

Arcontech unveils suite of real-time components for web & database developers

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London-based real-time software specialist Arcontech has announced Intercom, a new range of component products for integrating real-time market data with web and database projects.

Aimed specifically at third-party developers, integrators and the in-house development staff of market data end-user organisations, the components are currently used within Arcontech's CityVision real-time market data systems. CityVision has been well proven in large-scale operations, particularly on B2C (Business to Consumer) sites where live financial data is paramount. Current customer systems support thousands of users on trading sites.

"The products are simple to use and configure and are even suitable for use by web designers with little or no experience of handling real-time market data. However, they can be used in very advanced ways by more technical houses, reducing time to market and increasing quality," says Andrew Miller, managing director of Arcontech. "Clients increasingly expect more for less – less time, less money, but more reliability and higher price-performance ratios – and they don't want to throw hardware at the problem because it increases maintenance overhead, introduces potential failure points and does nothing to address the crucial issue of bandwidth utilisation."

Arcontech has, in the past, licensed its technology to third-party developers but generally only in situations where it was necessary to connect their systems to Arcontech's. "The components have been productised, but we have never marketed

them separately before,” says Miller. “This is a radically new business model for us because we are empowering others to produce systems, potentially in competition with us.”

The InterCom products include four main components, developed using Microsoft COM technology and aimed at the expanding base of Microsoft developers. COM makes it simple to use for developers but is not used for data transport as it is considered unsuitable for fast, efficient, asynchronous web and database interactions.

In particular they target the mass of web and SQL developers whose expertise may not extend to the intricacies of real-time market data, but who need to produce evermore sophisticated, efficient and scalable solutions for their clients.

- The Record Data Server (RDS) and Page Data Server (PDS) connect to multiple real-time sources, like Reuters' Triarch, TIB, RMDS and internal data sources and collate data for presentation on standard HTML pages, or via CityVision JClients – sophisticated Java display applets.
- Both components automatically handle dynamic bandwidth control by optimising data and maintaining session status on a per user basis. Other approaches rely on a full refresh every few seconds which rapidly consumes bandwidth and can result in poor response times.
- The SQL Pump provides a tool to stream real-time data into relatively slow databases, which would otherwise strain under the load.
- Finally, the CityVision Contributor object sits as a process inside an SQL database or IIS web server and pumps data changes and web-based contributions in real-time to any destinations supported by CityVision. These include, naturally, the RDS and PDS services and also Vendor services such as Reuters, Bloomberg and Moneyline Telerate.