

**WebSphere** software

## IDT chooses WebSphere software to expand reach in financial market.

### Overview

#### ■ Application

Provide financial advisors with an effective and efficient way to access managed investment information and upload transaction records

#### ■ Solution

A platform-independent, Java™ technology-based information exchange system for Investment Architect, a key IDT software product

#### ■ Business Benefits

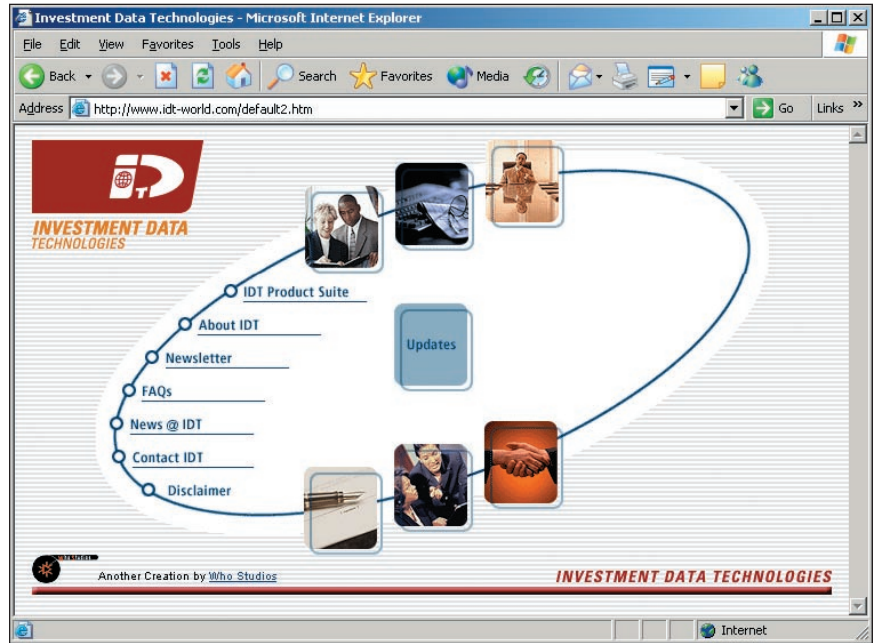
For advisors and their head offices: more reliable, convenient, secure and less costly information exchange  
For IDT: easier expansion of business geographically and to larger customers

#### ■ Software

IBM WebSphere® Application Server, Advanced Edition, Version 3.5; IBM WebSphere Studio Application Developer (formerly IBM VisualAge® for Java)

#### ■ Services

IBM Global Services—Business Innovation Services



IDT applies its combined experience in financial planning and software development to deliver business-enhancing solutions to its customers.

After the accounting debacle surrounding several major U.S. companies, investors worldwide have even more reason to take a good look at the source of their financial advice. But in Australia, financial advisors who work with Investment Data Technologies (IDT) can confidently reassure their clients. Brisbane-based IDT, a provider of software systems and managed-investment data, is one of only three companies in Australia that obtain managed-funds data directly from fund managers. Having built a reputation for product and service excellence,

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*—Stephen Wöckner, Executive Manager, Information Technologies, Investment Data Technologies*

## ***e-business—accelerating the pace of business and the pace of change***

IDT has earned the trust—and the business—of the country's top banks, insurance companies, financial advisor groups and fund managers.

A key offering in IDT's software portfolio is Investment Architect, a suite of data capture, planning, analysis and reporting tools for financial advisors and the financial services firms with which they are affiliated. To serve its purpose effectively, Investment Architect relies on a regular influx of current data on securities and managed funds as well as daily stock market indices. "Our business is based on getting this information to advisors on a regular basis," explains Norm Bulmer, manager of strategy and design at IDT.

Until recently, the only way IDT provided daily updates was through its bulletin board service (BBS), which advisors accessed through a modem connection. But the updates were scheduled for a specific 15-minute window. Advisors could not get updates at other times of the day.



*Financial advisors look to IDT for raw, quantitative managed fund data, such as unit prices, fund sizes and asset allocations.*

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*—Norm Bulmer, Manager of Strategy and Design, Investment Data Technologies*

What's more, security provisions such as 128-bit Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption—considered basic in today's Internet environment and essential in the financial services industry—were not possible to implement over the non-Internet-based BBS.

### **Dissolving barriers to market penetration**

“We had originally developed our software in [Microsoft] Visual Basic,” explains Steve Wockner, IDT's executive manager of information technologies. “So we thought we would just develop an Internet version of our BBS on the Microsoft platform. But when we spoke to some of our larger customers, we found that they preferred larger-scale platforms such as UNIX®. It seemed our e-business expansion would be limited to smaller financial service firms, until we learned about WebSphere software from IBM. With help from IBM Global Services, we discovered that if we developed a Java server solution using IBM WebSphere Application Server, it could run on our customers' UNIX servers and still integrate with the Microsoft client software we were developing.”

Working with IBM Global Services— Business Innovation Services, IDT used IBM WebSphere Studio Application Developer (formerly IBM VisualAge for Java) to develop a secure, Java technology-based data exchange mechanism for Investment Architect. Deployed on IBM WebSphere Application Server, Advanced Edition, Version 3.5, the data exchange solution allows financial advisors to get their updates from their firm's head office over an Internet connection, eliminating the cost of the dial-up calls to IDT's BBS. A major Australian bank is the first user of the Internet version of Investment Architect, and the company expects other customers to follow suit.

"With WebSphere software from IBM," says Bulmer, "we have created a platform-independent, distributed data delivery service that will be attractive to financial services firms of any size, no matter where they or their advisors reside."



*Investment Architect is a Microsoft® Windows®-based client application that runs on financial advisors' desktops or laptops.*

#### **Platform and database flexibility**

Currently, Investment Architect relies on the financial services firms with which advisors are affiliated to act as information gateways, or "master sites," as IDT calls them. Instead of communicating directly with IDT, advisors obtain the data they need from a server at their master site. They also upload transaction records to the master site server, where they are stored in accordance with Australian securities regulations. The master sites manage the data distribution policies and retrieve from IDT the information that their advisors need.

As advisors use Investment Architect on their PCs during the day, the Data Transfer module within the application places in a local database all the transaction files to be uploaded to the master site server. At night, a Java communications client automatically retrieves the transaction files from the database, protects them with 128-bit SSL encryption and sends them to the master site server over the Internet. The Java client also receives new financial information and stores it in another local database.

WebSphere Application Server, residing on the master site server, receives the incoming transaction logs and stores them in a relational database. To accommodate its customers' different database preferences, IDT leveraged the standard Java Database Connectivity (JDBC) support in WebSphere Application Server and configured the BBS server to interface with IBM DB2® Universal Database™, Oracle or Microsoft SQL Server databases.

The ability of WebSphere Application Server to run on multiple platforms was also important to IDT, which wants to maximize its scope of opportunity with financial services firms. "The smaller firms may have a dedicated [Microsoft®] Windows® server, while the larger ones may prefer mainframe or UNIX platforms," Wockner says. "Our software architecture, based on WebSphere Application Server, is the same in all cases, which enhances our return on investment."

### **Open to the Internet but still in control**

In addition to uploading transactions from the advisors, WebSphere Application Server uses Java servlets to match the advisors' identification with the list of data they are to receive. The application server then triggers additional servlets to retrieve the appropriate data and relay it to the Java client.

IDT and IBM Global Services used WebSphere Studio Application Developer to create the Java servlets. "WebSphere Studio Application Developer enabled us to develop the code in the Microsoft environment here in our head office in Brisbane, and then transport the Java runtime version of the code over the Internet to a customer's UNIX environment in Sydney, where they performed their acceptance testing," Wockner explains. "The WebSphere Studio Application Developer environment allowed us to retain ownership of the intellectual property within the runtime code."

Now that IDT can rest assured that both its customers' data and its own application code are safe, the software provider's path to market expansion is a little smoother. "Although our core market remains Australia," Bulmer says, "the new WebSphere software solution will make it easier to grow our client base in New Zealand and other offshore markets in the near future."

### **For more information**

Please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner.

Visit us at: [ibm.com/websphere](http://ibm.com/websphere)

For more information about Investment Data Technologies, visit: [www.idt-world.com](http://www.idt-world.com).



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08-02  
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