

A CALL TO THE MAINFRAME COMMUNITY: KEEP THE RENAISSANCE MOVING FORWARD



Overview: A modern IDE unlocks developer creativity, brings speed and quality to the development process, and keeps the Mainframe Renaissance moving full speed ahead.

Now is a great time to be a developer working on the mainframe.

We are in the midst of a mainframe renaissance, driven by companies tapping into the critical data stored on the mainframe and realizing the competitive advantages that data gives them. This has led to an influx of new programming talent and the adoption of Agile and DevOps on the platform.

All of this positive momentum comes with challenges too. Where previously, going back for decades, mainframe IT served as chaplains of the old order, now the emphasis is on heightened productivity; mainframe development must move at the speed of business.

So how do you achieve this heightened productivity? One critical step for the whole community, both new and veteran mainframe developers, is to move to a modern IDE. ISPF has been the industry workhorse for generations but development technology has moved well past its capabilities. Nowhere is that clearer than when editing source code.

Intelligent source code editing goes beyond the simple language colorization available in ISPF. Here are just three examples of where Compuware Topaz, with its intelligent source code editor, can help you unlock your creativity and achieve maximum speed and quality in mainframe development:

Cut through complexity. Mainframe programs tend towards heterogeneous with individual programs accomplishing multiple tasks. Not only does this lead to extremely large programs but it can also be intimidating for someone tasked to change those programs. This leads to developers, as part of a *first do no harm philosophy*, adding fields and paragraphs rather than reusing existing code and data – actually *increasing* the program complexity. Topaz's Program Analysis capabilities resolve these concerns, providing field usage information and on-the-fly flow charting (including the ability to zoom in/out for the desired perspective). All intended to give developers confidence to quickly and accurately make the necessary changes to accomplish business objectives.

Encourage the flow. The flow is those Zen moments when a developer is totally concentrating on the work at hand and productivity skyrockets. Hard to describe and harder to achieve, the spell can be snapped with any interruption. Some of these interrupts can be self-induced. For instance, simple ones like typing the name of a variable wrong or getting the syntax of an instruction wrong. Or in an even worse, using the wrong field – this can often chew up hours to track down unexpected results. Topaz provides a pop-up glance at a field definition and assistance with language commands to help the developer avoid these self-induced interruptions and stay in the flow.

Runtime understanding. The real key to unleashing programmer productivity is to remove guesswork from the process. What is the code path with the existing code? How have your changes affected the code path or intermediate results during execution? Removing guesswork can be a daunting task but newer Topaz technologies that automatically create and execute unit and functional tests have opened the door for this level of program understanding. Add to that its Runtime Visualizer and Code Coverage capabilities and you can verify what code is actually running, the I/O it does, and the paths it takes through the code.

A modern mainframe developer experience not only brings speed and quality to the development process it can add joy. Topaz's IDE with its improved source code editor and BMC AMI DevX's DevOps toolchain integrations are critical pieces in providing the heightened productivity that modern mainframe development demands, enabling mainframe development and delivery to move at the speed of the business, and in keeping this mainframe renaissance moving forward!