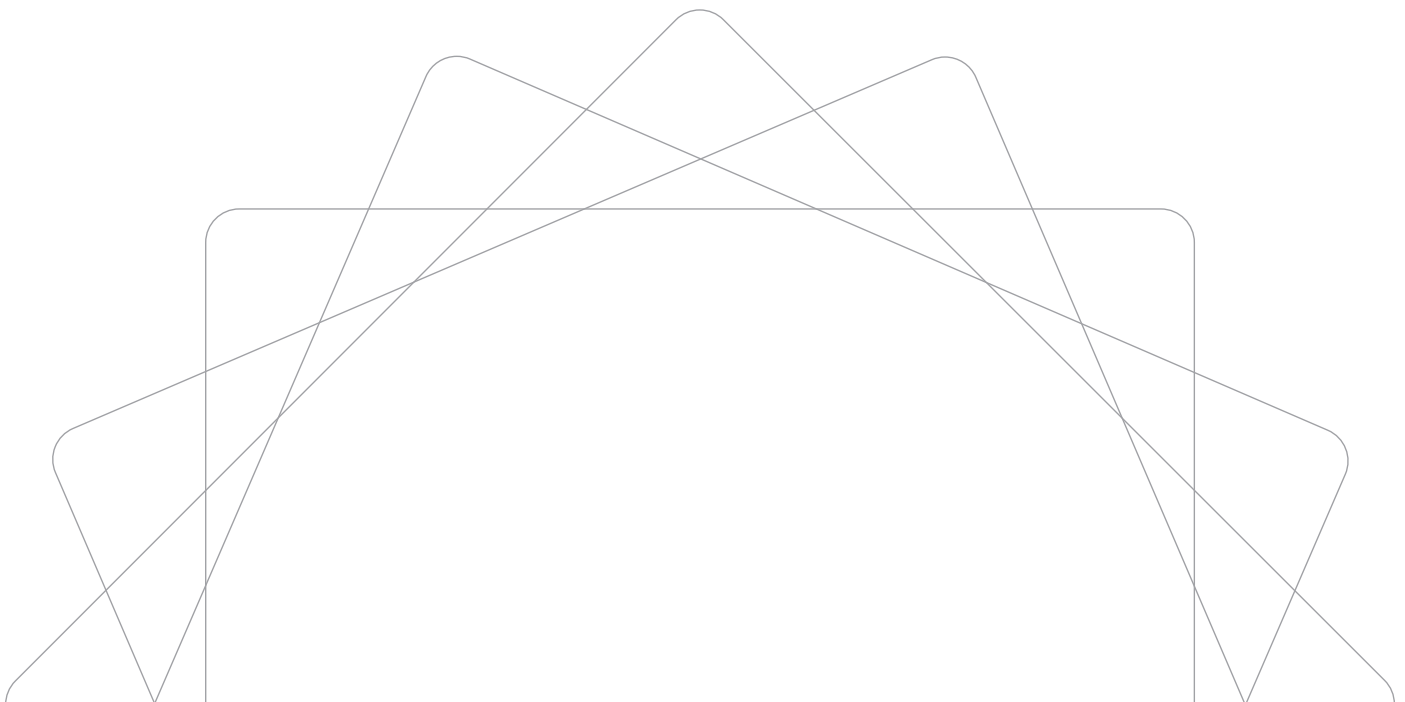**BOLD
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Migrating from Adobe ColdFusion : How Abt Can Help

Abt Associates

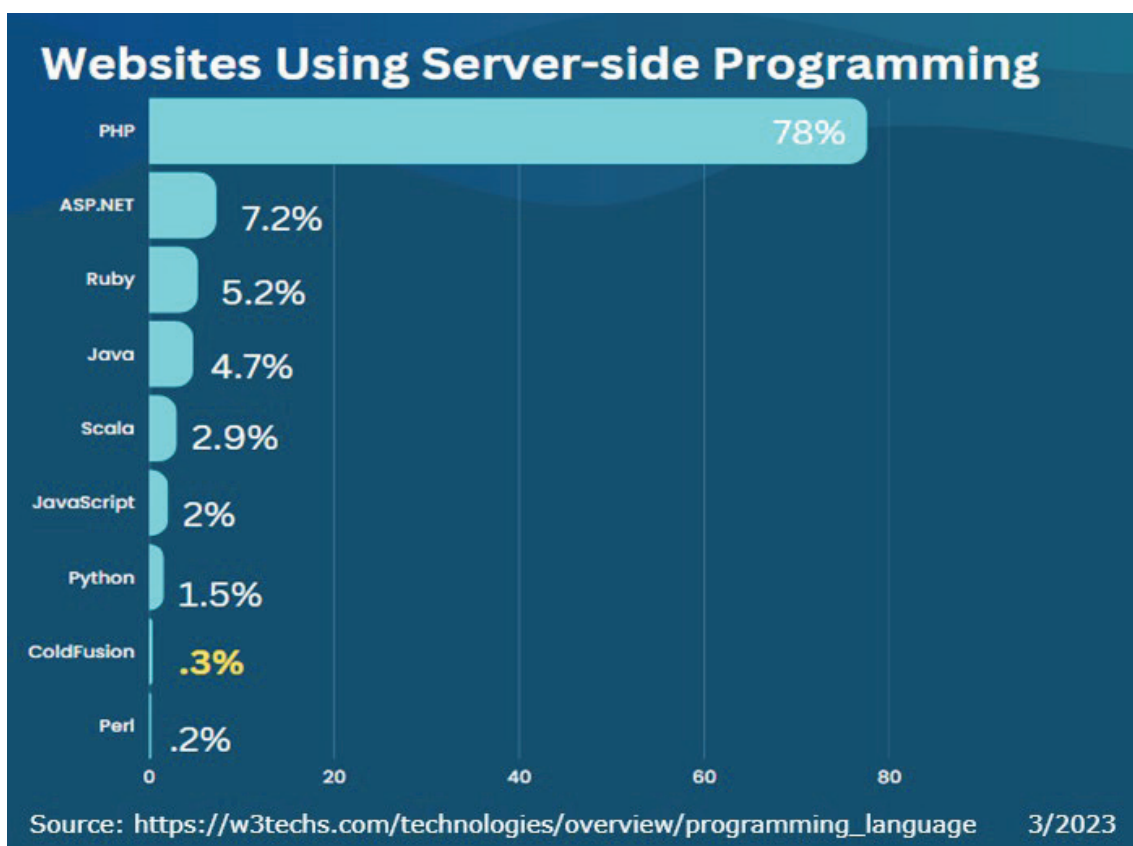Lori Hunter, *Solutions Architect Principal*

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Well-designed, high-quality website content drives value for agencies across the federal government. Technologies and applications for content delivery continue to change, and agencies need a well-planned roadmap to confront this shifting landscape and realize the full benefits of their technology investments. For over 25 years, Adobe ColdFusion has been used to develop web applications, services, and platforms used by the federal government—and it is frequently cited as the application most threatened by emerging trends and changes in content delivery environment. While Adobe continues to invest in the development of ColdFusion, agencies are also seeking ways to migrate away from ColdFusion for several reasons including:

- **Avoiding Vendor Lock-In and Substantial Licensing Costs:** The level of support Adobe provides for ColdFusion applications has substantially waned in recent years, and its licensing model is antiquated. Adobe's feature-based licensing system pushes agencies into purchasing more expensive enterprise editions to access the advanced features required to build complex enterprise applications.

- **Migrating to a Fully Enabled Cloud Environment:** ColdFusion's monolithic architecture is not suitable for cloud-native design patterns, which prevents agencies from leveraging the full benefits of cloud computing. While ColdFusion can reside in a cloud environment, it is not designed to leverage the advantages of a native cloud architecture. Additionally, ColdFusion images within the AWS marketplace increase hosting costs.

- **Finding Labor to Support a Legacy Application:** Another challenge facing agencies committed to ColdFusion is the shrinking number of ColdFusion developers and the associated salary levels of those senior developers who maintain their expertise in ColdFusion. Junior developers with exposure to ColdFusion and an interest in learning the language are in short supply.

Websites Using Server-side Programming

Language	Percentage
PHP	78%
ASP.NET	7.2%
Ruby	5.2%
Java	4.7%
Scala	2.9%
JavaScript	2%
Python	1.5%
ColdFusion	.3%
Perl	.2%

Source: https://w3techs.com/technologies/overview/programming_language   3/2023

Migration options from ColdFusion can include several paths, all of which depend on the agency's broader technology investments, goals, and roadmap. Paths away from ColdFusion may include:

- **Lucee:** an open-source ColdFusion language that can reduce an agency's licensing costs and lock-in to Adobe while still allowing the agency to utilize past investments, given that about 98% of ColdFusion code is portable to Lucee.

- **Drupal:** (PHP-based) a robust open-source content management system which allows agencies to avoid licensing fees while still having access to a large user community and pre-developed modules or workflows.

- **Headless CMS:** any type of back-end content management system where the content is separated from the presentation layer (the "head"). This construction allows content to be delivered via APIs for seamless display across different devices (rather than having to store different content for each channel).

Remember: It's All About Content

Regardless of their migration path, agencies looking to change will need a solutions partner that understands content is the driver of experience and value for citizens and partner agencies, the government's customers and information users. Abt has worked with federal, non-profit, state and local government content for more than 50 years.

We have worked with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to modernize their Data Management System, under the Program Evaluation for Prevention Contract (PEPC), system built in DotNetNuke . We are supporting U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with the modernization of a Point-in-Time count application into a more user-friendly interface for Continuums of Care. And we are partnering with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to modernize

their Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research (CLEAR) website, which synthesizes evidence on labor policies and programs.

We are experts at partnering with organizations to create user-facing websites and digital experiences that feature clear, relevant, and targeted communications. We can work with you to develop a transition plan from ColdFusion that builds upon initial investments and helps to future-proof your cloud environment, while avoiding vendor lock-in, high licensing costs, and staffing shortages.

What We Offer

Abt is a world-class leader in bridging our clients' unique data, information, and technology needs with industry-standard tools for data transformation, analysis, and decision making. For nearly 60 years, Abt has been an engine for social impact, leading cutting-edge research that moves people from vulnerability to security worldwide. Our digital teams specialize in bringing together multiple sources of data to provide specific data-driven solutions to improve programs.

Our data capabilities fit a wide range of analytic tasks and timelines. Our program monitoring capabilities allow us to collect and manage actionable information that drives continuous improvement. Our approach to digital delivery, integration of tools and systems, and systems innovation is grounded in our human centered design methodology, which we believe provides the most significant and sustained impact. Abt customizes digital tools around the needs of our clients and their specific projects and stakeholders.

Our seasoned technology team includes experts in agile development, graphic design, user experience testing, web and mobile programming, system architecture, database administration, data science, visualization, GIS, DevSecOps and automation. Our team has developed more than 150 websites and software applications in support of Abt projects with federal, state, and local clients. Abt is well versed in cloud-hosting, supporting projects in Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud and Amazon

Web Services (AWS) where we are an Advanced Public Sector Consulting Partner. We currently manage over 60 cloud-based projects where we host everything from content management systems, dynamic web applications, data collection tools, learning management and data science platforms. Several of our projects have a high security standing and are compliant with FISMA requirements. We have managed 20 successful Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 (FISMA) Authorization to Operate (ATO) processes.

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