Societe Generale Transforms Mainframe DevOps With BMC Compuware

In less than two years, more than 90% of our IT employees are now engaged in mainframe DevOps!

Head of zDevOps | Societe Generale

Compuware joins BMC to empower the next generation of developers to mainstream the mainframe. Bring apps that run on the mainframe to market faster with increased quality as you accelerate your evolution to an Autonomous Digital Enterprise.

Business Challenge

Societe Generale is one of the leading European financial services groups. Based on a diversified and integrated banking model, the group combines financial strength and proven expertise in innovation with a strategy of sustainable growth, aiming to be the trusted partner for its clients and committed to the positive transformations of society and the economy.

Digital transformation is an ongoing strategic initiative for Societe Generale as new technologies and Open Banking accelerate the shift in how customers derive value from retail banking services and functions. Societe Generale sees this as an opportunity to “reinvent the bank of tomorrow” and meet customers’ increasingly high expectations for proximity, instantaneity, customization, and security in retail banking. Today, Societe Generale’s 23,000 IT experts around the world are partnering with the group’s business teams to develop new digital solutions that continually improve the customer experience.

To enable this, the group’s French Retail Banking IT department has been advancing on a DevOps transformation journey and practicing Continuous Delivery. Their focus is on delivering value to the business and to customers with speed and efficiency through daily innovation. This transformation includes the acquisition of new powerful tools to drive IT modernization—including on the mainframe.
The IT department of Societe Generale’s French Retail Banking has integrated mainframe infrastructure into its IT strategy with objectives to:

- Re-energize its mainframe development environment
- Remove obsolete mainframe technology
- Transform its mainframe into a modern Agile/DevOps platform

“The mainframe will always play an important role in IT, mainly in the services sector. More than half our lines of code are maintained on the mainframe. And almost all applications and new business initiatives are composite, involving both a mainframe and distributed legacy,” said the head of Societe Generale’s zDevOps IT initiative for French Retail Banking.

**zDevOps: The Agile Mainframe**

zDevOps, part of the IT department’s Integrated Development Environment for Mainframe (IDEM) project, is aimed at modernizing mainframe applications and practices through Agile development and DevOps.

**zDevOps Guiding Principles**

- Know the goal to reach but be flexible when determining the path to take
- Adopt flexibility and agility by agreeing to adapt permanently
- Always build with users by meeting the needs of the business

“Our challenge was clearly to unite the teams around the zDevOps project,” the head of zDevOps said. Another challenge was attracting talented next-gen developers to work on the mainframe.

“To modernize development practices, generate productivity gains, and foster generational renewal of developers, the mainframe must be transformed into an agile, innovation-oriented DevOps platform,” he continued.

This ambitious but pragmatic project has positioned Societe Generale as a pioneer of mainframe DevOps in French Retail Banking. But a successful outcome required modern mainframe development tools that empowered the IT department’s developers to preserve and advance its mainframe assets, kick-starting the process of analyzing multiple mainframe IDEs, with the end goal of finding a solution that would:

- Improve developer productivity across numerous mainframe technologies and languages
- Ease next-generation developers’ adjustment to and understanding of mainframe systems
- Bring the platform into the Group’s overall Agile/DevOps strategy

**BMC Solution**

Societe Generale began a two-month request for information (RFI) analysis of potential IDE solutions to power its mainframe investment strategy. Ultimately, the Group chose BMC Compuware Topaz.
Why Topaz?

- Integrated suite of tools, not just a set of features
- Intuitive and adaptive for millennials
- Designed for Agile/DevOps teams
- Equipped with static and dynamic visualization capabilities to help developers literally see program structures
- Integrates with leading mainframe and non-mainframe DevOps tools such as SonarSource and Jenkins
- Provides the capability to develop plug-ins through BMC Compuware Topaz Connect (a key adoption criterion for IT organization)
- Open and customizable through APIs
- Flexible with licensing

Easy Installation and Implementation

Beyond features, the IT department of Société Générale’s French Retail Banking appreciated the easy installation, setup, and startup of Topaz, as well as BMC Compuware’s superior customer support. When it came to proof of concept, Topaz was installed by the bank’s developers themselves within an hour and was operational from day one.

Superior Support

BMC Compuware provided the bank’s RFI teams with above-and-beyond assistance throughout the process, including training sessions, workshops, regular reviews with project team leaders, a user guide in the bank’s domestic language customized to their context, and access to support and product management to fix cases.

“To put our mainframe DevOps transformation to the test and drive support for this massive change, we put in place a disruptive and humorous competition, proposing the teams ‘hunt’ for bugs and defects using Topaz,” the head of zDevOps said.

“This allowed us to strengthen the cohesion around the mainframe and demonstrated to the teams that the mainframe culture can very easily adapt and support the most innovative standards of IT to offer a development experience identical to other technologies such as Java.”

Today, the mainframe developers use the intuitive Topaz interface to foster cross-platform collaboration. With the help of Topaz, they increased mainframe development productivity within the first month.

Beyond the technological performance of Topaz, what differentiated the solution for Société Générale was the synergy between its own teams and BMC Compuware, who worked collectively to ensure the success of this phase in the zDevOps project.

“The collaboration with BMC Compuware was done naturally. It is built on our requirements, on agility and trust. We have found an expert partner who understands, does not hesitate to join the teams to solve a bug, and allows us to enroll the mainframe in a process of collective innovation,” he said.
Business Impact

With the help of Topaz, the IT department is enabling mainframe DevOps and removing the platform from its silo—something many have struggled to envision as a reality for too long.

This modernization of mainframe culture, processes, and tools is enabling new communication, collaboration and transparency between teams, regardless of platform, ensuring they can co-construct quality customer-facing banking innovations with velocity and efficiency, as well as equip the next generation of developers to be productive on the mainframe.

“For 35 years, we had been using the V-Model, an extension of waterfall and a model in which the mainframe had to adapt,” he said. “By changing the paradigm, the mainframe has adapted again to fit an approach of agile and sustainable innovation. The mainframe will remain a powerful, adaptable, and scalable technology that we rely on to co-create value with the business.”

“By including the mainframe in a culture of agility, collaboration, and DevOps, we disprove anti-mainframe pundits every day.”

Head of zDevOps | Societe Generale

To learn more, visit bmc.com.