

*Redvers Consulting Ltd*

White Paper

**Protect the  
intellectual  
property in your  
COBOL source  
code with the  
Redvers Cloaking  
Device**



## Executive Summary

In these times of global outsourcing, cloud processing and industrial espionage, it has never been more important to protect intellectual property from theft and misuse.

In a speech on global outsourcing Gartner research vice-president Ian Marriott states “the real challenges are security, intellectual property protection and privacy.” he adds “Companies that do not understand

governance will become disconnected from the thrust of the industry and will miss out”.

Whether you’re an end user considering the option of outsourcing, a company with COBOL applications that could be sold for profit or even a service company writing COBOL applications for clients, the **Redvers Cloaking Device** is an essential part of securing the future of your business.

## Intellectual Property Theft and Subversion

Court cases involving the theft of intellectual property at offshore outsourcing companies routinely appear in the press. The worry is that for every publicised case, you can be sure there are many more, never reported.

We don’t mean to imply that companies or individuals who specialise in the provision of IT outsourcing are any less honest than any other organization. They merely derive their competitive advantage from being less expensive than their competitors, not from a vested interest in their client’s future.

The threat of IP theft doesn’t only exist within outsourcing; it can occur at off-site disaster recovery centres or on-site, by contract staff or disgruntled employees.

Self-documenting languages like COBOL make reading and understanding source code easy. However, this aspect also makes the intellectual information contained within the code vulnerable to theft and misuse.

Many companies don’t realize the extent of their intellectual property coded in legacy systems. While networked systems strive to allow only minimal access to the most basic operational functions, mainframes and powerful servers hold core business logic in source code form, accessible with the minimum of security checks. If unscrupulous individuals were to get access to this code they could:

- Pass processes that make your products superior, to competitors.
- Use account validation routines to divert funds.
- Make public, customer profiling or other information that could bring your company into disrepute.
- Place malicious routines within the code to be triggered at a date of their choosing.

## Software and Service Companies

The legal case brought by SCO regarding their ownership of copyright to parts of the Linux operating system has highlighted the risk that software companies take, in a world full of litigation.

With IT services being increasingly treated as a global commodity, service companies need

to feel confident they will be paid for the work they do, without the need for expensive international law suits.

Outsourcers also need to prove to potential clients that the corporate secrets they are entrusted with, will be kept safe from theft and corruption.

## The Requirement

What the software industry needs today is an inexpensive, practical way of ensuring intellectual property is kept in the hands of its rightful owners, while giving those owners the opportunity to benefit from a global outsourcing revolution.

Encryption of source code doesn't solve the problem because third parties can't compile and run encrypted code without decrypting it first. Unfortunately, once the code is decrypted, it's vulnerable to theft and corruption as before.

Distributing applications in compiled machine code is prone to problems in hardware and operating system compatibility. It's also unlikely that a customer or software service company would be capable of programming and debugging in machine code.

If only there was a simple way to keep the information written in corporate source code secure, without sacrificing the flexibility that comes with source code. For many years obfuscators have been providing just such a function.

## Obfuscators

Obfuscators obscure the readability of source code by replacing meaningful data names and label names with random nonsensical strings. They also remove any comments and indentation within the code and often encrypt literal strings.

Obfuscators don't alter the program logic, nor do they change source code into machine readable objects - output from an obfuscator is still source code that needs to be compiled before it can be executed on a computer.

Obfuscators were originally developed by software houses to prevent the re-engineering of compiled object code back to its original source code state. Applications written in languages like Perl and Java are particularly prone to re-engineering. Microsoft has even included an obfuscator in Visual Studio .net.

COBOL obfuscators are still fairly rare even though the majority of the world's business logic and therefore intellectual property is written in COBOL.

## What's Special about the Redvers Cloaking Device?

**The Redvers Cloaking Device is a COBOL obfuscator, written and distributed in pure COBOL source code.**

No additional hardware, software or training is required. It can also be kept in your standard COBOL source code library with the other COBOL programs, until the system is retired or migrated.

### **Literal string encryption.**

Literals coded within the procedure division can reveal critical clues as to the type of processing being performed and conditions that invoke specific processes. The **Redvers Cloaking Device** encrypts procedure literals to prevent this.

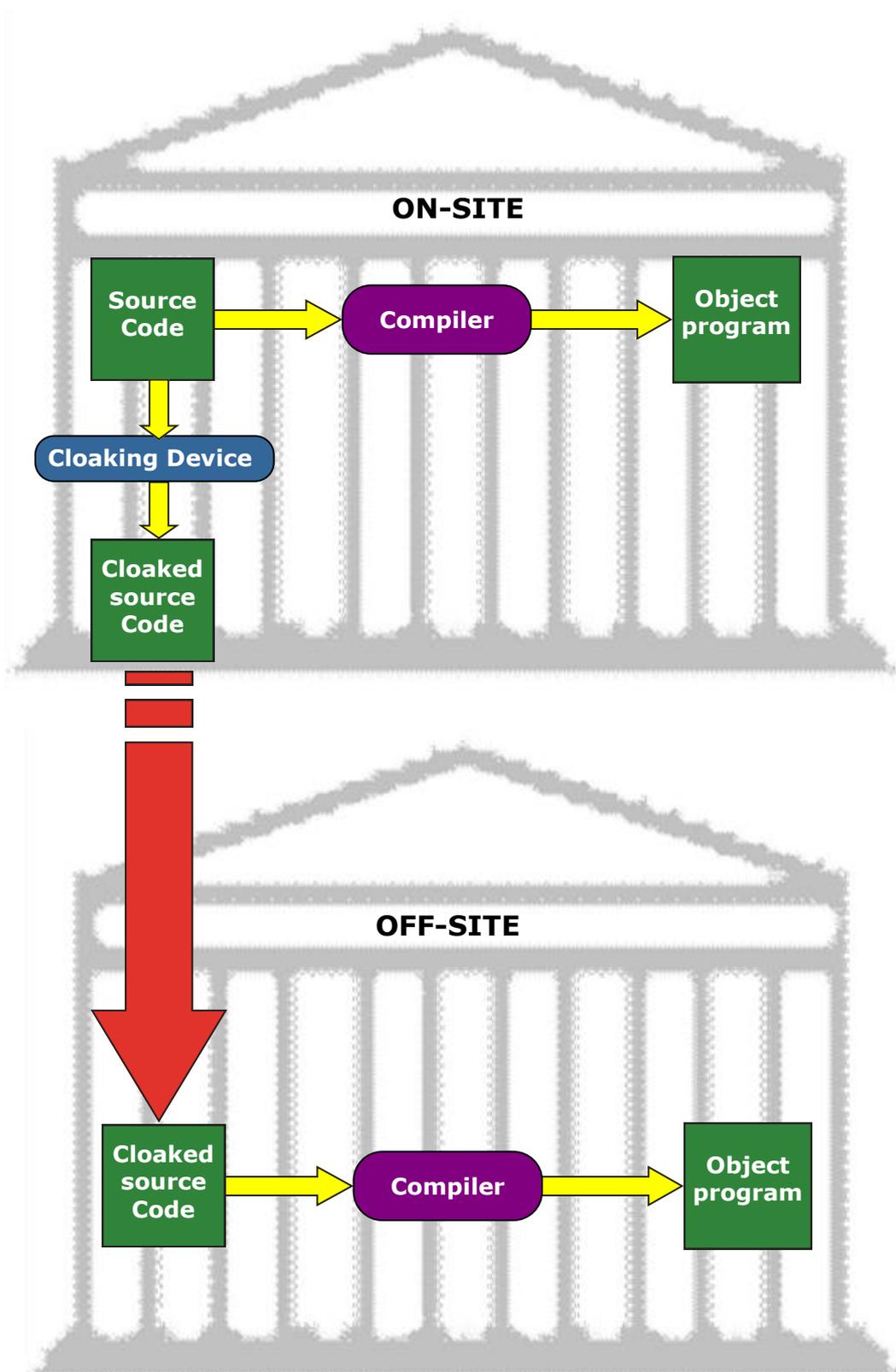
**Specific lines of code can be excluded from obfuscation.**

This facility allows certain information, such as comments or positional structure, to be retained so users of "cloaked" code can still gather enough information to use and run the program. This is particularly useful if the code is to be sold to customers.

**Resulting code is approximately 70% smaller than the input.**

A byproduct of the removal of positional structure is that the number of lines of code is greatly reduced. This makes "cloaked" code ideal for the cloud or off-site backup.

## How Obfuscators are used on and off Site



## Making a Profit from your Applications

If your IT department has developed COBOL applications that could be useful to other companies, the **Redvers Cloaking Device** can be used to turn your computer systems into profit making opportunities rather than being seen as just another cost centre.

Selling software in source code form is much simpler than selling object code because once the code is compiled on the customer's system it's immediately compatible with all

their other COBOL applications. Source code distribution also removes the need to support an endless list of hardware and operating system platforms.

For many years Redvers Consulting have used the **Redvers Cloaking Device** to market software products written in COBOL, to customers all over the world. In fact, even the **Redvers Cloaking Device** has been "cloaked" using its own logic.

## Users of Cloaked Source Code

**Affiliated Computer Services (USA)**

**Agora (FR)**

**Bank One / JP Morgan (USA)**

**Canada Life Assurance (UK)**

**CUNA Mutual Life Insurance (USA)**

**EduLinux (Canada)**

**Enterprise Spa (IT)**

**FirstBank (USA)**

**Fiserv (USA)**

**Oppenheimer (USA)**

**Metavante (USA)**

**Sasktel (Canada)**

**SEB (DE)**

**Standard Life Assurance (UK)**

**Suncorp (AUS)**

**Teleflora (USA)**

**WorldCom / MCI (USA)**

**Zurich Insurance (UK & SUI)**

## The Product Package

A perpetual license for the **Redvers Cloaking Device** is available from Redvers Consulting.

### All licenses include:

- Product source code ("cloaked")
- User Guide
- Corporate level software license
- Two year warranty
- Product upgrades and support via email\*

\* Free for the first year followed by a minimal annual fee.

### Additional options:

- 24 x 7 telephone hotline support

Software and documents are shipped in the form of email attachments unless otherwise requested. Installation is performed by copying the source code text into your COBOL source code library and compiling.

Full pricing details can be found at: [https://www.redversconsulting.com/cloaking\\_device\\_pricing.php](https://www.redversconsulting.com/cloaking_device_pricing.php)

## About Redvers Consulting

**Redvers Consulting provide niche software products for the integration, modernization and security of COBOL applications. Our clients are primarily large financial institutions in Europe and North America, although we also have customers in many other business and geographical areas.**

Our ability to deliver software in COBOL source code form, gives customers reliable, efficient and perfectly integrated solutions to business needs. Source code distribution also means our software will run on all hardware platforms and operating systems: *EBCDIC, ASCII, big endian or little endian*.

Redvers Consulting have received many business awards over the years, including winning the **Best use of Technology** category in the Thames Gateway Business Awards. We are also business partners with **IBM, Micro Focus** and **Fujitsu**.

### Our client list includes:

Agora (FR)  
ANZ (AUS)  
BAE Systems (USA)  
Canada Life Assurance (UK)  
Deutsche Bank (USA)  
Deutsche Rentenversicherung Bund (DE)  
FirstBank (USA)  
Fiserv (USA)  
GMAC Insurance (USA)  
Hanesbrands (USA)  
John Deere (USA)  
LBS / Finanz Informatik (DE)  
J P Morgan (USA)  
Oppenheimer (USA)  
Pacific Gas (USA)  
Network Rail (UK)  
R+V Allgemeine Versicherung (DE)  
Sasktel (CAN)  
SEB (DE)  
Standard Life Assurance (UK)  
Suncorp (AUS)  
SunGard / FIS (USA)  
WorkSafeBC (CAN)  
Zurich Insurance (UK & CHE)

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