



## Problems

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Marilyn Shenn, Senior Vice President, CIO for Presidential Life when the project was implemented, describes their situation, "Support for Windows NT ceases in January 2005 and support for the CICS-supporting package we have been using expires in June 2005. Continuing to execute on these unsupported systems would clearly be unacceptable so we had to find a solution that would keep us fully supported for the foreseeable future."

In addition to the critical support needs, Presidential Life was also beginning to think that it should be able to take advantage of some of the GUI features, or Web connectivity, available in newer releases of the Windows operating system and, if possible, find a more agreeable fee structure for its COBOL runtime support.

## Solution

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Resolving the support issues clearly required upgrading to the latest versions of Windows and finding a newer product that would support CICS COBOL programs. Presidential Life was pleased to find that NeoKicks more than fit the bill for CICS migration as not only did it work on Microsoft's strategic .NET environment but it also provided an upgrade path for their BMS screens, taking them to ASP.NET pages.

The COBOL part of the solution, NetCOBOL for .NET, which provides the foundation for NeoKicks, gave access to the extensive .NET Framework class libraries and brought the benefits of Visual Studio .NET to Presidential Life developers. It also has a no-runtime-charge model that was a welcome bonus.

Using the Btrieve feature of Pervasive.SQL for the COBOL data file support for the migrating CICS code, allows Presidential Life to bring all its data into a common file system – as it's Life Insurance systems already use Btrieve.

## Benefits

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Clearly the main benefit for Presidential Life was fulfilling their goal and critical need of running their applications on supported software. However, other gains have become apparent during the course of the pilot projects:

- Potential to enable certain applications for Web use
- Better application performance
- More competitive pricing of production support (such as no COBOL runtimes)
- Uniform file system (Btrieve) for all COBOL Data files

## Why Fujitsu Software?

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The primary reasons listed by Presidential Life for choosing Fujitsu Software were:

- Confidence in the software quality
- Ease of migration provided by the NeoKicks Project Wizard that processes the COBOL programs and BMS maps into their new .NET form and populates Visual Studio .NET projects.
- Availability of consultants to train and support staff in the migration process gave assurance that the project would be completed successfully.

Commenting on the choice of Fujitsu Software, Shenn said "Presidential Life already had experience with Fujitsu Software's products as we had migrated to NetCOBOL for Windows in 2003. This gave us confidence in the reliability of the products and, after we had researched what other solutions were available to support CICS in the Windows environment, we decided that NeoKicks with NetCOBOL was also going to be the best solution to give us the agility we were seeking for the future, both in terms of application development options and a reasonable cost base."

Senior Programmer/Analyst, Matthew Dubin added, "We had a great training week at Presidential. This helped tremendously. The NeoKicks Wizard, in particular, made it much easier to adapt to using the Visual Studio tools for converting our BMS and CICS code. Also, the process for setting up the FCT and PCT is very user friendly - not as complex as I have experienced in other online development projects."

## Next Steps

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Presidential Life started the implementation of their migration plan for all systems in the summer, 2004. The first two systems go into production in the fall, and the most complex of the systems will wait until early 2005 after all year-end processes are complete.

"We have rigorous standards for testing any application updates, so I expect all the migrated systems to be exposed to a full set of online transactions and many iterations of batch processes before they are put into production," concludes Shenn. "This will be the biggest part of our migration efforts and something we are careful to schedule to ensure success. Thereafter we are looking forward to a new phase of life for our CICS applications."



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Updated August 2004