

## The Rima Report

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq



Category	Points	Weighting	Overall Score
Certifiability	4.00	.100	0.400
Installation	3.70	.150	0.555
Ease of Use	3.70	.150	0.555
Documentation	3.70	.150	0.555
Functionality	3.70	.150	0.555
Usefulness	3.70	.150	0.555
Support	3.70	.150	0.555
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.20</b>		<b>3.730</b>

**KICK THE TIRES:** This product gives you a glimpse of what's to come; 5250 conversion to GUI with the conservation of the investment in the existing code base is the future. If you haven't started looking in that direction, here's a product to consider starting with.

*(Points given are on a scale of 0 to 4, with 4 being the highest. Each category is assigned its own weighting from the total of 100 percent.)*

### Certifiability

Everything I played with worked as I expected.

### Functionality/Usefulness

You may be asking yourself, "How can this product be used in my shop to make my life easier?" Well, in short, it's a quick and easy way to get those GUI mongers off your back and showcase your IT skills by making the applications they're familiar with look like the ones they want to use.

I liked how smoothly the code conversion worked in bringing over some of my existing applications into the new GUI mode. Changing radio-button options to return the values that the RPG is expecting was an easy attribution change. That is, if I have a column of selection items that I usually hit with an "X" to select, I just convert them to radio buttons, change the returned field to send an "X" when selected and the RPG code doesn't even know the difference.

Screen design wasn't hard to pick up, and the interaction and interface between the screens and base RPG code followed a lot of what I already was thinking from dealing in RPG and DDS mindsets.

With conversion like this—applications that don't require a lot of post-conversion tweaking—you could easily code your mods to the 5250 base set, then reconvert on the fly when putting things into the GUI production with a minimal amount of post-conversion retrofit. This depends on how fancy you want your screens and how much post-conversion customization you want to put into them. Some folks will opt for either parallel development or conversion.


And, going forward, this product provides a nice IDE for continued RPG development and maintenance. So, the decision falls on your shoulders as to what kind of look and feel you want your next annual review based on.

### Support

Profound Logic's tech support was well versed in the product, server delivery and i5/OS\* environment.

### Summary

RPGsp gives you a glimpse of where things are heading—5250 conversion to GUI with the conservation of a company's current software investment. It's the best of both worlds. Like many others, I'm a firm believer in the fact that a browser presentation layer with a solid RPG back end combined with a solid DB2\* database still makes for an unbeatable development and production environment.

The learning curve is short. The ability to be productive (if you already know the languages and a little about how visual environments and IDEs work) is good. You should be off and running really quickly. If you don't understand GUI too well, the learning curve isn't that steep. I'd recommend taking a known application into a test environment, then learn and play. 

**Don Rima** has more than 20 years of experience with IBM\* midrange systems. For the past 10 years, he has owned a consulting group. Don can be reached at [dr2@dlr2.net](mailto:dr2@dlr2.net).