



URL: [www.cityofinglewood.org](http://www.cityofinglewood.org)

Industry: State and Local Government

Country: USA



## City of Inglewood

Rehosted an essential Computer Aided Dispatch system from an aging mainframe onto a Windows platform

### Challenge

Public safety and security in the City of Inglewood was at risk due to an aging IBM mainframe. The City needed to migrate a sophisticated Computer Aided Dispatch system for 911 emergency services running on its mainframe.

### Solution

- Micro Focus Server Enterprise Edition™
- Micro Focus Studio Enterprise Edition™
- RUMBA®

**The City of Inglewood** is located in southwestern Los Angeles County, California, southwest of downtown Los Angeles. It was incorporated as a city in 1908. Since that time its population has grown from 1,200 people to over 109,000 as of the 2010 Census. From 1920 to 1925 Inglewood was the fastest growing city in the United States as people who came to see the damage from an earthquake in 1920 found the city and climate appealing and stayed.

Today, this thriving and active community is administered by the City of Inglewood council, which has responsibility for a wide range of public activities from libraries and public works to planning and building, and police.

### Applications portfolios had to move off the mainframe

The City had traditionally operated a majority of its large systems on an IBM mainframe and relied on its team of five COBOL developers to build applications as required. When the now Assistant City Manager and CIO, Michael D. Falkow, started working for the City of Inglewood's IT department in 2003, the mainframe was already aging. Falkow explains, "The mainframe was already over 20 years old, and we were paying IBM in the region of \$120,000 a year in maintenance – and were under pressure to upgrade the hardware and operating system. It made financial sense to reduce our reliance on the mainframe, and we undertook a series of projects to move our applications onto other platforms." The easiest option for many of the applications was to purchase commercial, off-the-shelf packages. The integrated library system, for example, was replaced with a commercial system. Others required more thought and work.

### Highlights

- Retained valuable and highly versatile custom-built functionality
- 99.99% fault resilience preserved
- Saved over \$120K per annum in maintenance costs
- Moved final application from an aging and expensive mainframe, enabling mainframe shutdown and decommissioning

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**Michael D. Falkow,**  
Assistant City Manager and CIO,  
City of Inglewood

## Final, mission critical application proved problematic

After a four-year program, all but one of the applications had been moved off of the mainframe. "The remaining application was the most mission critical," explains Falkow, "as it provided support for our 911 emergency dispatch call center. It was mission critical because it involved public safety, and we are a very active city with more than 250 calls for service each day." This means Inglewood's police department receives more calls for service than all of its neighbors combined. The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system plays an integral role in protecting the citizens of the City of Inglewood. When a 911 call is received at one of the City's eight emergency control center desks, its details are transmitted instantly to LED displays in all 40 police patrol cars. Originally built by the in-house COBOL development team, the CAD system integrates with the City's Records Management System. When a patrol car attends an incident and investigates, a record is generated that goes into the Records Management System. This process enables the build up of intelligence that can be referenced and used proactively by police officers on patrol.

The CAD system is required 24/7, and data has to be transmitted as soon as the call is taken for the immediate dispatch of service. Downtime is not an option. "The mainframe system was incredibly reliable, incredibly fast, and incredibly accurate," says Falkow. "But we couldn't continue to keep the mainframe alive." The age of the mainframe made it increasingly difficult to obtain replacement parts when components failed, and the City's CAD system faced the potential risk of catastrophic failure. "We were desperate to get the application off of the mainframe. There was a distinct possibility of the mainframe 'flatlining,' and we couldn't justify upgrading a mainframe just for one application – no matter how important."

## Micro Focus helps turn defeat into success

Falkow and his team looked at a range of options to overcome this challenge. Buying a commercial packaged solution meant compromising on functionality and risked sacrificing the years of intelligence built into the system, and it would have cost upwards of \$2 million. A more cost-effective project to convert the 500,000+ lines of COBOL code to Windows was attempted, but this ran into problems when, after a year and a half of development, implementing a software update caused the code on the server to fail, taking eight hours to fix. "For a system that demands 99.99 percent reliability, and operators who are used to this level of availability, this was simply far too risky for us to contemplate rolling out into production," says Falkow. "We had to admit defeat." At that point,

Falkow brought in Micro Focus to migrate the application in its entirety, from DOS/VSE on the mainframe to Micro Focus Server Enterprise Edition on Windows Server. "Micro Focus really helped save the day," says Falkow. "They delivered a solution that helps aid the security of our citizens and at the same time retains our 99.99 percent fault resilience."

The 150 MIPS (millions of instructions per second) mainframe application now runs on two Windows servers, one for production and one for development. Ongoing development is minimal and is done directly against the development Windows server running Micro Focus Studio Enterprise Edition via remote desktop. The production environment for the application is a Windows Server running Micro Focus Server Enterprise Edition. Around 50 terminals connect to the production server along with in-car console displays and emergency control center desks.

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**Michael D. Falkow,**  
Assistant City Manager and CIO, City  
of Inglewood

For Falkow, a key factor in the success of the migration was the relationship between the two organizations, "The strength of the partnership between Micro Focus and the City of Inglewood helped get us over the hurdles," he explains. "That, and our shared determination to make this project a success, was the perfect set of ingredients. We couldn't tolerate another failure and owed it to the people of Inglewood to protect their security."

The City of Inglewood now benefits from a robust and resilient CAD system that runs on a far more cost-effective platform and continues to deliver the functionality that is so important to the emergency response services of the City.



### About Micro Focus

Micro Focus, a member of the FTSE 250, provides innovative software that allows companies to dramatically improve the business value of their enterprise applications. Micro Focus Enterprise Application Modernization, Testing and Management software enables customers' business applications to respond rapidly to market changes and embrace modern architectures with reduced cost and risk.

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