Banks Trial Arcontech's CityVision for Linux

25/10/2010

London, 25th October 2010. Arcontech, the real-time market data technology specialist has today announced the Linux version of its CityVision market data distribution and vendor contribution platform. The new version has completed rigorous internal tests and is currently being installed for user acceptance testing.

The latest CityVision version recognises market demand for Linux, particularly from North America and in larger investment banks where Microsoft Windows is not popular in server rooms and Solaris is not seen as a strategic operating system.

As with the Solaris version released last year, Arcontech's innovative use of its own real-time micro kernel has enabled re-use of the proven code base of the CityVision for Microsoft Windows™ and CityVision for Solaris™ versions by providing an abstraction layer from the underlying operating system. This approach reduces both the effort required and the risk of introducing programming errors, since core logic does not need to be reworked.

Interoperability between all three operating system versions has been ensured meaning that migration is simple and can be achieved without system downtime. This is due to CityVision's fully dynamic hot-standby feature, where parts of the resilient system are taken off-line and upgraded to a new operating system while the other parts continue to service the load. Once re-synchronised, the other parts are upgraded similarly.

Performance also benefits from micro-kernel software engineering. According to Andrew Miller, CEO of Arcontech, "Taking full advantage of multi-threading and multi-processing capabilities of Linux together with modern multi-core processors, we are seeing exceptional throughput and reduced latency, even in virtualised environments. This is important with the ever increasing fully-loaded cost of CPUs; CityVision users can get better performance with fewer boxes."

The Linux version of CityVision can, of course, be co-located with existing Linux systems. This can further reduce hardware requirements and the need for additional operating system skills and resource within market data service departments.

Andrew Miller added: "We're seeing strong interest in Linux deployments with several new contracts dependent on its availability. This is another example of us staying ahead of the competition in terms of features, reliability, availability and flexibility."

Arcontech announces CityVision "Self Expression" contributions rules engine

08/09/2010

Arcontech announces CityVision "Self Expression" contributions rules engine

London, 7 September 2010. Arcontech, the leading independent provider of market data contributions and real-time platform integration software, has announced "Self Expression", a significant upgrade to its CityVision market data platform, with particular benefits for MVCS, its best of breed multiple vendor contribution platform.

CityVision Self Expression is a flexible, user programmable rules engine which controls and transforms data as it passes from various sources to various destinations. It performs on-the-fly calculations in real-time, including data sanity checking and can withdraw, change or qualify data output depending on the results.

Calculations and validations are defined in a new simple-to-use windows interface, using functions, operators and syntax similar to those used in Microsoft Excel. Using Self Expression users can, for example, define rules to calculate mid prices from bid and ask, check and raise alerts for unusually large price movements compared against the price history. CityVision Self Expression can also produce different sets of tradable prices for different outputs. This is useful, for example, to produce different buy and sell prices for clients, trading partners or venues with different credit ratings or trading conditions.

Time-out rules and actions can be defined so, for example, data can be monitored to check that it updates sufficiently frequently during the normal trading day and to prevent updates out of hours

Users can assign different levels of importance to various validation failures, which are reflected by status colouring in the GUI. Integration with automated monitoring systems is supported by output to log files with user defined logging levels. Errors are also reported in real time on the status feed which is available across the CityVision platform and accessible via displays, the API and could even be published onto Thomson Reuters RMDS.

Andrew Miller, Managing Director of Arcontech commented: “The Self-Expression idea started with client requests for simple, specific calculations and validations. We soon realised that requirements differed greatly between installations and so embarked on this major development, aimed at giving end-users fine, dynamic and flexible control of data in transit.”

CityVision Self Expression is in Beta test and is scheduled for Q4 release.

Notes for Editors

About Arcontech Group Plc

Arcontech Group Plc’s (AIM: ARC) key trading subsidiary is Arcontech Limited.
Founded in 1979, Arcontech is real-time software specialist providing products and bespoke systems for collection, processing, distribution and presentation of time-sensitive financial markets data.
Arcontech is independent of any data vendor (such as Thomson Reuters or Bloomberg) and has thrived due to timely delivery of dependable, cost-effective solutions to the financial community based on its award winning CityVision product suite. Its diverse clients range from National Government, Banks and Data Vendors through to Internet Bookmakers.
Arcontech installed its first digital market data products in 1983 and has continually developed new, innovative systems and products, adopting leading edge technology, proven in the marketplace.
Arcontech has experience of a wide range of technical concepts and applications and the ability to combine the best from each. Key areas of expertise include:

- Real-time market data systems
- Multi vendor data contribution
- Contracts for difference trading and spread betting systems

- Real-time data collection and distribution
- Consulting and custom development

CityVision

CityVision supports collection, aggregation and redistribution of market data in real-time from multiple sources to multiple destinations. Sources can include exchanges, MTFs (Multi-lateral Trading Facilities in MiFID speak) and data contributions from the spreadsheets and trading systems of the pan-European investment banking community. Destinations include multiple vendor contributions, dealing desk displays, Microsoft Excel, real-time streaming web updates and on-line trading applications.

CityVision continued.
CityVision is fast, flexible, fully resilient, scalable and secure, with a full authentication and entitlements system. The system is extensible to receive instruments in any asset class, from hundreds of contributors and to provide controlled re-distribution.
CityVision can interoperate with other systems (such as Thomson Reuters RMDS and exchanges) via existing de-facto standards (such as Market link SSL and FIX) and via its own comprehensive APIs. This means it can provide cost effective solutions to add value to or replace incumbent systems.

AXE
Arcontech's AXE is a complete system for on-line and telephone based Contracts for Difference (CFD) trading and spread betting. It is a fully featured product using our award winning CityVision components, combined with proven customer, deal, order and position management software. It's fast and resilient with automatic recovery from server and/or network

failure and instant failover to contingency systems. Support for multiple currencies, different languages and graphics re-skinning mean it can be deployed quickly to suit customers' own branding without the need for costly custom building – meaning customers can get to market fast.

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Latest Arcontech DNA gives new life for real-time developers

20/05/2010

London, 20th May 2010. Arcontech, the leading independent provider of market data contributions and real-time platform integration software, has announced the latest version of its CityVision DNA (.NET API), first introduced in February 2008. DNA is an advanced interface which allows firms using the Microsoft .NET environment to greatly reduce the time and skills needed to develop sophisticated market data algorithms. It enables programmatic interaction with other services and systems connected via the CityVision real–time market data middleware.

The latest release gives developers the full advantage of enhancements in the underlying CityVision Platform to send and retrieve data in real-time from multiple sources and destinations.

An important addition is the ability to connect directly to the Thomson Reuters RMDS infrastructure using RFA (the Reuters Foundation Architecture), with automatic configuration. This effectively 'wraps' the RFA libraries with a C# interface, giving .NET developers the ability to write true real-time applications more reliably in a fraction of the time and with far fewer lines of code. Most common tasks can be achieved by using just a single line of code. Less coding means less chance of bugs and less overhead in developer hours, saving time and money.

DNA supports full multi-threading, allowing programmes to take maximum advantage of the load scaling capabilities of today's multiple processor, multi-core computers and operating systems. This is particularly significant for complex, high throughput and time-critical functions such as algorithmic trading interfaces, because it allows code simplification and provides predictable performance under continuous heavy load conditions.

Andrew Miller, Managing Director of Arcontech commented: "DNA has two modes of operation, synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous mode supports high functionality with absolutely minimal code, whereas asynchronous mode allows for truly high performance, still with relatively trivial coding, the API handling all the technical detail. DNA is generating considerable interest with clients and prospects and has already been used in a number of successful developments, including broker trading systems integration."

Arcontech Readies Excelerator Version 3 for Q2 Release

16/04/2010

London, 16 April 2010. Following significant new contracts in 2009 and the addition of advanced features in response to client feedback, Arcontech will release, this quarter, version 3 of CityVision Excelerator, its real-time market data "add-in" for Microsoft Excel™. The upgrade is designed to further improve usability, flexibility and compatibility as well as easing migration from competitive products.

The Excelerator product allows traders and analysts to bring real-time data into their spreadsheets from multiple sources, including the Reuter RMDS platform, internal data and other non fee-liable services. It also allows contribution of data from the desktop to multiple destinations, including data vendors like Thomson Reuters and Bloomberg. Implementing Excelerator in place of bundled solutions from data vendors can lead to considerable cost savings as well operational streamlining and increased performance.

Commenting on the forthcoming release, Andrew Miller, CEO of Arcontech said: "This version is inspired by extensive research, trials and constructive feedback from the many banks and brokers we are working with. The redesigned user interface provides a more intuitive look and feel for advanced users, whilst retaining the dynamic approach popular with users. We have also re-engineered the internals to use our Microsoft .net API (DNA), thereby improving performance and robustness even further and enabling us to build in much requested advanced VBA functionality."

The new VBA API makes the full power of Excelerator and DNA available from Excel macros, for both real-time publishing and subscription. Users can receive, process and contribute data programmatically, often with a single line of code, without needing to populate spreadsheet cells or set up complex links.

A further area addressed is ease of deployment, integration and conversion, particularly in a Thomson Reuter RMDS environment. The product is now self-configuring, DACS compliant and includes a utility to convert spreadsheets to CityVision formulae which has dealt flawlessly with the most complex spreadsheets presented to it.

“We are seeing that data-vendor independent solutions are increasingly in demand within institutions where choice, cost and future-proofing are important – most firms, in fact”, added Miller. “Excelerator’s ability to connect to and integrate multiple data sources, platforms and domains, means that it is ideal as part of a forward thinking market data strategy.”