

Tradex strengthens its business with an iTera solution from IBM and Northdoor



Overview

■ The Challenge

Protect the business from unexpected system outages with immediate and full recovery; maintain low cost of ownership and low maintenance overheads

■ The Solution

Working with IBM Business Partner Northdoor, Tradex implemented a second IBM System i5 platform and selected Echo² software from iTera to create a complete duplicate of the production environment in real time

■ The Benefits

Up-to-the-second replication of production systems to backup server offers immediate business recovery, helping to minimise costs and reducing the impact on customers; low cost of acquisition and rapid implementation for Echo² software with simple management requirements

Founded in 1995, Tradex (www.tradexinsurance.co.uk) specialises in insurance for businesses in all sectors of the automotive trade. From its headquarters in London and six further offices across the UK, Tradex provides tailored insurance for motor dealers, trade services, taxi firms, logistics companies and private individuals.

Many of Tradex's customers – in particular, taxi drivers – are covered on a month-by-month basis for varying amounts of risk. The volume of contract renewals puts a significant strain on the company's Harlosh insurance application, and makes it particularly important to provide high levels of reliability and availability. To minimise the impact of unplanned downtime, Tradex reviewed several software-based high-availability solutions, and selected Echo² from iTera.

"We wanted to have up-to-the second updates of our production system replicated to a second data centre," explains Amar Khan, IT Support Manager at Tradex. "The Harlosh application is critical for our business, so we needed to ensure that there would be no loss of data in the event of a disaster at our main site. The iTera Echo² solution had all the functionality we needed, at a very competitive price."

Rapid deployment

Tradex worked with IBM Business Partner Northdoor to select and implement its new high-availability solution, and to supply a second IBM System i5 platform to act as the backup and disaster-recovery server. Northdoor ran the evaluation process, helping Tradex to review the available options and to determine the best one for its needs.

The Echo² solution from iTera uses the Remote Journaling functionality built into IBM i5/OS, rather than a custom-built transport mechanism for data. This simplified the development of the software, a fact reflected in its relatively low price and high speed of installation.

“The deployment of Echo² was very straightforward – we completed it in just two days,” says Amar Khan. “Northdoor’s experience during this phase was invaluable, helping us to set up the system correctly and at very low cost. Since going live four months ago, we have spent almost no time on maintenance – the solution has simply worked perfectly. The ongoing support from Northdoor is first-class, helping us continue to provide an excellent service for the business.”

Tradex has two IBM System x servers attached to each of its IBM System i5 platforms, using IBM Integrated xSeries Adapters. The company is now looking at the options for mirroring these, to create a full disaster recovery solution.

Simple, effective protection

The Echo² solution replicates applications, data areas, data queues, user profiles, device configurations, spool files, triggers, constraints, message queues, and more – in real time. Journal components are automatically monitored and recreated when needed, and the software’s

“We have a great deal of trust in the System i5 platform, and we have never had any reliability issues.”

Amar Khan, IT Support Manager
Tradex

self-managing functionality enables smooth switchovers with minimal effort from administrators.

Echo² employs exclusive CACHE² (Concurrent Audit Concurrent Heal Echo²) technology, which can automatically discover out of sync objects and ‘heal’ them at the record level. This can eliminate the need to resynchronize entire objects when an out-of-synchronization condition is detected, which significantly speeds the correction of data integrity problems and reduces bandwidth traffic between mirrored environments.

Says Amar Khan, “The Echo² software is efficient, reliable and very easy-to-use – it has given us real peace of mind that our business-critical data on the System i5 platform is well protected.”

Insurance against failure

The combination of IBM System i5 technology and iTera Echo² software has given Tradex excellent protection for its Harlosh InsuranceFaces application. This handles quotations, underwriting, claims management and all associated administration, making it a key part of the Tradex business.

“We have a great deal of trust in the System i5 platform, and we have never had any reliability issues,” says Amar Khan. “Working with Northdoor to implement Echo² and the second System i5 solution has strengthened our confidence and provided a true high-availability environment at low cost.”



IBM United Kingdom Limited

PO Box 41
North Harbour
Portsmouth
Hampshire
PO6 3AU

The IBM home page can be found at **ibm.com**

IBM, the IBM logo, System i, System i5, i5/OS and System x are trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation in the United States, other countries, or both.

Other company, product or service names may be trademarks, or service marks of others.

Echo² is a product of iTera and is licensed solely under iTera’s licence terms and conditions. IBM and iTera are separate companies and each is responsible for its own products. Neither IBM nor iTera makes any warranties, express or implied, concerning the other’s products.

References in this publication to IBM products, programs or services do not imply that IBM intends to make these available in all countries in which IBM operates. Any reference to an IBM product, program or service is not intended to imply that only IBM’s product, program or service may be used. Any functionally equivalent product, program or service may be used instead.

All customer examples cited represent how some customers have used IBM products and the results they may have achieved. Actual environmental costs and performance characteristics will vary depending on individual customer configurations and conditions.

IBM hardware products are manufactured from new parts, or new and used parts. In some cases, the hardware product may not be new and may have been previously installed. Regardless, IBM warranty terms apply.

This publication is for general guidance only.

Photographs may show design models.

© Copyright IBM Corp. 2006 All Rights Reserved.