



## At A Glance:

### ❖ Company:

- A Major Online Retail Brokerage

### ❖ Business Challenges:

- Customer Dissatisfaction
- Competitive Disadvantage
- Insufficient Functionality

### ❖ Results with TACT:

- Reliable and Scalable
- 300 Transactions per Second
- Delivered on Time, on Budget

*“Using proven methodologies and leading technology experts, TACT led this online retail brokerage through the DEFINE, DESIGN and DELIVER phases providing their technology platform with the needed systems components. This project was wildly successful, with the requisite functionality provided on time and well under budget.”*

### **Real-Time Online Brokerage System – Phase I Custom Application Development Success Story (2004)**

#### **BUSINESS CHALLENGE:**

This major online retail brokerage firm faced a severe competitive disadvantage in its online trading offering. Customer service surveys revealed a crippling point of online account management dissatisfaction because customers could not receive real-time account balance information.

Prior to engaging with TACT to draft a solution, the client was constrained by its dependency on its order management platform and batch processes:

- The information being provided to customers was constrained and dependent by the delivery of information through other systems.
- The current implementation forced the client to be totally dependent on another system to provide any real-time balance information.

The real-time online brokerage system was chartered to close the service gap by providing a competitive level of real-time account information to customers.



#### **TACT SOLUTION:**

TACT utilized its System Delivery Framework (SDF) to provide this client with the optimum combination of Quality, Duration and Cost for this delivery effort. The SDF segments an effort into three distinct phases (DEFINE, DESIGN and DELIVERY) with each phase consisting of a set of well-defined disciplines. At the core of the SDF is the Accelerated Design Approach (ADA). The ADA spans the DEFINE and DESIGN phases providing a comprehensive methodology for defining, designing and dimensioning enterprise capable distributed systems.

- The DEFINE Phase is made up of gathering analysis activities.
- The DESIGN Phase is made up of modeling and costing activities.
- The DELIVER Phase is made up of building, installing and running the application.

The ADA uses three (3) specific models (Enterprise, System and Application) to render the Conceptual (Services), Logical (Components) and Physical (Technology) perspectives of a system. As the system was required to be constructed using Java technology, the design was performed with an emphasis on optimizing and designing Java based systems.

Because TACT was asked to fully “insource” the project with all work to be performed on-site, the ADA sessions were essential and invaluable. These sessions were used to model and accurately cost the system. The resultant design, budget and schedule were quickly agreed upon and approved. The DEFINE and DESIGN phases of the ADA enabled TACT to accurately quantify and qualify the resources needed to assemble and ensure this project was a success. TACT confidently agreed to fix price the project.

#### **SOLUTION OBJECTIVE:**

TACT understood the pivotal role of certain systems within their client Customer Service vision. In support of this vision, the project objective focused on the following:

- **Cost-Effective:** The facility was to be designed and developed in such a way as to minimize the Acquisition Cost (Design, Development and Delivery) and Ongoing Cost (Maintenance and Support).
- **Flexible:** Their customer’s technical environments vary in breadth and complexity. The facility was to be designed and developed in such a way as to support additional integration and deployment configurations.

- **Extensible:** Their customer requirements varied, therefore the facility was to be designed and developed in such a way as to support additional functionality.
- **Incremental:** The overall complexity of the service suite combined with the inability to predict changing customer needs dictated that the facility was to be designed and developed to support incremental enhancements and deployments.
- **Resilient:** Though the projected demands on the facility are consistent with a moderate transaction load, the facility was to provide stable, error-free processing behavior within acceptable performance tolerances.
- **Collaborative:** TACT was to work with the IT group to form a hybrid Implementation Team of TACT and the client's resources to ensure a quality deliverable and knowledge transfer.

#### PROJECT SCOPE:

The focus was to provide real-time balances and account type sub-balances to customers on an existing system. In addition, there was a requirement to leverage the buying power logic to provide customers with an updated buying power figure intra-day.

- Utilize various client channel interfaces.
- Back-end support required the provision for Institutional and Wireless channels.
- The system was to be made available to all customers of the in-scope channels.
- The existing balance pages required maintenance for use when issues with infrastructure arose.
- A "House Call / Margin Call" notification message needed to be displayed on the balance page when an account entered a "Funds Due" scenario.
- Legal disclaimers were required on the "My Account: Balance" page of all electronic trading channels to indicate that the balances displayed may not be totally accurate.

#### RESULTS ACHIEVED:

Through the use of our System Delivery Framework (SDF), TACT successfully went into production May 2004. This "Real-Time" service has enabled this brokerage to close a significant offerings gap with its premier competitors:

- Through the implementation of TACT's SDF / ADA, the project was delivered on time and well under budget.

- By providing a highly qualified team on this initiative, the Solution Objectives were met. Now client offering is reliable and scalable and the system can handle up to 300 transactions per second.
- TACT delivered detailed documentation outlining all logical and physical components of this design and development effort. This has enabled the client to independently support and maintain the application.
- Based on the success of the system, TACT has built tremendous credibility within this firm's IT group.

### *About TACT*

TACT has built a reputation for cutting-edge IT solutions that is exemplified by its impressive Fortune 1000 customer base. TACT focuses on a business-oriented, value-added approach to its end-to-end IT Services and Business Process Outsourcing solutions. For over 20 years, TACT has enabled significant ROI gains in Business Intelligence, Custom Application Development, Strategic Sourcing, Technology Optimization, System Support and Maintenance, Business Process Outsourcing, and Call Center Services.