

Professional Networking Consultants, Inc Conversion Whitepaper

Today businesses struggle with the problem of maintaining the investment made in their legacy systems while, at the same time, attempting to take advantage of the performance and reduced ownership costs of newer systems. Many legacy systems have been customized to meet the specific requirements of their business and are, in many cases, mission critical. Businesses trying to replace their legacy systems using software packages, usually find the package needs to be customized extensively at significant costs to meet their business needs. Once modified, the software package is no longer considered an off-the-shelf solution, resulting in a larger overall cost of ownership than expected.

Professional Networking Consultants, Inc bridges the gap between legacy and more up-to-date operating systems via system migrations. Understanding the value of the years of investment put into these legacy systems, Professional Networking Consultants, Inc helps businesses retain it. For over a decade, PNC has been migrating legacy systems to Open Systems.

Major Benefits for Migrating/Converting

- Lower Cost of Ownership
- Increased Performance
- State of the art Architecture
- Expandability
- More software Choices
- Programmer Availability

Professional Networking Consultants, Inc (PNC) believes in the following Three phase approach.

PHASE I

An in-depth study should be done before a single line of code is written or converted. Most horror stories of conversions gone bad, are a direct result of organizations not doing Due-Diligence before starting the conversion. Keep the following in mind before starting a conversion.

1) “ONE SIZE DOESN’T FIT ALL”

Every organization is different, with different staffing with various levels of expertise in different areas. Just because you golf with someone that just went through a conversion, chances are, his environment is quite different that yours. Do not select a Hardware platform and operating system strictly on Cost Savings. It could end up costing more in the long run.

2) Get Help

Very rarely do organizations have expertise and staffing to both keep the existing data processing running and do a conversion at the same time. Select consultants that have expertise in both the system you’re converting from as well as the system your converting to. With over 30 years of Unisys experience (former employees), PNC specializes in Unisys Conversions to Open Systems (writing code for Windows and Unix/Linux since 1990)

3) Set Realistic Goals

All too often, management set goals based on when they would like things done and not when things can be done. It serves no purpose to set goals that can’t be achieved. Staying on a realistic schedule and hitting realistic milestones will make for a smoother conversion.

4) Get Training

If your staff (operations and development) doesn’t have expertise on the new platform. Get them trained. Good operators and Good Programmers are hard to come by. Update their skills to make them productive quickly on the new system. PNC can custom training at your site.

PHASE II**1) Convert the Data**

PNC has tools to help Convert DMSII to SQL, EBCDIC to ASCII Converters and other misc. Data Converters that take into account data alignment, byte swapping etc.

2) Convert the Applications (leaving as much code as possible untouched)

Most sites have a substantial investment in COBOL code. PNC has tools to help convert Unisys COBOL to Micro-Focus, ACU-Cobol and Fujitsu COBOL, leaving much of the COBOL code untouched. PNC has developed libraries called "AMCP" and "VMCP". These libraries provide the most common MCP functions. These functions include things like STOQ, CRCR, COMPLEXWAIT allowing for inter-program communication as if they were still on a UNISYS mainframe.

3) Leave the Network intact. (End Users do not need retraining).

Through the use of PNC's COMSMCS and NTMCS modules, Unisys applications can be ported leaving the "ONLINE" application interface intact. The COMSMCS supports the COMS Header and functions like Get-Designator-ByName. The V-Series MCS (NT-MCS) supports NDL Headers, DCS-Headers and Gemcos Headers.

4) Start realizing the Cost savings from proprietary Hardware, Software Licensing and Maintenance.

The sooner you can get off the Unisys Hardware, the sooner you start realizing Savings.

PHASE III

1) Modernize the User Interface (Windows Clients, Browser Based)

Once the data has been converted, modernizing the User Interface becomes substantially easier.

“Off-the-shelf” tools can now help bring about a Rich User experience.

VB.NET can now be used to provide 2 and 3 tier application models.

2) Modernize Batch Jobs

Tools like Crystal Reports can be used to generate Comprehensive ADHOC reports.