The Success of Spider – a connectivity platform at its best

What started as a contract solution for Germany's number one banking address has turned into one of the finance sectors most successful and reliable software products: SPIDER by Spider Software. Used by banks, stock exchanges and trading centres it is the turbo among finance software packages.
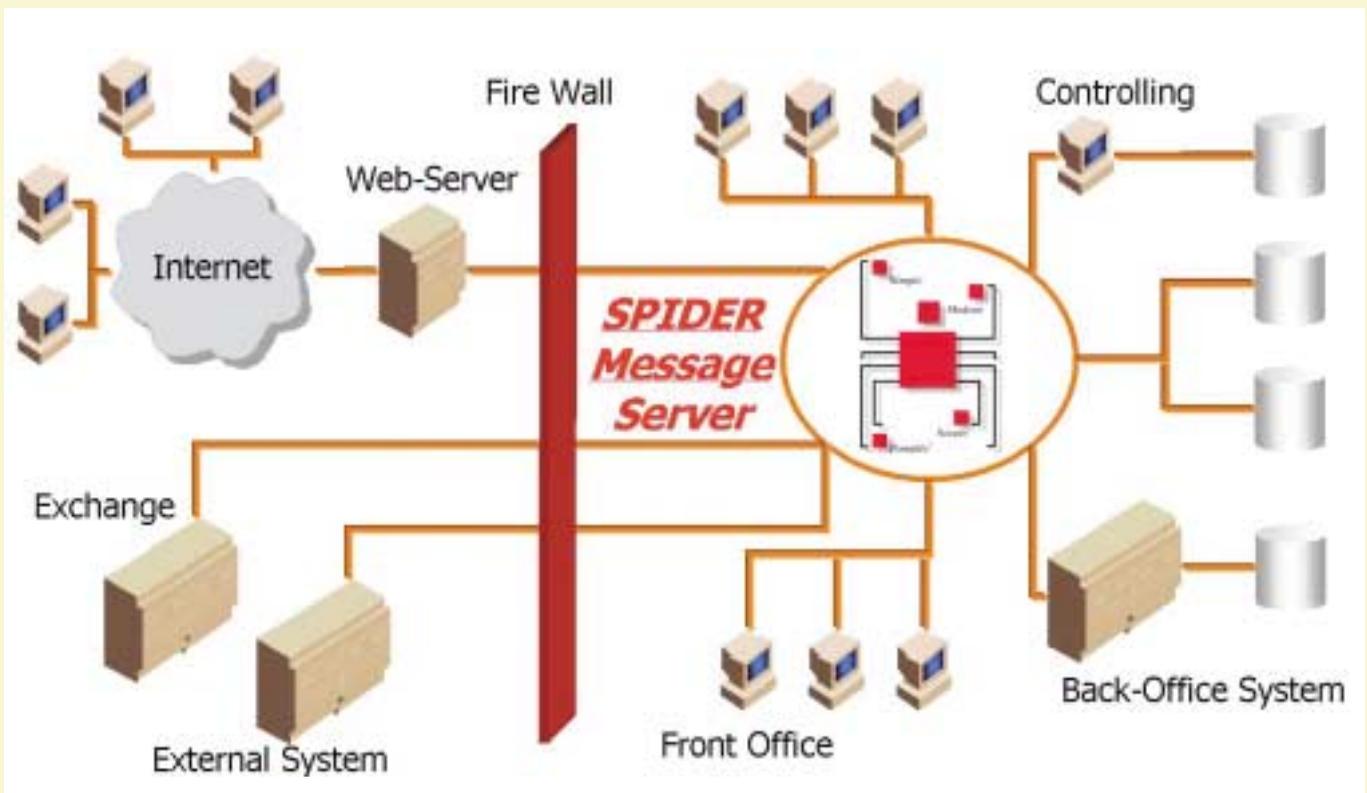
The day to day in financial institutions has become unimaginable without reliable software like SPIDER. This would be reason enough to look more closely. And when we do we see a top product in its field with a dynamic development history spanning more than ten years.
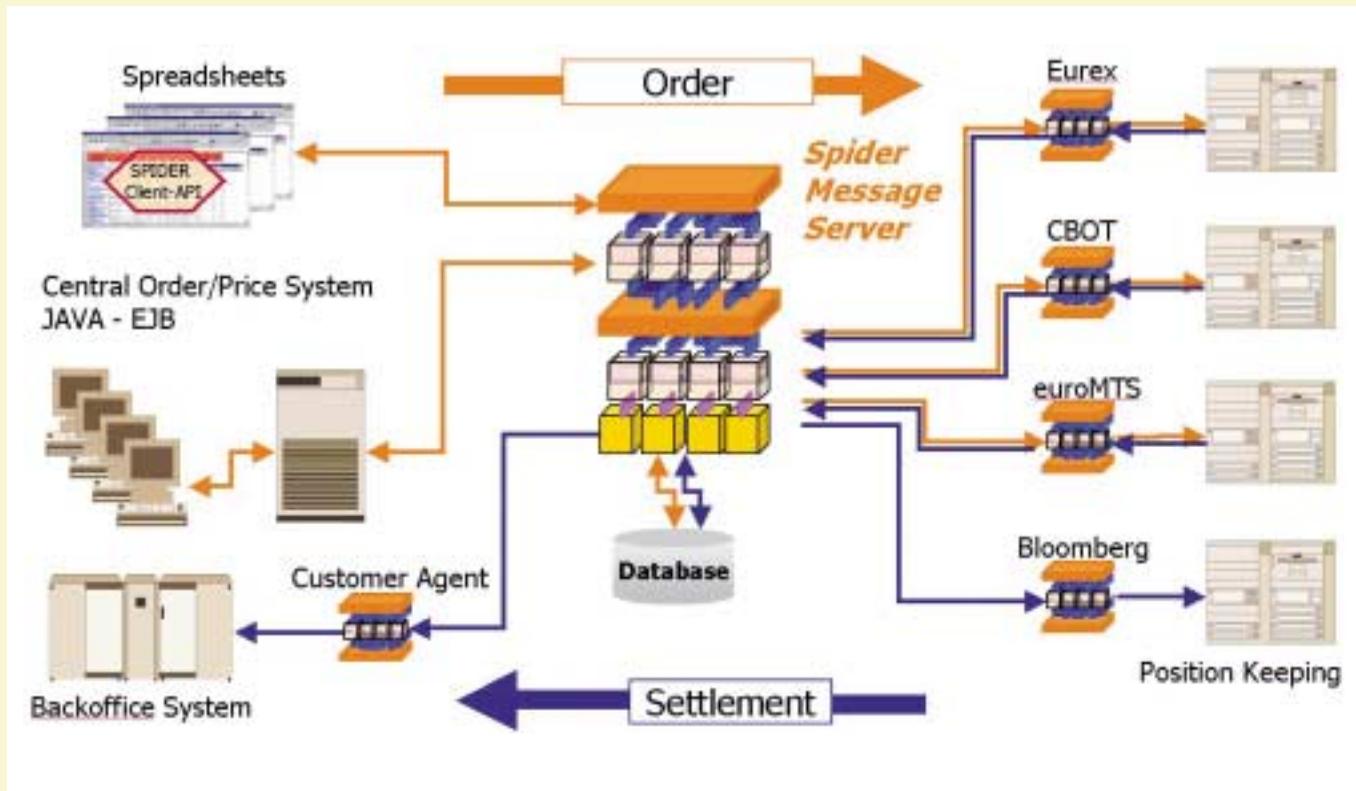
On Expansion Course

Amsterdam, city of canals, tourists and tranquility, is also one of the most powerful and important financial centres in the world. It is here where highest degrees of security are required with each single transaction that Michael Boeke (43) founder and director of Spider Software GmbH takes the next step in a new decisive direction for the future of his enterprise. "The Benelux states have always been strategically important within the financial sector. We are convinced that bringing SPIDER to Amsterdam now is the right software in the right place at the right time. We also wish to give the best degree of service possible to clients in this fascinating city". The Spider branch in the Dutch capital is the second in Europe after

▼ *SPIDER's place in the IT infrastructure.*

▲ *Example of SPIDER's exchange and order systems (Figure 2).*

Berlin and it most certainly will not be the last. Spider's development shows a definate trend: all the way to the top. Spider is a specialist software application developed by Spider Software GmbH in Berlin. It was developed over ten years ago for finance sector enterprises (especially large banks) that internally process and amend financial data from for example stock exchanges. Originally it was designed to flexibly feed so called Bloomberg Connection data to and from back and front offices who amend it with enriched data from other sources. Spider attaches to existing multi-server architecture enabling a simple, secure, fast and inexpensive exchange of data.
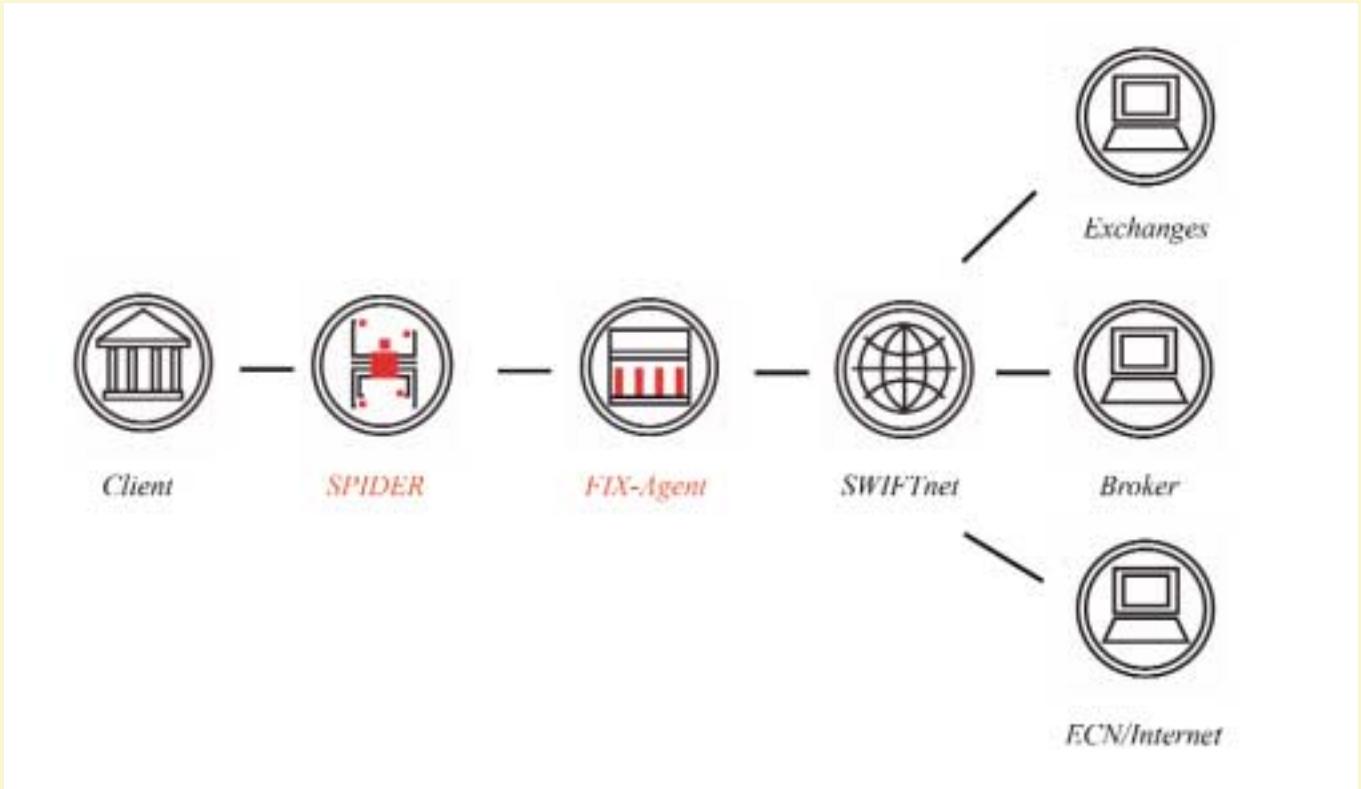
Made meaningful for the user

There is a good reason for the success of this specialist finance software. Special attention was paid to simplicity, scalability, speed and security whilst developing SPIDER's architecture. This has been achieved excellently. Originally conceived and developed for the Bloomberg connection into Deutsche Bank the

demand of Germany's number one financial institution on the application was "we want to use Bloomberg flexibly". Flexibility meant numerous users simultaneously accessing data to fulfil varying demands. The results impressed the finance experts in Frankfurt. A message server forms the heart of the Spider platform. Using so called agents it enabled comfortable, controllable, real time, on demand access to

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the most sensitive information in domestic and international financial data traffic. Just how good the software really is becomes apparent when its reliable performance over more than a decade is compared with other technologies. SPIDER is now more than ever before a proven entity and a fixed item on the daily agenda at Deutsche Bank when it comes to the collection and distribution of sensitive data to and from stock exchanges, trading centres and other data suppliers. A brief look at the number and quality of the currently existing connections is enough to see that SPIDER is an exceptions expert. This is the case for

- Currenex (Currency Exchange)
- EuroNext (Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam via euronext-FIX 1.x)
- FIX 4.x (North American Exchanges, Brokers, etc.)
- FXall (Currency Exchange)
- LIFFE (London Inter. Financial F&O Exchange)
- Nasdaq (via FIX and TIB RV)
- PATS (Trading Platform)
- SIA (Bond Vision and euroMTS)
- SWIFT (Society for W'wide Interbank Fin.

▲ *Example of a "SPIDER in a box".*

Telecommunication)
· SWX (Swiss Exchange)
· Virt-X (European Blue Chip Platform, Swiss Exchange)
· Values API (Xetra, Eurex, EEX, Vienna Exchange, CBOT)
· IBM MQ Series
· Bloomberg Trading System (BTS)
· Trade-Feed Protocol
· Multi Product-Feed Protocol
· Consolidated-Message-Feed (Retail-Feed

Protocol)
· Real-Time Pricing Engine
· Reuters
· SSL via DDS (Sink & Source)
· Telekurs
· Front Arena Message Broker
· Sungard
· RXM
· Credient
· Tibco
· News
· Market Data (RendezVous/CI)

SPIDER shows no deficits in practise. Over the past ten years the product has been adapted perfectly to financial market requirements. (see fig 2.)

Setting an example

One man shows the way to success and many others follow. This principle combined with continual, consistent development in the ensuing years convinced and won Spider a stream of reknowned clients. Its reference list reads like a Who's Who of German banking. Among them are giants such as Deutsche Bank, Commerzbank, Hypovereinsbank,

Nord LB, ING London, ING BHF, BBG and Deutsche Börse. These institutions have been successfully using SPIDER for their various data enrichment, trade automation and external connectivity needs for a long time. The original Bloomberg connectivity is now one of SPIDER's most basic functions - a fleeting glance over the extended options and that becomes obvious.

It is a client's good right to ask for quick solutions – SPIDER provides them within four weeks.

Jack of all trades with brain and brawn

For years already the vehement demands of all company leaders have been put into practise: cost control and efficiency. The bottom line for SPIDER was clearly reliability, low cost and quick operational readiness, the so called "time-to-market". Each individual module is excellently in tune with every other, so data arrives at its destination quickly and automatically by predefined safe routes. Nothing ever gets lost and everything arrives as and when it should – guaranteed. "SPIDER has the

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answer to every question. No matter what the data is, by which channel it is requested or even which operating system employees use: the languages and systems used will always be understood. To Spider there is no 'cannot' " explains Henry Grimm, Key Account Manager with Spider Software in Berlin. "Manual routing and mapping definitions during the setup via the user interface are easy and comfortable, they have been kept user oriented and comprehensive." Obligatory data backups occur automatically with SPIDER – even in the event of a shut down or system crash. In the Spider household a great deal of value is placed on constant, durable high quality.

Client satisfaction is the ultimate aim

Nothing can be better for the development of quality than listening to your client and listening closely. The most important thing a SPIDER developer can get from client relations is to hear what the customer wants. New and changing requirements made further major changes in this direction necessary. "Flexible programming made it easy to take that route. It also shows us how coherent SPIDER is" continues Michael Becker, second founder and director of Spider Software GmbH in Berlin. Clients can choose from an especially interesting range of licenses and support agreements. "Our client's trust is the most important thing to us" says Becker. "In return we give him as much flexibility in his basic framework decisions

as possible." These years of successful development lead to a slim-line version of SPIDER in 2002.

Fruits of Success

The demands made on Spider Software by large enterprises in the finance sector are extremely high and incrediby varied. The result was a product that was in its complexity apparently unsuited to the needs of smaller scale operations. Co-ordinated simplicity was needed. At a very early stage the team around Michaels Boeke and Becker considered in depth the growing demand for a "light" version of Spider and what Spider's reaction to that demand could be. After all one did not want to deny smaller enterprises offering financial services such as brokers and trading houses the unique opportunity of making a lesser impact because of smaller IT budgets. A vision of Spider for electronic trading and administration already existed by the beginning of 2002. Spider Software's first off the peg solution, Spider in a Box, promised the market an efficient and secure tool that clients only had to unpack and plug in. This package is easy to use with MQ–Series, Euronext and Liffe and an excellent solution for Enterprise Application Integration (EAI). Naturally, user friendly and cost effective.

Strong partners, strong solutions

The long term development of such a powerful product as SPIDER could only be achieved in conjunction with powerful partners. These partners were found among clients and software houses alike contributed to the enormous success of SPIDER.

IMPORTANT STEPS TOWARD THE FUTURE

SPIDER brought the finance sector a secure and fast solution to the complex and difficult analysis of Bloomberg Connectivity within banks. It can also be used to connect to stock exchanges, trading platforms and other data suppliers. Impressive references prove Spider Software GmbH's product has been a consistent and reliable entity on the market for over ten years. Opening a new office in Amsterdam shows that SPIDER is forging ahead. A new phase in a company's history and a new impulse for Amsterdam as a finance centre.

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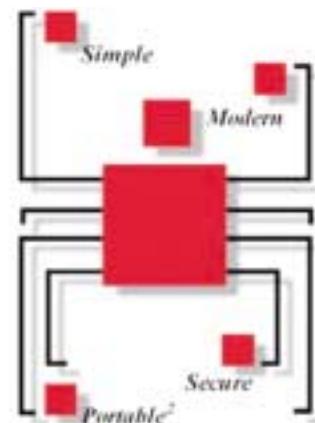*Rodenbergstr. 29*
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