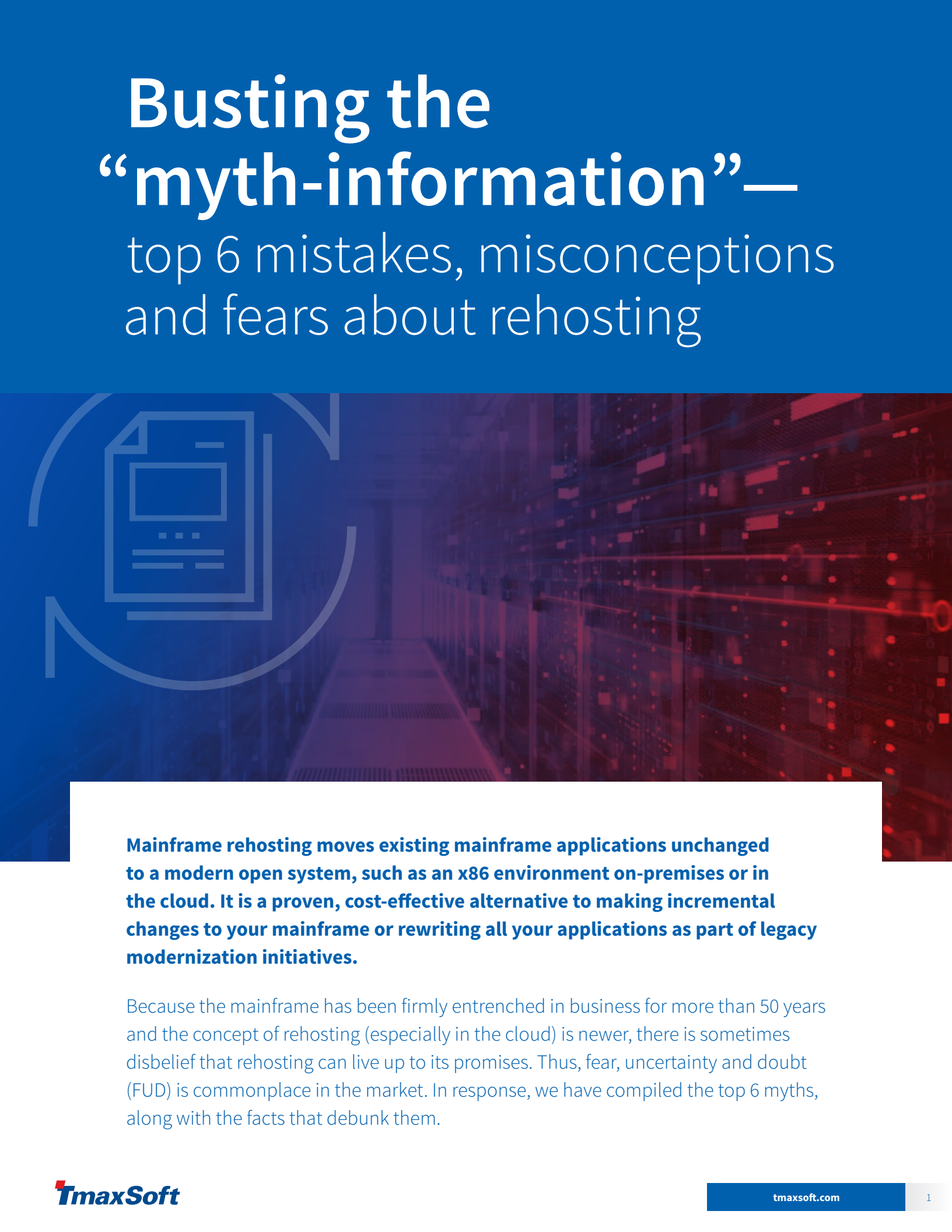


Busting the “myth-information”— top 6 mistakes, misconceptions and fears about rehosting



Mainframe rehosting moves existing mainframe applications unchanged to a modern open system, such as an x86 environment on-premises or in the cloud. It is a proven, cost-effective alternative to making incremental changes to your mainframe or rewriting all your applications as part of legacy modernization initiatives.

Because the mainframe has been firmly entrenched in business for more than 50 years and the concept of rehosting (especially in the cloud) is newer, there is sometimes disbelief that rehosting can live up to its promises. Thus, fear, uncertainty and doubt (FUD) is commonplace in the market. In response, we have compiled the top 6 myths, along with the facts that debunk them.

1

Rehosting fails more often than it succeeds

This myth is number 1 on our list based on how frequently it is reported. It is a claim that is rarely backed up. As an example, a writer who promised stories linking “mainframe migration failures” to rehosting provided a link to a popular mainframe blog. However, most of the “failed” projects were caused by something other than rehosting—such as complete application rewrites or someone trying to move massive MIPS onto small UNIX servers. In at least one case, this blogger went back 18 years to find a story that would make his case.

The fact is, rehosting does result in successful projects, and is also relatively low-risk when compared to rewriting or doing nothing. Companies that span all industries have successfully rehosted their mainframes. With rehosting, these companies have a fast, flexible foundation that enables them to respond quickly to changing markets and requirements. A rehosted solution provides a much better platform for the development and enhancement of these legacy applications.

2

Rehosting is a large, complex project that takes a long time

Another popular misconception is that rehosting isn’t as easy as its proponents make it out to be. Mainframe vendors and mainframe user groups like SHARE cite stories of companies whose projects took 1-3 years longer than promised. Digging deeper into any of these stories, you’ll discover mitigating factors such as embarking on an initiative without a fully-baked plan or before a full inventory of mainframe applications had been completed.

Other stories of lengthy, difficult projects are at least a decade old, and, fortunately, times have changed. Modern rehosting requires an in-depth assessment of the applications that need to move before the project gets underway with continuous reviews that monitor progress. This prevents unwelcome surprises that can add time to the project. Unlike the time it takes to rewrite applications (3-5 years), a rehosting project can take as little as 9-12 months. For example, Samsung Insurance’s rehosting project (7500 MIPS) took less than 12 months.

3

Rehosting costs much more upfront than planned

Respected industry writers often recount horror stories of cost overruns related to a rehosting project. Selecting the right rehosting vendor with experience in delivering successful projects on time and on budget is therefore a critical first step in a company’s rehosting assessment. If you select a vendor who has experience and a rock-solid rehosting solution, you are unlikely to run into cost overruns because the vendor will have best practices that prevent them.

Another cost myth is that there is a need to hire more resources for rehosting. This misconception is based on the confusion between rehosting and rewriting applications that were mentioned in myth 1. (*cont.*)

4

Rehosting ultimately does not save money

(cont.) Rewriting applications as part of a legacy modernization effort requires a significant amount of programming resources and effort, requires changes to underlying business logic and can cause severe business disruption. And, it usually means making an upfront investment in additional development resources. With rehosting, IT departments can take advantage of their existing skilled mainframe resources as well as those of open systems and modern technology teams.

By not rehosting, companies sentence themselves to expensive mainframe maintenance and updates. Large organizations spend millions of dollars each year to maintain and update their mainframes with new technology. By choosing the right rehosting vendor, you can avoid years of capital outlay on a patched, fixed, and aging mainframe that is prone to outages. And, with an upfront investment in rehosting, the TCO analysis always provides a favorable outcome for rehosting customers.

Another misconception is that rehosting does not offer cost savings or an appreciable ROI. Rehosting detractors use a hotel reservation story as “proof” of this myth. The costs per reservation, they say, rose from \$1.30 to \$1.65. However, they fail to mention what the cost per reservation might have been had the mainframe simply been upgraded.

Most companies who have rehosted are realizing major savings. Take [GE Capital](#), for instance. The costs of running its portfolio management system fell by 66% after rehosting. Samsung Life Insurance reduced costs by \$30 million in four years, and [Kela](#), a European government agency, says that costs will fall from €8 million a year today to €2 million when rehosting is complete.

5

Moving applications to another platform reduces quality of service

There is a contingent on the web that claims that rehosting results in incomplete applications and slow performance. Like those who claim that rehosting fails more than it succeeds, they provide little proof. They also fail to mention that a decades-old mainframe and its legacy applications are themselves liable to poor quality of service. The patching, fixing, maintenance (with downtime), difficulty accessing needed data, and sunsetting of COBOL applications by third parties hinders and slows performance.

In truth, companies who rehost their mainframes see no difference in the quality of service. In fact, it can increase application uptime and reliability. Rehosting makes no changes to the underlying business logic or user interfaces of your applications. You get a secure, high-performance, and flexible environment that dynamically scales based on business demand so that your users experience maximum service and reliability even during peak processing. For example, Samsung Insurance reports their online response time improved by an average of one second, and application error rates dropped dramatically.

There's no need to rehost

This myth is more likely to be found in companies where managers and executives have heard the other five myths and fret about failure, high costs, and performance. They argue that they've been hearing about how everything should move off the mainframe for years, but their mainframes are still getting the job done, and there have been no catastrophes. So, why not just maintain the status quo and not rehost at all?

The answer comes back to cost and even staying in business. As mentioned earlier, companies are spending millions of dollars each year to maintain and update older systems that become more of a liability the longer they operate. This ties up capital that could be used for innovation and differentiation. Meanwhile, their competitors are taking advantage of new technology.

By contrast, rehosting creates a fast, flexible foundation for quickly responding to market change and future integration requirements. And, there is no proprietary lock-in. After rehosting, your applications interact with APIs, new user interfaces and other modern technology such as containers.

Just the facts

As you can see, the myths about rehosting are a result of flaws in communication and an imperfect understanding of what a rehosting project entails. For example, rehosting is frequently confused with rewriting and as a result, some of the myths apply to application rewriting rather than rehosting. Others relate to the problems caused by external factors such as vendors and incomplete assessment.

Experience proves that rehosting your mainframe is fast with limited risk—and you can preserve its legacy without running up costs. Your mainframe applications move unchanged to a modern open environment, where it is preserved and where your mainframe applications can take advantage of modern technology, adding value and reducing costs over the long term.

For more details on mainframe rehosting, check out our guide, [5 reasons to rehost your mainframe](#).

