



Business challenge

ZB, National Association's staff need reliable access to the company's full document repository. But at 30 million documents and growing fast, how could the organization ensure future reliability?

Transformation

ZB, National Association addressed the risk that its repository of millions of documents would stop employees working effectively as the contents grew rapidly. By migrating the system to an enterprise-grade platform for Linux, the company gained a future-proof solution for secure and manageable document storage.

Business benefits

Cuts

risk of disruption to employees' work by protecting against loss of document system

Headroom

for growth created by moving systems to the mainframe

66% cost saving

on hosting document repository, boosting efficiency

ZB, National Association Investing in peace of mind with Linux on IBM z Systems

ZB, National Association of Salt Lake City, UT, operates more than 480 full-service banking offices in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah and Washington. This geographically dispersed company focuses on providing truly local management teams with community identities, supported by ferociously efficient IT services based at the head office.

“Our document repository is a business essential, so we trust it to ultra-reliable IBM z Systems running Linux.”

— Toby C. Wolf, Vice President, Group Manager—Mainframe Operations Services, ZB, National Association

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Removing barriers to productivity

ZB, National Association has a workforce of more than 10,000 people, most of whom view and generate documents every day. The company's existing document repository was beginning to show signs of strain.

Toby C. Wolf, Vice President, Group Manager—Mainframe Operations Services at ZB, National Association, elaborates: “Every department and business process—including commercial and consumer lending, treasury, bankcard, human resources and investments, to name just a few—depend on our document repository in their everyday operations. As we hit 30 million documents and growing, it was time to update the underlying solution, or risk putting the brakes on employee productivity and company growth.”

In doing so, ZB, National Association saw an opportunity to simplify management and deploy a document storage system better suited to support its future needs.

“We suspected that vendor support for the version of the document software we were running might soon be withdrawn, and we wanted to replace the custom-built user interface we had developed with something easier to maintain,” comments Wolf. “It was clear that the right course of action was to move to a new solution that offered lower risk, easier management, and headroom to accommodate the inevitable document growth.”

Banking on the stability of the mainframe

ZB, National Association decided to extend its mainframe strategy to its document repository solution, migrating millions of documents from distributed servers to an Enterprise Linux Server, based on an IBM® zEnterprise® BC12, with seven Integrated Facility for Linux (IFL) processors. Migrating from a UNIX-based system to Linux on the IBM mainframe platform enabled ZB, National Association to significantly reduce both acquisition costs and ongoing costs for its document repository. At the same time, the organization was able to improve the reliability, performance and speed of recovery for this business-critical application.

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Wolf explains: “ZB, National Association has decided to migrate everything ‘fit for purpose’ to the IBM z Systems platform, to allow us to take advantage of its innate stability and economies of scale.

For our document repository, a single IBM zBC12 Enterprise Linux Server does the work of 20 distributed servers. Maintenance is also much easier on the mainframe: we have the same number of support staff as we did seven years ago, but for ten times the number of MIPs.”

ZB, National Association worked with IBM and IBM Business Partner Levi, Ray & Shoup, Inc. (LRS) to achieve a smooth, low-risk migration. Wolf adds: “The support from IBM and LRS was exceptional; the combination of their skilled technical resources and industry-standard automation tools ensured success.

And because we had already used Linux on z Systems for four years, there were no costly new skills to learn.”

By moving its document repository to Linux on the z Systems platform, ZB, National Association also consolidated two login procedures to one, saving time for employees and reducing the number of password-reset requests to the service desk. The company was also able to eliminate the cost and effort of maintaining its custom-built user interface, as the new solution provides the required functionalities out-of-the-box.

Equipping the workforce for success

With the document repository in place and hosted on an extremely stable, secure and easy-to-manage platform, ZB, National Association is better equipped to face the future.

“Moving our document repository to Linux on z Systems has reduced risk for us in a number of ways,” says Wolf. “We do not need to worry about document growth for a long time, because of the extra headroom our IBM zBC12 offers us. The extra reliability the platform gives us also helps to ensure that documents are stored safely for use whenever our employees need them.”

The solution is enabling greater efficiency at ZB, National Association, as Wolf concludes: “Thanks to the economics of running Linux on the specialty IFL mainframe processors, the cost of hosting our document repository is now a third of what it was before, a significant saving.

“As we move more systems to our mainframe, we continue to simplify and streamline our IT landscape and reduce support calls, freeing up IT teams to focus on more innovative work. Our document repository is a business essential, so we trust it to ultra-reliable IBM z Systems running Linux.”

Solution components

- IBM® zEnterprise® BC12
- IBM Integrated Facility for Linux (IFL)
- IBM z/VM®
- Red Hat Enterprise Linux

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ZSC03337-USEN-00

