FORRESTER CONSULTING TEI: HOW BMC AMI DEVX SOLVED MAINFRAME TALENT GAPS WHILE TRANSFORMING THE DEVELOPER EXPERIENCE

A recent Forrester Consulting Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) study, commissioned by BMC, shows how organizations using BMC AMI DevX turned a talent pipeline challenge into a strategic advantage by improving the mainframe developer experience. For instance, the study found that new developers ramped up 50% faster, and overall productivity improved by 33%—equivalent to adding 25 full-time developers to the development team.

For the study, Forrester interviewed six organizations using BMC AMI DevX— including mainframe DevOps leaders in healthcare and financial services—and modeled the results into a composite enterprise with $10B annual revenue and 300 mainframe developers. The study provides an ROI framework for investing in tools that bring modern application development capabilities and DevOps practices to mainframe teams.

Why it matters

Mainframe systems remain mission-critical, but the talent pipeline is under pressure—with experienced developers retiring and younger professionals favoring other platforms. The right developer tooling can help alleviate these staffing challenges. By modernizing the developer experience—defined as the overall ease, efficiency and satisfaction developers have when building, testing and maintaining applications—organizations can make mainframe environments more intuitive and productive.

This isn't just an assumption—the Forrester study quantifies it. Developers want the same ease of use and agility they find in other modern environments, and tools like BMC AMI DevX can deliver a modern mainframe application development experience with clear, measurable impacts on developer productivity and satisfaction.

Watch now :

In this short video, Chris Condo, Forrester Consultant, explains the six levers of developer experience and how developer happiness directly impacts business outcomes.

Key challenges to attracting and keeping mainframe talent

Before adopting BMC AMI DevX, the interviewed organizations faced two critical workforce challenges:

- **Impending retirements:** Senior mainframe developers were nearing retirement, taking institutional knowledge with them.
- **Difficulty recruiting junior talent:** Steep learning curves and outdated tooling made mainframe developer job roles less attractive to new developers.

Overall, interviewees reported their mainframe teams struggled with legacy systems and outdated tooling—both homegrown and vendor-supplied. The limited functionality of these tools made working with complex, aging codebases risky and challenging.

Interviewees described the situation:

"I'm trying to retire. My whole team is trying to retire. … I'd guess a quarter to a third are looking to retire in the next two years. We're going to lose a lot of history." — PDM, North American Financial Services

"The learning curve in mainframe can be high. … Historically, it's been more of a challenge for us to find individuals, and that's the same for a lot of the third parties we work with. … We've tried to really improve our training programs to bring on new talent, it's still challenging even with that." — CIO, Healthcare

Faced with these challenges, the organizations sought a solution that would modernize mainframe development practices and elevate the developer experience—making mainframe development attractive to new talent.

What organizations were looking for in a solution

To help optimize the mainframe developer experience, interviewees were looking for DevOps solutions that were easy for developers to learn and use. They evaluated several vendors before choosing the BMC AMI DevX platform.

The interviewees explained their reasoning:

"It really came down to ease of use. has pretty similar capabilities. But the setup and configuration with the BMC products was so easy, so straightforward — especially compared to the fairly complicated process we'd have to go through with . … One big thing missing with was something simple like doing

copybook impact analysis. With the BMC tools, you right-click and view your impact, and there's your analysis. So, it pretty much boiled down to ease of use." — Mainframe DevOps lead, Financial Services

"We looked at nine platforms. … The big selling point was that had two interfaces — a GUI and green screen. So, I wasn't throwing the baby out with the bathwater, but I could get new, younger developers involved." — PDM, Financial Services

" is a very powerful tool, but it's much more complicated. Part of our justification for looking at the tools, and part of the rationale for why we selected them, is ease of use. Learning the tools is easier, which shortens the implementation timelines, and that creates value." — CIO, Healthcare

"A good part of the toolchain is that our developers have all their tools in one IDE ." — Project lead for change management, Financial Services

Why developers preferred BMC AMI DevX tools

As the interviewees evaluated different mainframe development platforms, they asked their developers what they thought. The developers consistently preferred the BMC tools over alternatives.

For example, at the healthcare organization, the developers consistently rated the BMC tools more highly than others. The CIO at the organization said: "… when you look at the reasons people list, it comes down to usability and how the tools flow and operate."

Detailed satisfaction ratings are included in the Forrester study.

Watch now :

Jeffrey Yozwiak, Forrester Analyst, shares what he heard from customers during the TEI study.

What organizations achieved with BMC AMI DevX to transform mainframe development

Beyond improving recruiting and onboarding, organizations reported that an enhanced mainframe developer experience notably increased productivity.

The composite organization **realized an overall 217% ROI** through modernization efforts, with significant staffing and developer productivity gains:

- **New developers onboarded 50% faster.** With BMC AMI DevX tools, knowledge transfer improved and new hires reached full productivity in just 4.5 months instead of 9 months, thanks to familiar interfaces (e.g., BMC AMI DevX Workbench integrates with Eclipse and VS Code) and standardized, codified processes—eliminating the traditional learning curve associated with mainframe-specific interfaces like ISPF. Estimated benefit: $825,000.
- **Junior developer headcount grew by 240%.** The BMC AMI DevX tools (as well as associated process changes) helped make the mainframe an attractive platform for early-career developers with access to modern programming languages (e.g., Go, Python, Java) and

artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities. The platform offers stability and growth potential that appeals to developers seeking long-term opportunities. Estimated benefit: $7.9 million.
- **Developer productivity increased by 33%, equivalent to 25 additional FTEs.** By automating repetitive administrative tasks, BMC AMI DevX freed developers to focus on coding and innovation. Estimated benefit: $8.1 million.

> *"We effectively removed all of the overhead for developers having to document exactly what they are changing... plus the need to manage the contentions, so we effectively saved two FTEs plus... about eight hours' worth of documentation and admin per release on average." — Mainframe DevOps lead, Financial Services*

Final thoughts

Organizations don't have to choose between preserving mainframe technology investments and attracting modern talent. By equipping developers with the tools and experiences they expect, companies can build thriving, multigenerational teams that drive automation and innovation while maintaining the reliability that keeps the business running.

The future of mainframe development isn't about replacing the platform—it's about transforming how people work with it, integrating mainframe systems into modern CI/CD pipelines without compromise.

One more thing

The study revealed an important outcome: mainframe development velocity matched non-mainframe teams—a significant shift from the days when mainframe lagged behind.

As one healthcare CIO put it: *"We were looking for a solution that was not just best in class but would also meet our needs and have the features and functionality we were looking for in the future."*

Watch now :

In this short video, Benoît Ebner, Mainframe Engineering Lead at NRB, *shares why he thinks it's a good time for developers to go to the mainframe and why* we need to challenge the mindset that "we can do the same thing with fewer people.

Ready to modernize the mainframe application development? Get the full Forrester TEI of BMC AMI DevX or request a personalized demonstration.