



COMPANY PROFILE

- Established in 1832 as The Friends' Provident Institution
- Listed on the London Stock Exchange since 2001
- Profits before taxation in 2005 of £600 million (\$1.116 billion)
- Assets under management of £131 billion (\$243 billion)

BUSINESS SECTOR

- Banking and Insurance

LOCATION

- Corporate HQ in London, UK

CUSTOMER CHALLENGE

- Maximize service availability
- Expedite implementation of new systems and application code
- Empower junior technicians

SOLUTION

- ZEN TRACE & SOLVE - EXIGENCE

KEY BENEFITS

- Ease of use
- Ability to minimize production outages
- Access to developers when discussing enhancements

"The single most important benefit of EXIGENCE is its ease of use. All other benefits flow from that."

"EXIGENCE is considerably more efficient than traditional tracing methods. I would estimate that analysing a trace is 5 to 10 times faster with EXIGENCE."

"Traces are no longer invoked as a last resort but can now be used routinely."

"EXIGENCE has proved itself to be an excellent investment for Friends Provident."

Andy Rafferty
Senior Technical Consultant
Friends Provident



CASE STUDY



TRACE & SOLVE
EXIGENCE

FRIENDS PROVIDENT

Friends Provident Assured by ZEN TRACE & SOLVE - EXIGENCE

Friends Provident is a prominent UK financial services group and one of the 100 leading companies quoted on the London Stock Exchange

Its corporate headquarters are located in Wood Street, Central London, with IT, administrative and customer service hubs in four separate UK locations. Friends Provident's humble beginnings date back to 1832 when it was established in Bradford, Yorkshire by visionary and forward-thinking Quakers to provide life assurance for their members. Today, Friends Provident is a multi-billion dollar organization based around three core businesses:

- The UK Life and Pensions business markets a comprehensive range of life protection, pensions and investment products for individual customers and corporate clients throughout the UK
- The International Life and Pensions business operates throughout Europe, Asia and the Middle East and incorporates the Luxemburg based company Lombard International which specializes in providing life assurance based estate planning solutions
- The Asset Management business - F&C Asset management plc - manages funds of some £131 billion (\$243 billion) and markets a wide range of investment products both to personal and institutional customers

To support the business, Friends Provident operates and manages networked mainframe z-Series servers, midrange i-Series servers and a host of Windows servers, UNIX web servers and UNIX Tier-1 and Tier-2 application servers. With in excess of 5000 employees to support as well as countless other third party business users such as banks, building societies and Independent Financial Advisors, the ability to maximize service availability is critical.

The Friends Provident Challenge

Andy Rafferty, Senior Technical Consultant at the Friends Provident Dorking installation, explains. "Typically, established application and systems code tends to work without any problem as long as the environment remains stable. However, service availability is immediately vulnerable the moment changes are introduced and, in our business, that is unacceptable. We need to ensure that we are equipped to respond instantly to service interruptions to minimize and, ideally, eliminate outages."

This was of particular importance when Friends Provident began the implementation of an IP network. At the time, the Friends Provident network was predominantly SNA based. However, the move to IP brought a new set of challenges.

Andy Rafferty explains, "Our installed SNA trace facilities were far from perfect but were usable. However, running an IP packet trace was quite a complex process. It was error prone, in terms of capturing the correct data and was also time consuming when performing both trace capture and, more importantly, trace analysis. We needed to find a tool that would enable us to trace problems without these complexities."

The Friends Provident Solution

Friends Provident readily embraces technology to enhance business performance. In fact, one of the company's six key business strategy tenets is "Apply technology to improve service, enhance distribution and reduce costs". So, when Rafferty was introduced to EXIGENCE at a GSE (Guide Share Europe) user group meeting, he decided to look more closely at what was on offer. "If we could confirm what other users claimed about the capabilities of EXIGENCE," Rafferty continued, "then it was clear that it had the potential to play a very important role within Friends Provident. EXIGENCE promised significant savings in terms of both trace capture and analysis with associated benefits in application and system availability." And they were not disappointed.

Why EXIGENCE?

Andy Rafferty explains:

"The single most important benefit of EXIGENCE is its ease of use. All other benefits flow from that. EXIGENCE is considerably more efficient than traditional tracing methods. **I would estimate that analysing a trace is 5 to 10 times faster with EXIGENCE** and, in situations where a problem can result in high cost resources lying idle until it is fixed, savings can be significant. Whether we are attempting to implement new systems or running an off-site disaster recovery test, EXIGENCE has a key role to play in ensuring our responsiveness."

But there are additional benefits which Rafferty is also keen to point out. "Because of its ease of use and efficiency, EXIGENCE is also an excellent educational tool. Traces are no longer invoked as a last resort but can now be used routinely to evaluate problems of a less critical nature. This has helped accelerate the skills-sets and responsiveness of our networking personnel as well as the process of systems maintenance and development."

Rafferty concludes, "Despite the fact that EXIGENCE is only used directly by a small team of technicians, its benefits are felt throughout the organization. EXIGENCE has proved itself to be an excellent investment for Friends Provident. "



ZEN TRACE & SOLVE - EXIGENCE

Maximize Application and Network Availability.

Diagnose and Fix Issues Faster.

WILLIAM
DATA SYSTEMS

William Data Systems (WDS) is a pioneer of specialized z/OS network management solutions. Established in 1993, we are an independent global organization that provides innovative solutions to run mainframe networks efficiently and securely. ZEN, the WDS network management suite, offers a selection of user-friendly and cost-effective solutions to meet your unique needs. To overcome both business and technology challenges, WDS provides customers with licensing and pricing terms that are as flexible as our solutions.

WDS supports customers worldwide in sectors such as finance, banking and manufacturing, and our client list includes Fortune 100 companies and government agencies. WDS is an IBM Business Partner and a member of the IBM PartnerWorld for Developers program. We are committed to the global z/OS networking market and to leading the way with innovative solutions through the latest advances.

To learn more about
WDS ZEN solutions,
for support or to contact
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www.willdata.com

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