

VirtualZ Computing Accelerates AI Innovation with the Progress DataDirect Connectivity Solution

CASE STUDY



INDUSTRY
Technology/Software

PRODUCT
Progress® DataDirect®

COUNTRY
United States

SUMMARY
VirtualZ Computing's flagship product, PropelZ™, a mainframe-first, multi-platform data movement and integration engine, automatically transforms intricate Virtual Storage Access Method (VSAM) data sets and other legacy formats into normalized, cloud-ready formats, then delivers that data to an on-premises or cloud database or data lake. By combining the PropelZ engine with Progress DataDirect JDBC drivers, it enabled high-performance movement and transformation of mainframe and other data into modern databases and cloud platforms for analytics, AI and modernization projects.

“So far, for the half-dozen or so databases we’ve worked with, the DataDirect drivers have behaved perfectly consistently across APIs and configurations, which makes our life much easier and lets us focus on our core product instead of chasing connectivity issues.”

Vince Re,
Co-founder & CTO

Challenge

VirtualZ, a data integration company focused on mainframe modernization, helps enterprises unlock legacy data for use in cloud and analytics environments. Its flagship platform, PropelZ, initially transformed this mainframe data in three steps: open-ended input from legacy sources, in-flight transformation/normalization and output via JDBC driver to target popular AI platforms like Snowflake and Databricks, as well as data lakes.

However, VirtualZ's enterprise customers were getting tired of the slow, rigid and custom engineering required to move the petabytes of VSAM, Db2, tape archives and other hybrid data. All of this resulted in performance bottlenecks, driver inconsistencies and manual setup friction, and impacted overall AI readiness of the engine. As a result, VirtualZ needed a tool that could unlock complex mainframe data structures for modern databases, data lakes, cloud targets and legacy data for analytics and AI initiatives.

Solution

One way to solve for these problems was to use JDBC drivers as a connection to the cloud target platforms, so VirtualZ turned to Progress as a partner and its DataDirect connectivity solution, which could help accelerate PropelZ's product innovation.

As Jeanne Glass, Founder and CEO described, “While we were innovating new products, we needed a partner that would innovate with us—and that’s one of the reasons we selected Progress. They’ve been with us every step of the way as we rolled out PropelZ and integrated their technology to push the bar forward on working with mainframe and multi-platform data.”

Progress DataDirect JDBC drivers facilitated this by providing the high-performance connectivity that let PropelZ push these massive volumes of legacy mainframe data reliably into those AI data platforms, making the data AI-ready at scale while running an IBM z Integrated Information Processor (zIIP)—a specialty engine designed for mainframes that can offload specific workloads from general-purpose processors—efficiently.

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Jeanne Glass,
Founder and CEO, VirtualZ

Progress DataDirect JDBC drivers connected PropelZ to many target platforms like an off-the-shelf, batteries-included connectivity layer, allowing customers to get consistent, standards-based access to many AI and BI platforms, including Snowflake, Databricks, PostgreSQL, SQL Server and Oracle.

Results

By standardizing on Progress DataDirect connectivity inside PropelZ, VirtualZ delivered much higher throughput for mainframe-to-cloud and database movements, seeing it jump from roughly 500 – 600 rows per second with an open-source Postgres driver to about 6,000 rows per second in its own testing environment—an 8 to 10x improvement.

One customer reported sustained performance of about 26,000 64 KB records per second, which translates into multiple terabytes of mainframe data moved per hour, while consuming only about 3% of a single zIIP engine. This averted the increase of billable MIPS or disruption of other workloads.

As Vince Re, Co-founder & CTO, summarized, “So far, for the half-dozen or so databases we’ve worked with, the DataDirect drivers have behaved perfectly consistently across APIs and configurations, which makes our life much easier and lets us focus on our core product instead of chasing connectivity issues.”

It also allowed many customers to stand up production-grade pipelines in minutes without the need to hunt for drivers or build custom integrations without direct assistance required from VirtualZ’s team.

This accelerates time to value because PropelZ is automatically shipped with DataDirect drivers for the target platforms.

This was echoed by Re: “For our customers, DataDirect drivers give us both performance and convenience. The drivers are packaged right into our product, so they don’t have to hunt for the right driver or worry about subtle differences between databases—it’s a true out-of-the-box experience.”

About VirtualZ

VirtualZ is a mainframe software company with a patented, no-code software portfolio that delivers out-of-the-box access to enterprise data anywhere it resides. Together, these solutions provide real-time data access, governed ETL, secure file movement and virtual cloud storage—all designed to work seamlessly, without complexity, coding or disruption. www.virtualzcomputing.com



Learn How Progress DataDirect optimizes APIs for performance, cost savings and seamless data connectivity.