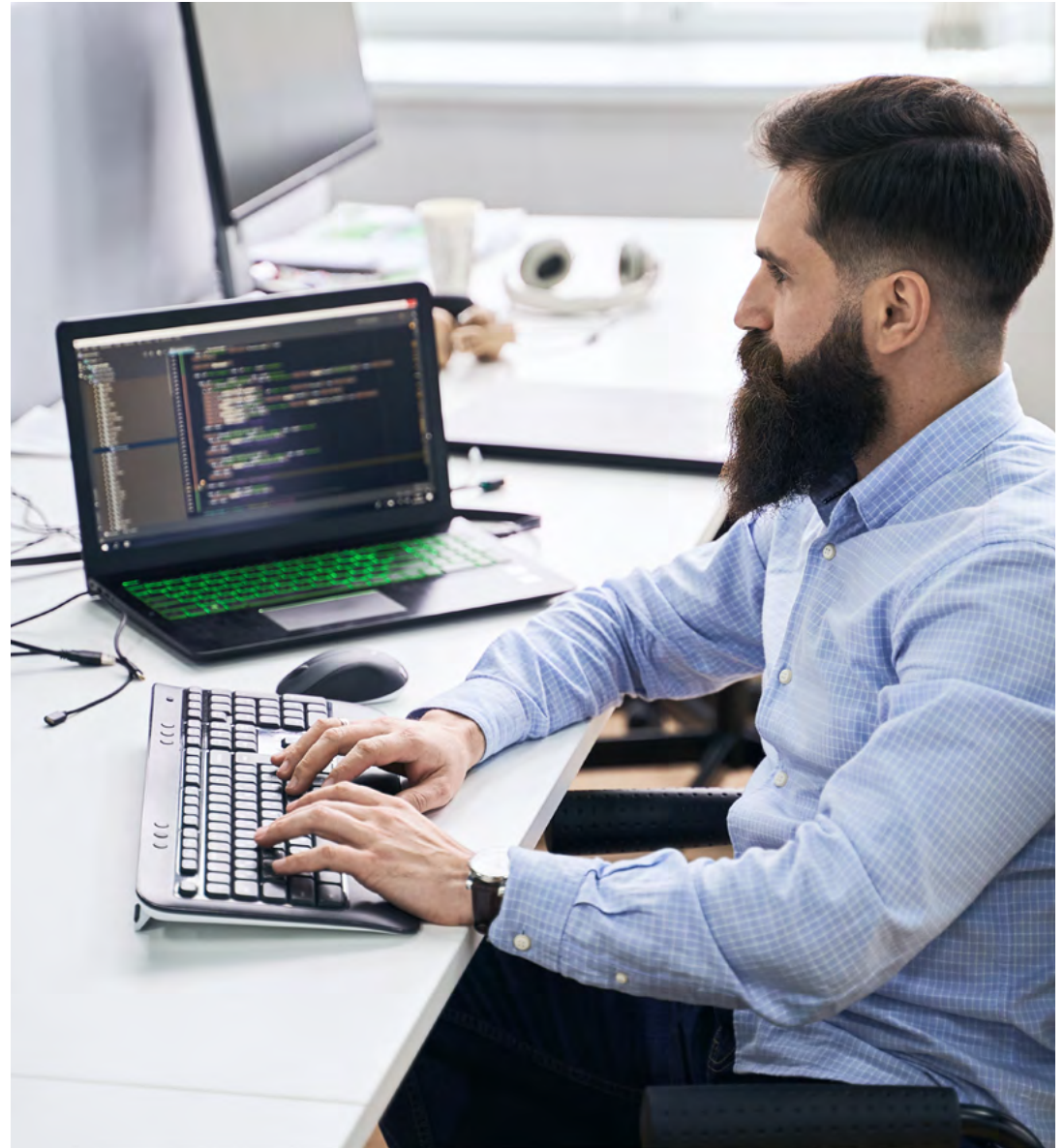
The power of the software vendor relationship

By switching to IBM mainframe tools, Bankwest reduced costs and gained a responsive collaborator

by Tom Farre
4-minute read

Mainframe computing remains a staple of today's financial services institutions. In fact, [IBM reports](#) that 44 of 50 of the world's top banks use its flagship IBM® zSystems mainframes.

The reason is, mainframes match well to many tasks major banks perform, such as ensuring information security, analyzing customer data in real time, and processing vast numbers of transactions efficiently and cost-effectively. For mainframes to deliver on these promises, however, a bank's technical team requires specialized tools for app development and



monitoring, database administration and infrastructure management.

That was the situation at Bankwest, a division of Commonwealth Bank Australia (CBA) operating in western Australia. The bank runs core banking applications on IBM z14® mainframes in two locations, one for production and development and one for disaster recovery (DR). Until recently, the mainframe team relied on close to a dozen tools for the IBM z/OS® operating system from two third-party ISVs. Yet several issues caused a rift in these vendor relationships.

The tools' functionality was acceptable, but there were concerns with the pricing and licensing agreements. And the vendors were unresponsive to requests to adapt their policies to Bankwest's needs.

"The primary driver for change was financial, but also dissatisfaction with

IBM's pricing and perpetual licensing model for mainframe tools

With support from IBM Expert Labs, Bankwest took just

Bankwest executives are counting on their relationship with IBM to

saved

Bankwest a significant sum

7 months

to complete a major migration project

contribute

to positive business outcomes

the suppliers,” says Scot Dixon, Executive Manager for Mainframe Services at Bankwest and CBA. “Their pricing was very aggressive and they were restrictive in their licensing agreements.”

As an example, if Bankwest were to spin off some development test workloads to the DR system, the tool licensing fees would have doubled. “We wanted licensing flexibility to fit our infrastructure model, but they weren’t prepared to discuss or modify terms to suit our bank,” says Dixon.

“The vendors were unwilling to step into our shoes to understand our needs and see things from our perspective,” adds Joseph Nguyen, Engineering Senior Manager (Mainframe) at Bankwest. “We couldn’t come to an understanding, which explains why the relationships broke down.”

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Putting the client's needs first

In exploring a new toolset vendor, Bankwest's mainframe team turned to IBM. The team's longstanding relationship with and respect for IBM were pluses, as were the maturity and wide use of IBM tools. "These tools are well established in the industry, and that means that our technical teams are already familiar with them," says Dixon. "So if we switched to IBM, it wouldn't be a cold start."

Upon analysis, it was clear that the IBM toolset could deliver the same or better functionality than the previous vendors'. The evaluation then turned





to pricing, licensing terms and the vendor relationship itself. Once again IBM came out on top.

“Choosing IBM made sense because of its pricing and perpetual licensing model,” says Nguyen. “The pricing was very attractive and the ongoing charges from perpetual licensing met our financial goals.”

Once IBM was chosen, Bankwest needed to migrate to the new tools before the current vendor contracts expired. This led to an engagement with [IBM Expert Labs](#), the product experts from IBM Software who help

clients with software implementation and adoption. The IBM team provided training and technical support for developers and system administrators on the following tools:

- [IBM Application Performance Analyzer for z/OS](#)
- [IBM CL/SuperSession for z/OS](#)
- [IBM Db2® Automation Tool for z/OS](#)
- [IBM Db2 Change Management Solution Pack for z/OS](#)
- [IBM Db2 Utilities Suite for z/OS](#)
- [IBM Db2 Performance Solution Pack for z/OS](#)
- [IBM Debug for z/OS](#)
- [IBM Fault Analyzer for z/OS](#)

- [IBM File Manager for z/OS](#)
- [IBM OMEGAMON® for Networks on z/OS 5.5.0](#)
- [IBM Z® Service Management Suite](#)

During the migration, the IBM team hosted training sessions for administrators on how to use the tools, and then post-migration for developers on how to exploit the tools on the mainframe and how graphic-based environments could talk to the mainframe components. “That training and guidance gave our users confidence in how to use these products,” says Nguyen.

Speed, savings and a great relationship

The migration project and training took seven months, ending well before the previous vendor contracts expired. “The project went very quickly and there was no impact on mainframe performance,” says Dixon. “In my view it was excellent.”

On the licensing side, the cost savings are significant. And it’s simpler dealing with a single vendor instead of two. Bigger picture, the feeling is that the IBM toolset and vendor relationship are so positive that the bank may also deploy the tools for the mainframes at CBA, Bankwest’s larger parent company.



“During the migration and transition, we received a lot of support from IBM Expert Labs,” says Nguyen. “A positive of the relationship is IBM’s willingness to ensure that we had a successful outcome. They were willing to do whatever it took.”

Dixon adds this about the relationship: “We want to partner with our providers to work together for mutual outcomes,” he says. “We and IBM have been doing that to date, and the more they do that, the happier we’ll be.”

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About VIA Metropolitan Transit

Founded in 1895 and headquartered in Perth, Western Australia, [Bankwest](#) (external link) provides personal and business banking services focused on Western Australia. The bank operates an extensive network of branches and business centers, as well as 24-hour banking on the phone, internet and mobile channels. Bankwest is part of Commonwealth Bank Australia (CBA), the nation's largest retail bank.

Solution components

- IBM® Application Performance Analyzer for z/OS®
- IBM CL/SuperSession for z/OS
- IBM Db2® Automation Tool for z/OS
- IBM Db2 Change Management Solution Pack for z/OS
- IBM Db2 Utilities Suite for z/OS
- IBM Db2 Performance Solution Pack for z/OS
- IBM Debug for z/OS
- IBM Expert Labs
- IBM Fault Analyzer for z/OS
- IBM File Manager for z/OS
- IBM OMEGAMON® for Networks on z/OS 5.5.0
- IBM Z® Service Management Suite

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