Rocket®software

The Rockstar in Your Data Center

The IBM i Platform

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Introduction

IBM® i on IBM® Power Systems™ and their applications often end up in the crosshairs of a CIO looking to streamline toward greater IT efficiency or competitive superiority. Usually, the CIO is unfamiliar with the platform's benefits, because its consistent, low-maintenance effectiveness has rendered it virtually invisible. This whitepaper will help you avert a crippling business decision by demonstrating why IBM i should not only remain an essential part of your IT environment, but is also one of your unknown rockstars, and an essential part of a competitive IT ecosystem.

Key takeaways

Don't underestimate IBM i when making strategic decisions about your future computing platforms. It continues to have significant market and competitive strength, and has evolved to work with the latest technologies, including cloud computing and open-source tools. It's a key innovation player for those looking to leverage its years of business logic.

IBM i is a vibrant platform that can solve many business challenges. It's already known for its legendary reliability, adaptability for innovation and problem-solving, and low total cost of ownership. Modernizing IBM i applications can help companies meet today's business needs — without disruptive replatforming projects — through:

01

Delivering unmatched ROI on your legacy infrastructure.

02

Attracting today's most innovative programmers to deliver the modern, intuitive experiences your users and customers expect.

03

Empowering developers and IT teams to take advantage of modern technologies and best practices like agile development and DevOps, AI, automation, and open source.

Who should read this report?

This report is for anyone responsible for the operation and success of IBM i on IBM Power Systems, particularly those constantly faced with defending its value.

Executive summary

IBM i is an untapped resource for many successful and cutting edge enterprises and their CIOs — some just don't know it yet. Though frequently labelled as "legacy" technology, IBM i and its applications are far from it.
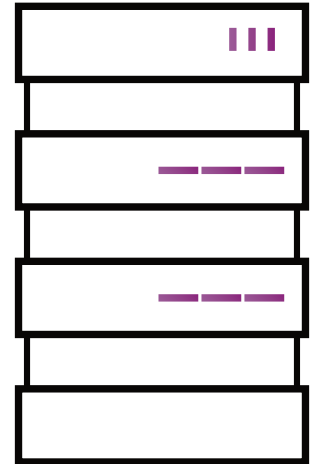
Unfortunately, too many businesses make decisions about the future of their IBM i on Power infrastructure without understanding its true capabilities and the potential for innovation and savings. This can end with IBM i being ripped from your IT infrastructure and quickly snowballing into a debilitating mistake. Just ask Gartner, IDC, or any business that's done it and regretted it.
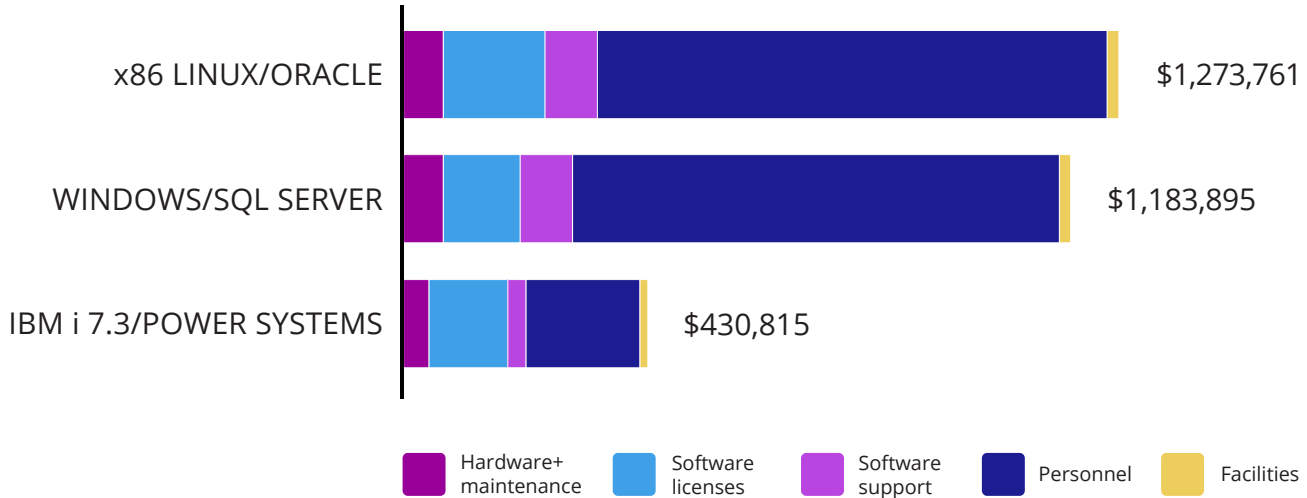
Let's start with the reality.

As originally designed, and with systematic updates provided by IBM ever since, the IBM i platform has always been ahead of its time.

It includes an object-oriented operating system, single-level storage, integrated security, a high-level machine interface, and an integrated database. (In fact, many of its best functions are just now being introduced on other platforms.) Moreover, because IBM i tightly integrates all the enabling software infrastructure behind a high-level machine interface, developers can easily create durable, modern applications that require little or no handholding.

Today, IBM i also works with open-source languages; databases and development tools; runs in the cloud; and can be accessed from Windows, web, mobile, IoT, and web service interfaces.

Three-year Cost by Platform-Average for All Installations

x86 LINUX/ORACLE $1,273,761

WINDOWS/SQL SERVER $1,183,895

IBM i 7.3/POWER SYSTEMS $430,815

Legend: Hardware+ maintenance | Software licenses | Software support | Personnel | Facilities

Businesses have made huge investments in core applications on IBM i, which have been refined over decades to support the company's unique ways of doing business.

If you look closely, the IBM i platform has more than stood the test of time. It can:

- Power critical employee-and customer-touching business processes

- Carry more and more business-critical workloads

- Run reliably with little hands-on management, low overhead, and low TCO

- Protect against data loss thanks to its legendary resiliency and built-in security

- Offer the latest in computing technologies

- Attract a robust, enthusiastic, and growing global community of experts experienced with the platform

- Keep up with future demands due to IBM's ongoing development and backward code compatibility

IBM i applications are more than ready to be a part of your digital transformation and other IT strategies. Now you just need to convince your CIO.

IBM i does what?

Seven facts for your CIO

Underneath its quiet exterior there are hidden powers
ready to help your CIO deliver core agility and strength
to the business without replatforming or moving a single
application to a distributed environment.

Fact 1:

IBM i lets teams use modern technologies, tools, and processes.

With IBM's support for popular open-source tools and modern technologies, some of today's most creative
programmers are actively developing for the platform.

Developers and programmers can use their favorite tools: open-source languages (such as Node.js, Java, Python
and JavaScript); development tools (such as Git, GitHub, Jenkins and Ansible); and just about any open-source
technology that can run on Linux/UNIX and Windows. Development teams can take advantage of modern
development processes (Agile development and DevOps), including open-source managers such as YUM to keep
open-source components up to date. Open source is enhancing and extending IBM i applications with modern
technologies, including hybrid clouds, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), analytics, and the Internet
of Things (IoT). Enterprises can now cost-effectively create an "innovation layer" for their IBM i applications. You can
infuse them with fresh thinking, pump them with new data, run new workloads (like machine learning), and refresh
them with compelling consumer-like experiences.

All of this provides you the freedom to choose where to take your IBM i applications next, and decide what new
business challenges you want to address.maximize the impact that DevOps can bring.

Fact 2:

IBM i is legendary for its resilience.

IBM i applications are built for a market of high customer expectations, ever-present security threats, business
disruption, and digital transformation. Resilience is built into the IBM Power Systems hardware and IBM i.

IBM i was private-cloud-architected by design, and a broad array of modern cloud options can further boost
resiliency. It's secure and prevents data corruption; its integrated security model makes it "nearly impossible" for
malicious code to affect applications, according to IDC. It moves data fast and makes it accessible, as do new IBM i
7.4 features like Db2 Mirror for i, which provides more flexibility and better throughput for users by abstracting a
database to reside across multiple systems.

IBM i can handle extraordinary volatility, limitless scaling and growth, and the ability to dynamically head off
or predict challenges.

Fact 3:

IBM i has surprisingly low TCO.

IBM i on Power Systems has the lowest TCO (by more than half) of any popular computing platform, including Windows/SQL Server and x.86 LINUX/Oracle.
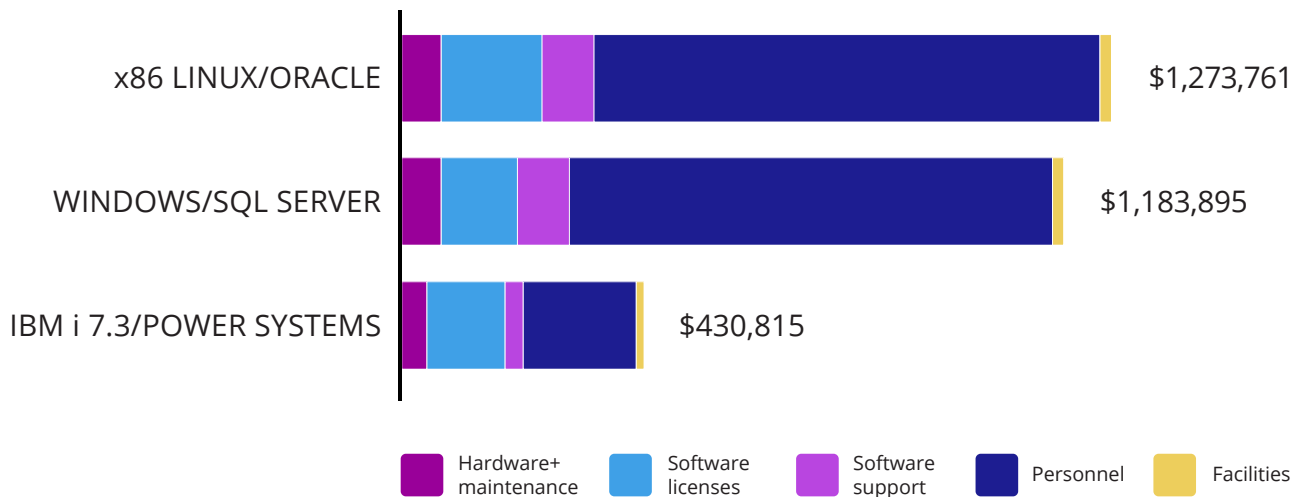
Low management overhead and operating costs are inherent to the IBM i platform.

IBM i also has low application development costs given its native architecture, coupled with the endurance of its code and IBM's backwards-compatible support. (That's why companies typically have IBM i development teams that are a fraction of the size of those developing for distributed systems.)

The ability to tap open-source development tools and the equally broad talent pool further lowers costs. Your proven applications scale painlessly and can be optimized for performance with workload processing options (cloud, on-prem, and hybrid). Moving testing (development) or operations (disaster response and failover) to the cloud can further lower TCO.

IBM i is a balanced fighter in all your businesses areas.

Figure 1

Three-year Cost by Platform-Average for All Installations

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Fact 4:

IBM i transforms user experiences.

Put that IBM-i-means-green-screens picture in your CIO's rearview mirror.

Having moved far beyond just patching on a new UI, developers now easily reengineer critical business processes using the latest UI and interface languages (such as HTML5, Node.js, and React) and tools. They can deliver full-bodied modern user experiences that can automate or streamline processes for customers, business partners, and employees all while reducing the need for training or additional support. You can attract and engage today's most innovative programmers to deliver the modern, intuitive experiences that people expect and business demands.

Fact 5:

IBM i speeds time to market of new functionality.

With the platform's openness, there's virtually no learning curve for its new programmers. Agile development and modern DevOps practices are all you need to keep things moving. Applications and new features get to market sooner, delivering measurable outcomes to the business.

IBM i can handle new customer-facing application requirements based on modern technology. Imagine what you could do with big data analytics that reveal opportunities in previously hidden business insights, or IoT systems that produce high volumes of data at high speed.

Customer service representatives (CSRs) in a large consumer loan originator lacked a single web view of its customer products. Creating manual APIs to feed a single application was too resource-intensive. By creating APIs to expose business logic in different product-focused applications, developers were able to incorporate them easily into a single, productive web-based view. Customer service and CSR productivity improved, while API creation time was reduced by 50%.

By modernizing its software development process, a leading cable company accelerated delivery by a factor of 10 in one year, critical to keeping up with growth. Changes included standardizing and centralizing change management, and automating tracking and documentation for audit compliance.

To attract and retain millennial employees, an insurance company reduced the complexity of its green-screen applications without replacing their existing infrastructure. By converting more than 800 green screens to a modern GUI, the insurer helped the employee base grow to more than 33% millennial. Research time required to complete policy renewals also recorded a 75% decrease, and overall claimsprocessing efficiency improved, resulting in a better customer experience.

Fact 6:

Businesses can reduce operating costs while running IBM i.

In addition to low TCO for the platform, businesses can leverage their IBM i platform to reduce operating costs through modernization. You can reduce training time for new or revamped applications with streamlined workflows and new, consumer-like experiences.

Fact 7:

IBM i reduces risk.

Moving applications to a new platform often calls for abandoning your core application investments. It can also add enormous costs and risks to your business through complex migration projects, large upfront licenses, new hardware and change management. There are countless stories of multimillion-dollar failures in which companies attempt to completely switch over to other platforms.

Why do it if you don't have to?

IBM i can do just about anything any other platform can with no replatforming or replacement of systems. Actively supported by ongoing development by IBM, it integrates well with your continually evolving IT infrastructure. You can rest assured that IBM i will always run your core applications because of IBM's commitment to backward compatibility.

When coupled with its track record of reliability and its consistent evolution by IBM over the decades, IBM i significantly reduces the risk to your most critical applications and workloads.

A logistics and transportation company modernized their IBM i environment to build new user experiences and improve productivity. They reduced training time from 14 days to two days and realized productivity gains of $10M per year.

A retail call center modernized its order processing application, reducing call handling time by 50 seconds, increasing average number of calls per day, and reducing training time by 8 hours or $60K/year.This drove more than $1M in increased productivity per year.

Now, go challenge your CIO

Using IBM i, you can streamline business processes by improving their user experiences, reducing execution times, and cutting training times. You'll improve productivity while increasing profits.

IBM i's support for the latest technology and low total cost of ownership makes it an ideal platform on which to build a future: a source of innovation and cost savings. By tapping into the value found in your IBM i applications, you can improve the fitness, responsiveness, and future of your enterprise.

Next steps and additional resources

We're a trusted, strategic IBM partner with a relationship that began over 25 years ago. Our partnership spans multiple IBM brands, solutions, and platforms, including IBM zSystems and Power Systems. Our ranks include 22 IBM Champions for 203, and our ecosystem includes Rocket.Build, an event that pulls together hundreds of talented IBM zSystems, i, and OSS developers — all of whom love a good hack and get together annually to solve a world-changing problem (or two). Come join us.

Meet the demands of the digital age while maximizing your legacy investment with Rocket's suite of modernization solutions

Rocket Software has decades of experience helping organizations bolster their infrastructure and bring about results. Rocket helps customers implement low-risk, effective modernization strategies and solutions so they can take advantage of all the latest technologies. Contact us today to get ahead of your competition and stay there.

With Rocket Solutions for IBM i, customers are:

- Initiating **data-focused modernization** projects with full visibility into what automation, integration, and user experience improvements will make the biggest impact on the business, then executing those recommendations with the click of a button

- Enabling **DevOps best practices** within IBM i+ environments to deliver comprehensive, holistic compliance reporting, automate testing to enable CI/CD and get code to production faster without degradation of quality, and encourage innovation that delivers a better experience to users, customers, and partners

- **Minimizing IBM i system and application downtime** to minutes instead of hours, ensuring teams can access the data and applications critical to operations

- Building a layered defense against IBM i systems, applications, and data to **minimize security risk** to the business

About Rocket Software

Rocket Software partners with the largest Fortune 1000 organizations to solve their most complex IT challenges across Applications, Data and Infrastructure. Rocket Software brings customers from where they are in their modernization journey to where they want to be by architecting innovative solutions that deliver next-generation experiences. Over 10 million global IT and business professionals trust Rocket Software to deliver solutions that improve responsiveness to change and optimize workloads. Rocket Software enables organizations to modernize in place with a hybrid cloud strategy to protect investment, decrease risk and reduce time to value. Rocket Software is a privately held U.S. corporation headquartered in the Boston area with centers of excellence strategically located throughout North America, Europe, Asia and Australia. Rocket Software is a portfolio company of Bain Capital Private Equity. Follow Rocket Software on LinkedIn and Twitter.

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