

Pension fund discovers an innovative “third option” to boost customer service

The fund migrated its legacy administration system to a new low-code technology platform, increasing productivity, reducing costs—and better serving its members.



At a glance

Industry

Pension services

Location

US

Challenge

Migrate an underperforming, outdated pension administration system to a new technology solution to better serve 215,000 members, retirees and beneficiaries.

Success Highlights

- **100%** faster pace of modernization
- **70%** reduction in manual efforts
- **90%** quicker response time to comply with legislative changes

The challenge



One of the largest public pension plan funds in the US—with more than \$100 billion in assets and 215,000 members, retirees and beneficiaries—provides US Department of Energy employees with retirement, disability and death benefits.

The fund's leadership has a clear, ongoing mission to be member-centric in conducting business and serving its members. But with an outdated legacy tech platform, challenges arose and persisted. Multiple “broken” functional areas and business processes were underperforming, both internally and externally.

To adapt to a complex and constantly changing business environment, process and technology fixes were clearly required. In response, the fund mapped a modernization strategy to decommission its legacy technology platform and replace it with a new, modern platform and application.

Our approach

By migrating out of its legacy administration platform, the pension fund sought to reduce costs, drive innovation, enhance system security, improve system availability and reduce the risks posed by outdated technology. This technology transformation also needed to avoid business disruption and short-term system issues, which could lead to member dissatisfaction.

The first decision was “build” versus “buy.” Using traditional coding methods to build a complex application was intimidating and expensive, and the fund's previous “build” initiatives were slower and more costly than planned.

The fund's leadership brought in Cognizant, which raised an innovative third option: low-code application development. This solution was compelling in that it offered:

- Better collaboration between teams, especially those without coding experience
- A speedier development lifecycle
- More consistent feedback, especially when utilizing agile workflows
- Greater control of the application development lifecycle
- Lower long-term costs

Cognizant helped the fund navigate and evaluate available low-code platform options. The selected provider—Mendix, a Siemens company—featured advanced, AI-enabled low-code capabilities, a rich library of reusable components, robust integration capabilities and financial stability.

Cognizant helped define the working model and overall solution architecture, which was designed as a set of distributed Mendix applications on a private AWS cloud. The phased plan included:

- “Lifting and shifting” existing functionalities that were performing well
- Migrating and managing large datasets involving over 500 million records
- Implementing end-to-end process automation workflows
- Handling large, complex inbound and outbound payroll files
- Deploying a common UI and apps to manage both electronic and paper documents
- Ensuring data quality and integrity to maintain the accuracy, reliability and consistency of data over its entire life

Because the Mendix platform allowed for multidevice, multilanguage, intuitive user interfaces, the system was easily adopted by members and other users.



Business outcomes



While the fund's multiyear modernization project is ongoing, its new technology platform is already helping to better serve its 215,000 members, retirees and beneficiaries. The new state-of-art system provides:

- **Flexibility and adaptability** in a complex and changing business environment
- **Agility** in processes, enabling faster and more flexible decision-making
- **Compliance** with regulatory, legal and policy changes—quickly, accurately and cost-effectively
- **Better service** to members by more effectively managing fiduciary responsibilities

2X

increase in pace of modernization

80%

straight-through processing of business functionality

70%

reduction in manual efforts

90%

faster response to legislative changes



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