

JBoss MAKES BANKING EASY FOR TEAMBANK

FAST FACTS

Industry	Finance
Geography	Germany
Opportunity	Migration and automation of core business application
Solution	JBoss Application Server
Benefits	Flexible and high-performance platform; fast, standardised development; lower total cost of ownership.



BACKGROUND

Headquartered in Nürnberg, TeamBank AG is a member of the DZ Bank Group. In 2006, TeamBank achieved revenues of 4.4 billion euros, making it one of the most successful consumer credit banks in Germany. Much of the bank's growth can be attributed to easyCredit, an online credit approval application. Today, TeamBank sells easyCredit through 910 partner banks and is branching out to the rest of Europe.

OPPORTUNITY

In 2001, TeamBank (then known as norisbank) began selling easyCredit to help gain leadership in Germany's consumer loan credit market. Built on Microsoft ASP, easyCredit was a simple, web-based application allowing customers to input data. By making it easy to apply for a loan with TeamBank, easyCredit could potentially extend the bank's reach and attract new customers and new lines of business.

Over the next two years, this proved true. easyCredit became invaluable for TeamBank's business. It was clear that an upgrade to easyCredit would yield even better performance and long-term value for the bank. In specific, TeamBank wanted to transform easyCredit into an end-to-end, automated platform covering the entire credit life cycle.

SOLUTION

TeamBank needed to migrate easyCredit off Microsoft ASP for both performance and cost savings. The bank planned to dramatically scale the application without incurring additional licensing costs. The new easyCredit would need to accommodate concurrent automated credit decisions and handle up to 100,000 parallel transactions.

The technology of choice had to enable fast development, provide high global availability and quality, and also keep costs low. As such, the team leaned toward open source. The challenge was in finding an open source solution that would fit their needs. The final decision came down to JBoss Application Server.

In January 2003, TeamBank began the easyCredit migration to JBoss Application Server. Midway through the project, the bank merged with DZ Bank Group. Now the development team needed to safeguard against significant performance loss while integrating an additional 785 financial institutions representing 11,200 agencies and over 31,000 registered users.

Working with these partners, TeamBank built a solution based on a service-oriented architecture (SOA), which via a web front-end, enables complete data capture from the sales channels and back office systems. This means that the new solution did not require the partner banks to install anything on their side, as they simply access the system via a standard web browser. The sales clerks of the partner banks provide all necessary credit information via the intuitive web front-end and data is passed on through a VPN to TeamBank, where credit approval is handled completely automatically. The decision is made by a rule engine which accesses internal and external data pools, e.g. Schufa (a German inter-bank data pool of credit-related information), customer base, additional information and address validation services. The easyCredit-infrastructure also accesses information in a content management system, which contains diverse paper-based documents, e.g. signed credit contracts, mail identification documents or proofs of income. Each day up to 10,000 fax pages are being added electronically, to the content management system.

The system went live in December 2003. The performance has lived up to expectations. With the end of life for this application approaching in 2008, the team has started working on the next-generation of easyCredit, this time using Red Hat's innovative JBoss Seam programming model and framework.

“We looked for solutions for our core product, easyCredit, which would provide us with fast and standardised development. JBoss fulfils these requirements optimally, and additionally offers an outstanding price/performance ratio.”

– Jens Pirnay, CIO TeamBank

BENEFITS

By deploying JBoss and complementary open source technologies, TeamBank was able to develop a completely new infrastructure for its core product, easyCredit, within a very short time frame. The new platform is not only very flexible and powerful; it also allows for very short-term, standardised development of new functionalities. Compared with a platform based on proprietary technologies, TeamBank also benefits from a much lower TCO. In addition, the SOA platform has proven to be extremely reliable. The system has been running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week since its deployment and TeamBank is yet to face any down time whatsoever.