

# ZXTM converges web architectures for the *ifs*

SERVE



MANAGE



SOLVE



The screenshot shows the 'ifs institute of financial services' website. It features a navigation bar with 'ifs home', 'Site map', and 'Contact us'. A search bar is present with the text 'All areas of the ifs website'. The main content area includes a 'News' section with a headline 'Financial Innovation Awards 2004 Calling for nominations' and a sub-headline 'The results from the April 2004 UMIST examinations will be available on my iflearning from the afternoon of Monday 5 July 2004'. There are also sections for 'The Institute', 'The Faculties', and 'Financial World Magazine'. A 'my iflearning' section is highlighted with a note: 'This area has restricted access and replaces the Student Network, Banking and Finance Faculty and IFSR members areas.' At the bottom, there are three boxes: 'Age 14 - 19 Financial Studies', 'Awarding Body', and 'Banking and Finance Faculty'.

was achieved using a round-robin distribution of the traffic. There was no provision for the support of SSL. The student and membership portal, and the public web site were housed on different servers, with different architectures.

Following a technical review of their web infrastructure, the *ifs* decided to source and implement a more effective load balancing solution. Also, as they were at the point of introducing SSL for the secure transfer of personal data associated with the provision of on-line services, there was an imminent need for SSL-capable application traffic management.

## The Solution

ZXTM was deployed in a resilient cluster to accelerate and manage traffic to the various web server architectures which the *ifs* supports. In addition, ZXTM's native SSL support and intuitive user interface enabled the *ifs* to provide their customers with secure, encrypted access to their application resources with only a few clicks.

Future enhancements to the deployed infrastructure will involve using ZXTM to implement a full fail-over solution between the *ifs*' two sites, and to allow secure, remote access to email.

## The Results

ZXTM enabled the *ifs* to converge their separate web architectures into a single, more easily managed and monitored service. This means that the *ifs* is able maintain and extend their application services without affecting the day-to-day operation of their site.

## Institute of Financial Services at a glance

The Institute of Financial Services (*ifs*), through its parent body the Chartered Institute of Bankers (CIB), is one of the leading bodies for the provision of education and life-long career support services to the financial services industry. Through a process of innovation and a desire to provide 'winning' solutions, the *ifs* provides a range of products and services that meet the needs of the wider financial services community.

The Institute of Financial Services' (*ifs*) vision is to be a School of Finance recognised throughout the UK and in key markets overseas for the excellence and relevance of its range of provision. To support that vision, the *ifs* provides a secure student and membership portal that gives their students access to their study materials, student records and on-line services. Students and members will be able to register on-line for modules within their programme of learning and update their personal details as held on the *ifs*' central administration database.

## The Challenge

Prior to deploying Zeus Extensible Traffic Manager (ZXTM), the load balancing of the *ifs*' web infrastructure



www.zeus.com



**“As a software solution, ZXTM provides the most cost-effective way of upgrading our existing solution whilst allowing us to provision for future growth.”**

Dot Carrier, IT Director, The Institute of Financial Services

By using ZXTM's advanced load balancing capabilities, the *ifs* was able to make significantly better use of their web serving capacity than they had previously been able to with simple round-robin request distribution. Through its unique perceptive load balancing algorithms, ZXTM ensures that requests are always sent to the most responsive Apache server, and by actively monitoring application health, it prevents any one server becoming overloaded.

ZXTM was deployed as a software solution for the *ifs*. Its hardware independence gave them the ability to upgrade easily and in the most cost-effective way in order to take advantage of the most high-performance server hardware available, not just for the servers behind ZXTM, but for ZXTM itself.

#### Solution Components

##### Application Integration

Through a combination of its unlimited content inspection depth and its powerful and intuitive TrafficScript™ routing language, ZXTM can manage traffic to and between any network-facing applications. This enables a wider variety of vendors' applications to be integrated together more tightly than had previously been possible.

##### Hardware Independence

As a software solution, ZXTM lets Moore's Law work to your advantage. Advances in processor speed, and other enhancements such as 64-bit processing can be used as soon as they become available simply by transferring the lifetime software licence of ZXTM to the new hardware platform.

##### Intuitive User Interface

With its secure, browser-based interface, ZXTM offers superior ease of use, more flexible configurations, wizards and extensible monitoring tools. ZXTM is able to monitor and understand the behaviour of both back-end servers and applications as well as other ZXTMs, making your entire system easier to manage.

##### Trying ZXTM For Yourself

ZXTM is the next generation in high-availability, application-centric traffic management and load balancing, providing unparalleled control, intelligence, security and resilience for all your application traffic.

To find out how ZXTM will enhance the performance, scalability and ease of management of your applications, try it out for yourself.

Download your **free** 30-day evaluation copy of ZXTM from:

<http://www.zeus.com/go/ifs/download>

##### Zeus at a glance:

Zeus Technology has a well-earned reputation for providing robust, secure and scalable traffic management solutions to organisations in a wide range of sectors including, media and content providers, telecoms and hosting providers, finance, education, government and online retailers.

Using the experience gained from our relationships with organisations as diverse as the Federal Railroads Administration, NEC, British Telecom, Play.com, Telewest, Thus Plc., TD Waterhouse, Telecom Italia Mobile, Ciao.com and eXpansys, Zeus is in a unique position to assist any business looking to enhance their mission-critical Internet service infrastructure. For more information visit our web site at <http://www.zeus.com/>

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