The Mainframe – A Mission-Essential Platform for Digital Transformation

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In this InfoBrief

**Overview**
This IDC InfoBrief explores how the mainframe continues to be the platform of choice as organizations advance on their Digital Transformation journey.

**Methodology**
IDC conducted online surveys and interviews with over 200 organizations with mainframes in North America. Respondents must have decision-making responsibility or influence on their organizations’ mainframe technology investments.
Disruptive Technologies Drive Digital Transformation

Third platform technologies - Cloud, Big Data, Social, and Mobility - are driving digital transformation.

Digital Transformation changes:

- **How you engage** with customers
- **The speed** at which products and services are delivered
- **How you innovate** your business
- **Your resiliency** to changing conditions
- **The reliability** of your operations

“**The amount of high value data that is worth analyzing will double by 2020.**”

“**Enterprise mobile apps are expected to grow 4X between now and 2018.**”
Leading Organizations Have Begun Digital Transformation – No One is Exempt from the Journey

These organizations are:
- Automating their processes
- Interconnecting their systems
- Adopting real-time analytics
- Harnessing and interpreting more data
- Acting on data for differentiation
- Accommodating user device explosion

64% of organizations are already “Digital Explorers” or “Digital Players”
In this Transformation, Savvy Organizations Continue to Invest in their Mainframe

66% say investment in mainframe-related staff support has increased or stayed the same.

64% view the platform as core to their business and to maintaining mission-essential workloads.

48% say they have already invested in z13 system capacity.

“Mainframe is a strategic asset to us. We can’t run the amount of transactions we run without the mainframe. It is considered as something that is required, otherwise we will not be able to conduct our business, based on the large amount of data flows that we have today.” – EVP IT Services, Multi-National Bank

Why? Today’s Mainframe Combines Known Core Strengths and Future Capabilities


40% of organizations with mainframe plan to invest in their mainframe platform to support new product development and innovation.

Mainframe as a System of Record

The platform continues to be the engine for mission-essential transactions, applications, and data.

Mainframe offers best in class:
- Performance
- High availability
- Scalability
- Reliability
- Security

Which of the following factors are driving investment in mainframe services within your organization? (% of respondents)

- IT cost reduction: 67%
- High availability: 64%
- Security: 47%
- Transactions: 42%

“We consider the mainframe to be a strategic asset for pricing, managing costs, leverage, and buyback.”
– Senior IT Manager, Large Higher Education Organization

Mainframe as a System of Engagement and Insight

Mainframe powers next-generation apps to connect users with data and gain analytical insights.

“From an IT operation perspective, we are doing a lot with security tracking and infrastructure analytics. We are trying to move to predictive and preventative automation.” – Exec. Director, Mainframe Systems, Global financial services firm

Which of the following technology trends are driving investment in mainframe services within your organization?

- Big Data/Analytics: 32%
- Cloud: 29%
- Linux: 27%
- Mobile: 21%
- Hybrid IT architectures: 18%

Mainframe as a Platform for Innovation

Next-generation mainframe apps require the flexibility afforded by open solutions such as Linux and Docker.

Mainframe organizations are embracing Agile and DevOps practices to speed transformation.

- 10% of mainframe MIPS* are running on Linux.
- 60% of organizations with mainframe expect Linux MIPS* growth in the next 24 months.
- 13% of mainframe decision makers are investing in mainframe for next-gen apps development and open source.

“Linux will be driving investment in the mainframe – absolutely. It plays a major role; we actually work closely with our vendor on the Linux side in an effort to lower TCO.” – VP IT, Multi-National Bank

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IDC Essential Guidance

▸ **Make mainframe an integral part of your organization’s digital transformation strategy.** Majority of organizations with mainframe view the platform as core to their business. They are strengthening staff and investing in system upgrades to support the transformation.

▸ **Build on core mainframe capabilities** for managing data, building custom apps, increasing mobile transactions, performing analytics, and executing IoT transactions.

▸ **Implement Agile development processes and DevOps tools** to speed up digital transformation and gain agility.

▸ **Use Open platform strengths** to support new product innovation.

▸ **Rationalize mainframe costs** – show efficiencies at high volumes, automated management functions, and leaner IT staffs.

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**The Bottom Line**

IT leaders pick mainframe as platform of choice to:

✔ Support business growth with efficient operations

✔ Reduce transaction costs as volumes grow

✔ Enable distributed Linux server consolidations
Appendix: Methodology

**IDC Mainframe Investment Survey**

IDC deployed online surveys and interviews targeting 202 organizations with mainframes in North America. Respondents must have decision making responsibility or influence on their organizations’ mainframe technology investment. The research effort was performed in Q1 2016 and sponsored by CA.

*MIPS = Millions of instructions per second.
N=202 mainframe decision makers.