



**Are you overpaying for Oracle Database?**  
 Hint. You're overpaying for Oracle Database.

Blogs: **Mike Vizard**

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**The Coming Code Crisis**

*Posted by Michael Vizard Mar 29, 2011 9:31:40 AM*

Deep in the pit of their stomachs, most IT leaders know there is a major business issue just waiting to happen because of some piece of faulty software.

In fact, at this point, Jeff Papows, CEO of **WebLayers**, which provides tools for automating the management of governance policies associated with developing applications, argues that as more of the people who created this code exit the work force, it's only a matter of time before this issue becomes a full-blown crisis.

In his book "**Glitch: The Hidden Impact of Faulty Software**," Papows argues that most of this crisis is being created because IT organizations didn't focus on making sure there were enough skilled COBOL programmers available. The end result is that there are thousands of developers skilled in the latest and greatest programming languages, yet the vast majority of mission-critical applications that businesses rely on are written in COBOL.

Papows, in an excerpt from the book found [here](#), acknowledges that there have been some efforts to shore up the base of COBOL programming skills in the form of training programs run by companies such as **IBM** and **Micro Focus**, but the internal knowledge transfer activities within IT organizations have been woefully lacking. The end result is that with each passing day, fewer people in the IT organization are intimately familiar with how the company's most important applications actually work.

When you come right down to it, Papows argues that IT organizations have only a handful of options available to forestall this problem. They can either embark on COBOL training and an **application modernization** project, or they can attempt to rewrite these applications in a modern language that is thoroughly documented. Either scenario is going to take years to complete, so the fundamental issue that Papows is trying get at is whether IT organizations are already out of time before the next major glitch results in some catastrophic business event.

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 **Gene Snyder** says:  
 COBOL rocks! I have been coding COBOL since 1988. I'm waiting to retire and make some big bucks consulting. Forget JAVA...mainframe COBOL is where it's at.



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