

IBM AXA
As Produced Transcript

We buy now goods and services across the open Internet from providers of financial data, pricing information, goods and services investment products, and we glue it together predominantly using message-based infrastructures. People can transact with our company across the SWIFTNet Financial Services Network.

We are moving from a mainstream business to an online business and that means that we are having to do far more work in security side of things that we would ever normally have to do before.

The first problem is that we are being faced with more and more challenges and the challenges are more complicated than they ever used to be. And the second is that the response to those challenges has to be faster than it ever used to be.

Computers cannot break down a lot now. Our company loses money every single time the computer breaks down. And systems that we are putting together have so many more moving parts than they ever used to have and the technology couplings are getting closer and closer. So scale, speed and reliability and just incredible aspiration from the business about what they want to do with that software now probably is the key thing.

We will regularly do trades in excess of a million pounds through a single message exchange path.

So, about three years ago, we were producing a product which has currently £3 billion of assets under management. And this product is in two pieces.

We have a piece in Basingstoke and we have a piece in Scotland and we send messages across the open Internet. So £3 billion of messages travel backwards and forwards over that network and we had to secure them.

We handle daily 10,000 message exchange paths coming in from financial services institutions.

So we were looking around for a product that would meet our needs and the XI50 was that product. Using the XI50 means we don't have to do any worry about security at all, the box is completely configurable to our needs.

There are no messages that we send that are not secured using the XI50. So it's a piece of fundamental infrastructure to our whole network, everything we do goes through that box.

We have had a million message exchange paths, have no faults, we have no outages, we have no losses, it's brilliant.

When I look at appliances like DataPower appliance, when I look at business rules engine like ILOG rules engine or a caching server like the XC10, all of these have got support 15 miles from where I run my company. And this is a really quite an interesting observation that we have suddenly come to realize that we can go and meet the people who make these things not just people that support them, but actually right the software for them.

I never have to worry about it. I never have to worry about it working or not working, it just always works. And as a family man that's a very important thing for me, it's one less worry for me to have. And as a designer, it means that I can short circuit some of my designs and get down to the proper business which is making business software.