

# SCOTTISH WIDOWS BOOSTS CUSTOMER SERVICE WITH IBM'S ATM TECHNOLOGY

Submitted by: Pleon

Wednesday, 17 February 1999

---

..£1 million pound investment provides employees with immediate access to paper communication with customers..

Leading financial services specialist, Scottish Widows, has invested a further £1 million in IBM's ATM technology, following a £2 million investment in December '97, at its headquarters in Port Hamilton, Edinburgh. The new network was implemented at the Client Services operation at its Dalkeith Road office, Edinburgh, in Q4 '98. By Q3 '99, over 1,000 employees will use the network to access Scottish Widows' new Image Workflow system in conjunction with its advanced Call Centre capacity and core systems, to enhance its ability to access customer documentation.

The Client Services division of Scottish Widows, which has now held its Independent Financial Advisor Five Star award for Service for three years in succession, carries out all aspects of contract administration and most contact with protection, pension and investment customers.

Ian Scott, IT Customer Services Centre Manager, states, "The new Image Workflow system will allow all paper customer communications to be scanned onto the network, which will mean instant access to electronic images of correspondence and files, where previously we had to depend on the movement of paper.

In conjunction with our call centres and mainframe systems, the new technology will allow our back office operations to provide faster access to customer records. Given the growth in Scottish Widows' business over the last two years, workflow and imaging will allow us to handle the greater volume more efficiently."

The payments department of the Client Services division, responsible for the payment of claims on pension and life policies, has over 110 staff and will be the first to utilise the new Image Workflow system in early 1999. The system will then be rolled out in stages throughout 1999 to the rest of the Client Services operation.

Scott adds, "The movement of images demands a robust, resilient and high-bandwidth network. ATM has the speed and bandwidth we required for an Image Workflow system. And, following the success of the Port Hamilton network, ATM proved to be the best technology to fit these requirements."

The project, identical to Scottish Widows's Port Hamilton site, includes thirty 8260 multiprotocol intelligent switching hubs, with one 8272 Nways Token-Ring switch installed in each hub. There are two core 8265 Nways ATM switches, along with two of IBM's award-winning 8210 Nways multiprotocol switch services (MSS) servers. The 8210 MSS server attaches to campus ATM switches (in this case the 8260) to provide a high-performance multiprotocol backbone. This maximises the effectiveness of the existing network, while positioning Scottish Widows for the demanding high-speed, low-delay applications of the future.

Scott added, "Following the successful network implementation at the Port Hamilton building, we chose to work again with IBM and its Business Partner Comparex, to supply and implement the network. Their technical expertise and support provided significant savings in terms of time and resource, and guaranteed a smooth implementation at Scottish Widows."

Adrian Kohn, Northern Regional Business Manager, IBM Networking Systems, states of the recent project, "A year ago, following the successful Port Hamilton implementation, IBM knew Scottish Widows was considering deploying high-bandwidth applications throughout the organisation. The Image Workflow applications Scottish Widows wanted to use created the need for an additional ATM network infrastructure. IBM is proud to be able to provide the technology to enhance Scottish Widows customer services well into the next millennium."

#### About Scottish Widows

Scottish Widows was founded in 1815 as Scotland's first mutual life office. Based in Edinburgh, Scottish Widows is now the UK's 5th largest provider of pensions, life and unit trust products, and employs over 2000 people. Proud of its mutual and independent status, Scottish Widows is renowned for its formidable financial strength. The company currently

provides benefits for more than a million policy holders and has funds under management of over £29 billion.

#### About IBM Networking Systems

IBM Networking Systems is a full service networking supplier, offering a complete range of equipment and services to build, operate and manage networks, regardless of size, platform or protocol. The acknowledged leader in high-speed networking, IBM has an ATM product portfolio ranging from workstation adapters to multi-gigabit capacity switches for public carrier networks. IBM Networking Systems is a business unit of IBM United Kingdom Ltd, based at New Square, Bedfont Lakes, Feltham, Middx, TW14 8HB. Tel: 0181 818 4454. Fax: 0181 818 5494.

Information on IBM Networking products can be found on the company's World Wide Web site at <http://www.networking.ibm.com>. This release and other information from IBM are available electronically on NEWSdesk, the online IT news network. If you are not currently accessing the service, it can be reached on the Internet at <http://www.newsdesk.com>, or dial-up software can be obtained by calling +44 (0)115 9 405300

#### About Comparex

Comparex Holdings is a group of Information and Communication Technology businesses which provides unrivalled solutions to its customers. Its areas of business are: networks, systems, services, security, E-commerce and technologies. The Comparex Holdings' network integration business is widely represented in every European country through: Telemation, ComTech, Nomea, Datelec and Comparex subsidiaries. Comparex's customers in the United Kingdom include major organisations in retailing, banking and finance, such as Safeway, Tesco Stores Plc, Marks & Spencer Financial Services.

In September 1998, Comparex Holdings acquired Anixter Communication & Integration (ACI), the global networking integrator and European arm of Anixter's worldwide networking division. Comparex Holdings currently employs 7000 people on a worldwide basis. Its revenues in 1997/98 were 700 million Euros.

Ref: 99/020

For more information about IBM Networking Systems, please contact:

Greg Mills /Tara Lucas (For IBM)

Tel: 01753 790700

gmills/tlucas@brodeuraplus.com

Or:

Inge Lauble

IBM Networking Systems

+49 7034 153 293

ilauble@vnet.ibm.com