

## Fraud protection service provider MIB redefines its business with new IT infrastructure

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### Highlights

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#### ■ **The Challenge**

*Obsolete connectivity solution lacked flexibility, limited scalability and prevented expansion into new markets*

#### ■ **The Solution**

*Implemented an IBM @server® zSeries® system-based IT infrastructure to support the company's new strategic direction and deliver new customer applications*

#### ■ **The Benefit**

*Flexibility and scalability to support growth and new customer offerings; robust, secure connectivity; increased customer satisfaction*



MIB Group, Inc., headquartered in Westwood, Massachusetts, is the premier provider of Internet-based information and knowledge services to the risk management market space in North America. Employing approximately 180 people, MIB provides services to about 500 of the largest insurance companies in North America.

At the heart of MIB's business is a proprietary fraud detection service which, until recently, customers accessed through a dial-up connection. "We ran our core application on an IBM mainframe, front-ended by a DEC system that handled all communications over

a dial-up network," says Bob DiAngelo, Vice President and Chief Information Officer at MIB. "The technology behind our communication interfaces with our customers was outdated, slow, inflexible and costly. More importantly, it no longer met the needs of our business."

For these reasons, MIB made a strategic business decision to move its business to the Internet as the first step in a larger reengineering effort. This decision produced two immediate benefits: customers gained convenient, cost-effective access to MIB's services and the new industry standards-based technology helped the company expand into new markets.

## **MIB redesigns IT architecture with IBM and IBM Business Partner Sirius**

With the help of IBM, and IBM Business Partner Sirius Enterprise Systems Group, LLC, MIB configured a new IT infrastructure to support its business goals. "The architecture was based on industry standards and designed for maximum business efficiency. We kept it simple to keep it manageable," explains DiAngelo.

The team chose Java™ technology for its new component-based software development toolset, IBM WebSphere® software to deliver Internet-based customer applications and an IBM @server zSeries 890 server to host both customer-facing applications and the application development environment.

## **zSeries 890 serves as the foundation of MIB's new IT infrastructure**

MIB deployed the zSeries 890 system as the cornerstone of its retooled IT environment. "We chose the zSeries 890 for its ability to deliver high availability services" says DiAngelo. "We also decided to run WebSphere software on the mainframe because doing so allows us to fully leverage our existing software investment, as well as develop new systems that can communicate across platforms to deliver new product offerings."

Flexibility also figured prominently in the IT team's decision. "We partitioned the zSeries 890 with four logical partitions (LPARs) for maximum efficiency and availability," says Bruce Green, Manager of Systems Support at MIB. "We're able to simultaneously service the business while providing our software engineers with a solid development environment—flexibly, with high reliability in multiple environments on a single powerful server."

## **Advanced zSeries technology helps provide outstanding performance at an optimal price**

All four LPARs leverage a zSeries Application Assist Processor (zAAP) to help execute Java for IBM z/OS® applications and workloads, helping to free up general-purpose processor resources and keep software costs low. "Before the zAAP was activated on our development LPAR, we saw approximately 40 peaks of 100 percent CPU usage," says Green. "After we activated the zAAP, in a similar two-week period, we saw only 20 peaks." MIB customers and internal clients both benefit from this tightly integrated, highly secure and extremely efficient application and database service. When combined with the IBM sub-capacity pricing model, the ability to off-load work to the zAAP also can help drive down costs.

## **zSeries-based infrastructure helps support new product offerings**

As a result of MIB's technology upgrade, customers now have access to the company's services through two new Web-Enabled Business Solutions, both running on the WebSphere Application Server. These solutions, WEB-TERM™ and WEB-DIRECT™, provide customers browser-based or server-to-server access to MIB's services, depending on their needs. The combination of WebSphere, the zSeries 890 system, the zAAP and z/OS Workload Manager helps provide the reliability and security demanded by MIB's business.

## **Alignment of business and technology helps provide a competitive advantage**

Today, MIB has closely aligned its IT infrastructure to support its business

goals. "Redesigning our IT infrastructure helps ensure our company's continued success and gives us a much needed competitive advantage," says DiAngelo. "zSeries technology allows us to standardize MIB services and go after new markets. A few years ago, we were on the trailing edge of technology, unable to meet the needs of the business. Today, we are on the leading edge, with technologies that are fully aligned with our strategic business direction."



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