Winterflood
SECURITIES

CASE STUDY

Winterflood Securities Limited
With IP Trade, Europe's leading market maker quickly meets changing market conditions. Flexible, virtualised architecture reduces reconfiguration times from days to only minutes.

Its turret system at end of life and plagued by high costs, low agility, bottlenecks, and possible outages, Winterflood turned to IP Trade. Virtualised applications integrate seamlessly with Cisco Call Manager to increase resilience, efficiency and customer service levels. Performance has improved while costs have fallen. With IP Trade, Winterflood can quickly react to ever-changing markets, leveraging new opportunities while reducing risk.

"IP Trade easily adapts and scales to meet changing market conditions. It increases backend efficiency, allowing us to quickly meet the needs of our traders."

Ed Gumuskaya
Senior Network & Infrastructure Engineer

IP Trade™

THE TRADING FLOOR

Winterflood's traders rely on flexible turret systems for complex communications. Client buy and sell orders, team collaboration, and transaction implementation are all accelerated with the IP Trade turret solution. IP Trade agility empowers Winterflood to match turret requirements to ever-changing market conditions, reaping profitable opportunities while reducing risk for clients and stakeholders.

IP TRADE SOLUTIONS

- T3203/10 /30 and T3M Turrets
- Turret Proxy Open Line (TPO) virtualised turret system controller
- Turret Support Server (TSS) web-based management and database application
- Cisco Call Manager PBX
- Voice Recording
- VMware

KEY BENEFITS

- **AGILE** – reduces reconfiguration times from days to minutes
- **FLEXIBLE** – quickly meets ever-changing market conditions
- **EFFICIENT** – for effective team collaboration
- **COST EFFECTIVE** – virtualised solution minimises OpEx and maximises availability
- **CUSTOMISED TURRETS** – drives trader performance
- **MEETS COMPLIANCE** – with integrated, fully protected, Voice Recording functionality
- **FUTURE-PROOFED** – for high ROI
- **FULLY INTEGRATED** – with Cisco Call Manager and VMware
- **MINIMISE OUTAGES** – eliminates possible bottlenecks while supporting DR

BACKGROUND

Winterflood Securities Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Close Brothers Group plc, is Europe's leading market maker. Headquartered in London and founded in 1988 its traders, analysts, and support personnel work to make two-way prices even in adverse market conditions to retail brokers and institutional clients.

Focusing on AIM and small cap markets, but with a substantial reach into the FTSE 350, Winterflood competes by offering best price, superb service levels, and expeditious trades. The company deploys leading technologies to quickly adapt to ever-changing market conditions, maximising opportunities and profitability while minimising risk.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Winterflood relies on communications systems to carry out complex trading workflows. However, the company's legacy turret system wasn't up to the task. Coming to end of life, the old system lacked flexibility. Reconfiguring to meet new opportunities and challenges took days. And the system did not easily integrate with Cisco Call Manager, the company's PBX system.

Additionally, the legacy turret system used cumbersome physical server infrastructure. Three racks of hardware were expensive to power, cool and maintain, and did not support virtualised environments. These contributed to high operating costs (OpEx), management inefficiency, and bottlenecks that could lead to outages. These factors also complicated the backup and DR requirements.

"Agility is key to our performance but with the old system if we wanted to do something as simple as move a trader to another desk, we might have to wait days for an engineer to reconfigure backend hardware," explains Ed Gumuskaya, Winterflood Senior Network & Infrastructure Engineer. *"In the meantime, the market would move on and we could miss opportunities."*

THE SOLUTION

To meet its challenges, Winterflood decided to replace its ageing turret system. Following bids from five turret providers, as well as in-house demonstrations and feedback from its traders, Winterflood chose IP Trade.

"We chose IP Trade due to its flexibility, its ability to customise the turret to meet traders' workflows and priorities, and its economical capital cost and low OpEx," says Wayne Davies, Winterflood Head of Networks & Infrastructure. *"Importantly, IP Trade could operate in a virtual environment and used Cisco Call Manager as its switchboard. While others could integrate with Call Manager, IP Trade was the only option that had the Cisco PBX at the heart of its solution."*

Winterflood, with the support of a local IP Trade Approved Partner, deployed a fully-unified, virtualized IP Trade communications solution. Today, 120 Winterflood staff including traders, analysts, back office, and IT personnel rely on IP Trade T3210 Turrets for voice and Intercom communications. aTurret Proxy Open Line (TPO) turret system controller together with the Turret Support Server (TSS) web-based management and database application have been fully virtualised and are managed by VMware operating within advanced data storage infrastructure. Full Cisco Call Manager integration has been achieved as part of the deployment. Integrated voice recording provides full histories to meet compliance and track client communications.

Winterflood has also established a comprehensive backup and Disaster Recovery capability. A few years ago, the company refreshed its original IP Trade turret system by deploying IP Trade T320X series. Older turrets were re-assigned to support DR capabilities. Today, 100+ IP Trade Turrets, supported by associated IP Trade applications, are housed in a separate DR office for immediate use when required.

VIRTUALISED FLEXIBILITY MEETS CHANGING MARKET CONDITIONS

Because IP Trade uses virtualised applications rather than physical servers, Winterflood no longer relies on expensive third parties to make system changes. Instead, in-house Networks & Infrastructure staff can reconfigure the system to meet new requirements in only minutes.

"When the market changes we must respond instantly," says Gumuskaya." IP Trade provides us with the flexibility we need to meet unexpected events." To illustrate this point, he cites a recent market crisis. Winterflood had to quickly re-allocate 10 turrets to manage higher call volumes with more traders. *"With our old system that change would have taken up to a week and at a considerable expense,"* he says. *"With IP Trade, the change took only minutes and we did it ourselves."*

Virtualisation also delivers many other benefits. Since deploying IP Trade, three racks of physical servers were retired to minimise OpEx and maintenance costs. Seamless Cisco Call Manager integration reduces bottlenecks and possible outages. Backup and disaster recovery initiatives ensure high availability even in the event of major disruptions. And due to ongoing IP Trade application development programmes, the Winterflood investment has been future-proofed.

"IP Trade easily adapts and scales to meet changing market conditions," Gumuskaya explains. *"It increases backend efficiency, allowing us to quickly meet the needs of our traders."*

EMPOWERING TRADERS WITH INCREASED EFFICIENCY

Winterflood's traders and staff benefit from the effective design of IP Trade turrets, driving efficiency and performance. Turrets can be easily customised to meet traders' workflows. In-built directories allow staff to determine caller identification and prioritize incoming calls. Easy-to-use touch screen interfaces, the ability to support peripheral devices including handsets, microphones, and headsets, and audio/visual multi-media streaming, increase user productivity. Integrated voice recording of incoming, outgoing, and Intercom calls are protected by backup routines, enabling Winterflood to fully meet compliance while providing traders and managers with comprehensive records to ensure accuracy.

Davies points out that *"the ability to fully customise the front end of IP Trade turrets is vital to its successful use by our traders. With the old system, traders were stuck with a small fixed display and hard buttons. With IP Trade, they can have almost anything they want."*

A FUTURE OF SUCCESS

Winterflood continuing success is propelled by its ability to deliver service excellence. Today, it does so in part due to the efficiency and lower costs derived from IP Trade unified communication systems. And while most maintenance and administration issues are resolved by Winterflood staff, an authorised IP Trade partner provides ongoing support.

"Winterflood's success is due to the good name and reputation that we have established in the marketplace," Davies says. *"For that reason, we adopt new tools only when they can help us to better serve our customers."*

"IP Trade helps us to increase efficiency and service levels. It helps us to reduce costs. It empowers us with the flexibility and competitive advantage we need to quickly meet changing market conditions and effectively serve our customers. That's why we recommend IP Trade so strongly. We succeed in part because of them. And I hope that IP Trade succeeds in part because of us."

IP TRADE NETWORKS LIMITED