

Three Hot Takes: Shaping the Future of Core Business Applications

While the COBOL@60 celebrations pointed to a bright future for COBOL systems, we wanted to learn more. So Micro Focus asked global research analysts Vanson Bourne to poll a representative sample of the Micro Focus COBOL community. Here's what they found out.

Hot Take #1

Don't gamble on future success—plan for it.

- 70% consider modernization the best option for business change
- 63% plan to modernize their key COBOL applications in 2020¹

Modernization is driving strategic change and is the clear preference above replace and retire. The trend is to build on strength and get new value from current IT investments through modernization; while 37% refresh processes, another 38% invest in infrastructure activities—and both require COBOL system integration.

Hot Take #2

IT and business synergy remains strong for COBOL.²

- A 36% / 33% split between CTO and CIO are driving modernization strategies
- 42% (up from 30%) now see cloud as the top priority

This involves senior non-tech roles, too, proving that IT supports the new drive towards cost management, greater efficiency and the strategic alignment of COBOL systems with modern-day technology. Cloud enabling tech will take host COBOL applications on a journey into the future.

Hot Take #3

COBOL remains a foundational element of IT and business change.

- 92% (up 8%) see their COBOL applications as strategic
- 53% plan to modernize their system/applications

Meanwhile, the average code base is up to 9.9M from 8.4M lines of code, signifying continued investment, re-use and expansion in core systems. Two factors drive COBOL's continued popularity.

- As the business and technical case for modernization grows, COBOL's "net increase" reflects the cause-and-effect principle underscoring continued market usage, reliance, and value
- COBOL modernization, changes in where it needs to be delivered, how it is being delivered, and ultimately its increased usage and footprint

The proof is out there. COBOL remains a strong digital technology; anyone running COBOL applications and core systems can look forward to many more years of innovation. Check out this webinar download for a deeper dive into the survey findings.

[Check out the webinar ›](#)

1. 46% say aligning applications to business needs to deliver competitive advantage is one of the top three most important things when modernizing/upgrading COBOL, and 38% say this for aligning the business to a new/evolving digital strategy

2. Additionally, 36% (from 25) now see a need for better integration with RDBMS systems to improve both IT efficiency and customer insight, and take on new opportunities. This reflects new strategies requiring COBOL's ongoing evolution.