

M.R. Williams and IBM

M.R. Williams Recovers from Ransomware and Modernizes with IBM i

After a ransomware attack took their Windows-based servers offline, M.R. Williams relied on IBM i and IBM® Power® to keep critical operations running, avoiding lost revenue and downtime. With support from IBM and their IBM Business Partner Service Express, the family-owned distributor quickly restored systems and is now accelerating modernization with IBM Bob, empowering their team to improve efficiency and innovate faster.



Outcomes

- Maintained business continuity during a ransomware attack
- Accelerated recovery and reduced operational risk
- Enabled developers to understand and document RPG applications up to 18X quicker

Solution components

[IBM Power](#)

[IBM i](#)

[IBM Bob](#)



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Business Challenge

M.R. Williams, a family-owned convenience store distributor headquartered in Henderson, North Carolina, relies on its internally developed order and inventory management software to support operations across multiple states. The company runs its mission-critical core business applications on [IBM i](#) and [IBM® Power®](#), alongside a Microsoft Windows environment. Early one weekend morning, the IT team discovered that a Windows server had been infected by ransomware. The attackers had gained administrative access, compromised server and network management functions, and began spreading ransomware across the environment. With operations at risk and the threat expanding rapidly, M.R. Williams needed to contain the attack, protect its core systems, and restore business operations as quickly as possible.

Transformation

Upon discovering the breach, M.R. Williams immediately engaged IBM Technology Expert Labs to assess the situation. The Expert Labs team acted quickly to shut down outgoing processes and verify whether any IBM i systems had been impacted. In parallel, the company worked closely with Service Express and IBM Champion for Power Steve Pitcher to secure the IBM i environment. Using BRMS remotely, the team rolled back the system to ensure it was completely clean and free of ransomware. By that same evening, the IBM i environment was fully validated and operational. While Windows systems required extensive manual cleanup and isolation, IBM i continued running core mission-critical business applications without disruption.

Results

Thanks to the resilience of IBM i and strong collaboration with IBM and Service Express, M.R. Williams was fully back up and running on IBM i by Monday night, while Windows-based servers took an additional week to recover. The company avoided lost revenue and productivity, as critical workloads such as ERP, warehouse management, and purchasing remained online throughout the incident. The experience reinforced the value of IBM i in supporting business continuity and security. As a result, M.R. Williams is advancing its IBM i modernization strategy with new mobile solutions and accounting system improvements, while leveraging IBM Bob to quickly interpret older RPG code, automate documentation, and streamline development workflows.