

Insurance carrier achieves continuous processing and operational flexibility



Property & Casualty Insurance



Overview

This regional property and casualty insurance provider supports commercial policies across multiple lines of business, including motor vehicle coverage. Core underwriting, rating, and policy servicing functions run on long-standing, homegrown mainframe applications that are tightly integrated with CICS and VSAM.

These systems are central to daily operations and must remain highly available to support underwriting staff, agents, and downstream systems throughout the business day.

Business need

The insurer needed to eliminate file outages caused by batch processing while maintaining data integrity across mission-critical VSAM files.

Historically, batch jobs required files to be closed or restricted during processing windows. Updates were grouped and run at specific times, limiting flexibility and creating operational friction. As business hours expanded and processing volumes shifted, this approach became increasingly restrictive:

- ❗ Files had to be closed to run updates
- ❗ Processing flexibility was limited to predefined batch windows
- ❗ Operational teams had little tolerance for extended outages
- ❗ Application rewrites or database migration were not viable options

The organization needed a way to modernize processing behavior — without re-architecting stable, proven applications.

Solution

The insurer implemented SYSB-II to enable controlled sharing of VSAM files between batch jobs and online CICS regions.

SYSB-II was deployed using a JCL-based implementation model, allowing existing batch jobs to run while CICS remained online and actively updating the same files. The solution provided:

- ✓ Continuous VSAM access during the business day
- ✓ Integrated syncpointing to maintain data consistency
- ✓ Automated backward recovery using CICS journaling
- ✓ Minimal application changes and no data model redesign

SYSB-II was brought up early in the morning and allowed to feed batch updates continuously throughout the day, aligning processing with real business activity instead of fixed batch windows.

Benefits

- ✓ **Continuous processing during business hours** — Batch updates now run throughout the day without closing files or impacting online users.
- ✓ **Improved operational flexibility** — Jobs can be executed on demand instead of waiting for scheduled batch windows.
- ✓ **Simplified recovery model** — CICS-based journaling provides sufficient recovery protection, reducing manual intervention.
- ✓ **Minimal disruption to existing applications** — No application rewrites, no DB2 conversion, and no changes to business logic were required.

Enabling Continuous Insurance Processing Without File Shutdowns

Prior to SYSB-II, updates to policy and rating files were batched and deferred until files could be safely closed. This restricted operational agility and delayed the availability of updated data.

With SYSB-II in place, the insurer transitioned to a model where batch jobs could safely access VSAM files while CICS remained active. Updates now flow continuously from early morning through the evening, aligning processing with business demand rather than operational constraints.

The environment supports millions of records, with update volumes that have declined over time but still require consistent availability throughout the day.



Operational Stability Through Automated Recovery

One of the most valued aspects of the implementation was recovery.

The insurer relies on CICS journaling for backward recovery and has found it sufficient for their workload. In practice, recovery events are rare, but when needed, SYSB-II provides confidence that updates can be safely backed out without complex decision-making.

This approach reduced the need for manual file restores and eliminated the uncertainty that previously accompanied mid-day batch failures.

Getting Results Without Rewriting Applications

Alternative approaches — including transactional VSAM, RLS, or database migration — were considered but offered little immediate value given the application design and workload characteristics.

SYSB-II delivered the needed concurrency and recovery capabilities without forcing architectural change. As a result, the insurer was able to:

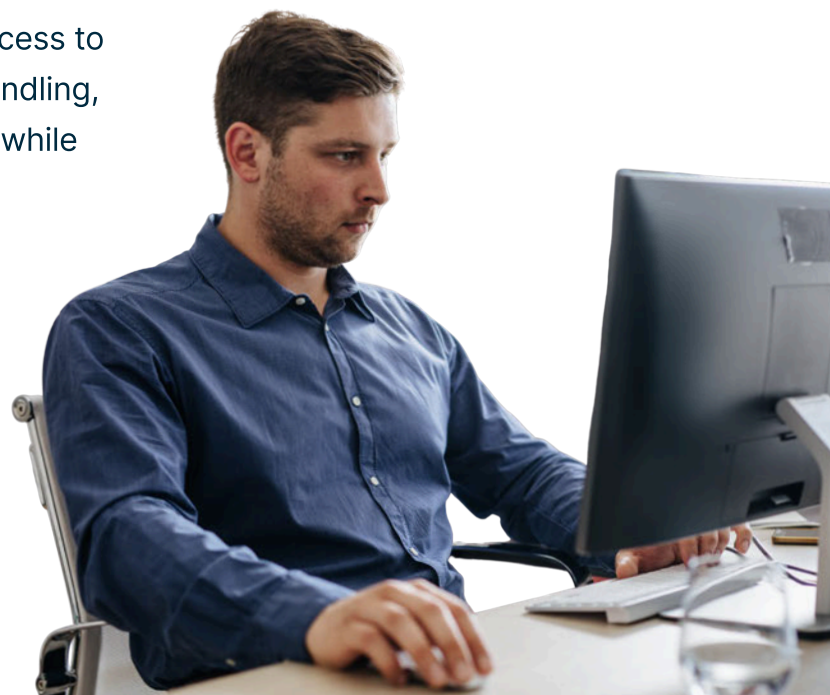
- ✓ Preserve investment in stable applications
- ✓ Improve availability quickly
- ✓ Avoid long-term modernization risk
- ✓ Focus resources on business priorities instead of infrastructure redesign

Conclusion

By implementing SYSB-II, this insurance provider transformed its batch processing model from a restrictive, window-based approach to a flexible, business-aligned operation.

The organization achieved continuous access to critical VSAM data, improved recovery handling, and greater operational confidence — all while keeping core applications intact.

SYSB-II now operates as a foundational component of the insurer's production environment, quietly enabling the availability and reliability required for modern insurance operations.



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