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Ronin Spin-Off Rival Preps Derivs Feeds

Chicago-based derivatives trading software startup Rival Systems, which was spun out of Chicago proprietary trading firm Ronin Capital six months ago, will add market data from a range of global exchanges to its Rival Trader derivatives trading and risk management platform over the next six months, in response to customer demand for broader data coverage.

The vendor beta launched its Rival Trader front end and Rival API with a selection of clients five months ago, before rolling out the offering to the broader options and futures trading community within the last two weeks.

Initially, Rival is providing traders with low-latency market data from CME Group. However, the vendor will add data from the Chicago Board Options Exchange this quarter, followed by data from IntercontinentalExchange by year-end, and will add data from Deutsche Börse-owned derivatives market Eurex early next year.

The vendor decided to add the new venues in response to customer demand, says Robert D'Arco, chief executive of Rival Systems. "We release a new version of the software at least once a month…. What really drives our approach is that we take feedback and **>3**

Iress Buys Proquote Terminal Biz from LSE

Australian data and trading technology vendor Iress has bought UK data and trading workstation provider Proquote from the London Stock Exchange in a £37.6 million ($58.3 million) deal that includes the LSE's Pulse Software Systems portfolio management solutions arm, to expand the services it provides to the UK market.

While Iress already has a UK staff of close to 600, Matt Rady, group executive of global markets at Iress, says the vendor made the acquisition to boost its position in the capital markets space, where it currently has a relatively small presence. The vendor's growth strategy is focused on being "relevant" and investing in the

markets it currently participates in. "We don't want to spread ourselves too thin by being in too many places and being a big player in global markets… we prefer to have appropriate-sized investments in core markets, and the UK is a core market for us," Rady adds.

The LSE bought Proquote for £10.9 million in January 2003, reversing its 1994 decision to exit the data vendor space when it sold the Topic terminal business to ICV (which was later bought by Thomson Financial).

Once the deal is complete, Iress will retain the Proquote brand and integrate its staff. However, Rady says that from a product and technology perspective, the services will remain **>3**

Symphony Unveils Content Partners, Icap Plans Rollout to 'Thousands' of Brokers

Startup secure messaging provider Symphony Communication Services has unveiled Dow Jones, S&P Capital IQ and Selerity as the first vendor partners to participate in its "ecosystem" of third-party content, at the same time as New York authorities reached agreement with some of Symphony's bank backers around storage and encryption of the data transmitted.

Symphony chief executive David Gurle says the vendor has more than 100 other providers wanting to join its ecosystem, and has received

interest from at least a dozen more since launching Tuesday, Sept. 15, which will ultimately lead to an app store-style portal dubbed Symphony Marketplace, which will go live in the second quarter of next year.

In the meantime, one firm already testing the platform is interdealer broker Icap, which plans to roll it out "immediately" after beta testing to all sales and product staff in the broker's e-commerce business, and any other client-facing roles, says Dean Berry, chief executive **>12**

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Ronin Spin-Off Rival Preps Derivs Feeds

<1 rapidly deploy new features at no additional cost," he says.

The data will be available via Rival's front end, which displays real-time options and futures data and price sheets, as well as real-time theoretical prices of options calculated based on the risk and volatility thresholds of each trader. To deliver the best performance to users, Rival subscribes to the lowest-latency feed from each exchange, and installs best-of-breed servers at each venue's co-location facilities. "We provide the top-of-the-line servers and co-location and hosting services at a competitive price. Customers can significantly reduce their overall IT costs by leveraging our services," D'Arco says.

The data will also be normalized and delivered in a proprietary data format via the vendor's Rival API, which allows users to plug the feeds directly into their applications. The API features a C++ library of in-process market data feed handlers and execution gateways, as well as the ability to manage instruments, orders and trades, to conflate data, and to modify parameters during runtime, and automatic integration with Rival Trader. "The normalization means that if you build a strategy on one exchange, you don't have to do anything special to deploy it on another," D'Arco adds.

Rival systems was established six months ago as a spin off from Chicago-based proprietary trading firm Ronin Capital, which developed the platform internally and saw a gap in the market for a faster, smarter and feature-rich trading experience for traders. "The feedback we have been given is that current platforms out there are not fast enough to compete with proprietary systems, people are not getting the features they need, and they are missing out on trading opportunities because of technology issues," he says.

Faye Kilburn

xCelor Slashes Switch Latency, Bolsters Troubleshooting Tools

Chicago-based low-latency switch and data hardware provider xCelor has released its latest switch, dubbed XPM3, which cuts the latency required both for data replication and outbound orders, and also enables firms to store more data with granular timestamps for replay and troubleshooting.

The new switch has 32 ports, compared to 48 ports on its predecessor, the XPM² switch, and six SSD drives for data capture and storage. It can replicate data between ports at 3 nanoseconds, and performs "muxing" (or "multiplexing")—sending order data back to an exchange without passing through a full-service switch that can add latency—in 80 nanoseconds.

"Now, we can do in 80 nanoseconds what XPM² did in 130ns," says xCelor chief technology officer Rob Walker. Part of the speed gain was achieved by moving to Altera's new Aria 10 FPGA cards, which are already proving faster than the current range of Altera Stratix 5 chips, while the vendor has also benefited from building its own FPGA boards, whereas it previously sourced FPGAs from a third-party supplier.

"This was specifically designed for XPM3 so we could give the switch as many ports as we wanted," Walker says. "This will form the FPGA platform of choice for xCelor products going forward, including our feed handlers… and allows us to future-proof our platform. It's nice to have complete control over everything one uses—and with a third-party FPGA, we didn't. But now we can spin individual boards optimized for >12

Iress Buys Proquote

<1 separate for the immediate future.

An LSE spokesperson says the sale of Proquote fits into a diversification strategy that has been ongoing at the exchange for at least the last four years, as demonstrated by the way it has more recently begun breaking out its revenues. In the past, the spokesperson says, there was a greater focus on the capital markets side of the LSE's business—specifically, the listing and then the trading of equities, which has increasingly become a much smaller slice of the group's overall revenues—whereas the rest of its information services business has increased as a share of overall group revenue. With the acquisition of the Frank Russell Company in 2014, and before that, the purchase of the remaining 50 percent of index provider FTSE that it didn't already own, LSE is focusing more on the benchmarking and indexing side of the information services division, of which Proquote was not a core component, he adds.

Iress consulted with Proquote's clients, and was told that its systems are highly valued, so Rady says the vendor's immediate plan is to continue investing in the existing technology, "to enable clients to continue using the products and services from Proquote that they have always used," he says.

While there will be opportunities further down the line for Iress to provide a broader range of services to clients and link the two systems, there is "no plan to streamline [them] over time; it's more about building appropriate integration links," Rady says. "For example, the Proquote trading platform will enable an integration for Iress clients to access things like fund trading, bond trading and Retail Service Provider facilities unavailable to Iress' current clients…. Likewise, we think there are opportunities to build out Iress to allow our clients to access more market data, because of the depth of market data that Proquote has in its region…. There are opportunities there, but enabling clients to continue to use the technology that is there is the preference."

Following the deal, LSE will remain a supporting partner of Proquote, and will provide data to the vendor, while Iress will maintain the technology in the exchange's datacenters. "From that perspective, there is a strong ongoing partnership in a variety of ways that will continue post-transaction," Rady says.

Joanne Faulkner

Is Your Board on Board with (Or Just Bored by?) Data Governance

I know London cabbies are incredibly knowledgeable about many things, especially the streets of London (Indeed, to drive a taxi in London, you must first pass an exam known as "The Knowledge"), but it's unusual to hail one who happens to know about market data.

"Yes, guv'nor, where you 'eaded? I'm not goin' sarf of the river this early in the mornin'. Oh, Victoria Park Plaza? No problem. You must be goin' to that European Financial Information Summit, right? I 'ear they've got a good event this year. Lot of discussions about data governance. I coulda' gone into governance, you know. Nothing to it. But I got this 'ernia, see, so I 'ave to sit down all the time or me innards'll pop out. 'Ere, 'ang on," he driver said, peering at me in the mirror, then at his copy of *Inside Market Data*. "Aren't you the guv'nor?"

I thought about it, and realized that while the ideas of managing something and governing something may initially sound the same, there's a logistical and practical chasm between them. A government governs, which means setting and enforcing policy; while various arms of local government or agencies manage—by which I mean they manage the implementation of what the government dictates. So the concept of data governance first needs to come from the top—i.e. C-level executives and a company's board—before its implementation can be managed by those in the trenches.

Perhaps more than ever at this year's European Financial Information Summit, data quality and governance was high on the agenda, not just in the reference data stream, but also among market data executives tasked with reducing costs and eliminating duplication within datasets.

In the past, these tasks fell to market and reference data managers, though more recently firms have appointed chief data officers with overall responsibility for data throughout their organizations. However, these CDOs look at the position a different way: Being responsible for all data, they say, doesn't mean they're the only one who needs to worry about—or take responsibility for—data quality. Indeed, many see their role as an evangelist of processes and best practices to the rest of their firms, including their boards of directors.

If there was one clear message repeated again and again throughout the event, it was that appointing a CDO does not solve the problem, but merely represents the fact that a firm recognizes it has a problem and is taking the first step towards a solution. One person alone cannot solve a firm's data quality issues; rather, the responsibility must lie with each and every employee who touches the data—creating a "data culture" and effectively making everyone a data scientist of sorts, said Capgemini's Zhiwei Jiang—while the ultimate responsibility must be shouldered by a company's board, who should be prepared to be actively involved in (and concerned about)

the accuracy of data that drives decisions they sign off on.

Here's the thing: without good data governance processes, it's harder to control your datasets and understand the quality of your data. If you can't verify your data's accuracy, you should assume it is questionable. And if your data is questionable, then so is everything ranging from trades and portfolio valuations to the P&L figures by which management sets strategy—not to mention other important activities, such as client reporting and relationship management. Then, of course, there's the data required to comply with new regulations and reporting mandates, which especially needs to be accurate. "Let's not underestimate the challenge of complying—but it's difficult because of where we're coming from, not because of what it is," said Chris Bannocks, chief data management officer at ING Bank.

With all this at stake, the question is not whether you can afford to make the investment in data governance projects, no matter how arduous and expensive, but whether you can afford not to.

Max Bowie
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Inside Market Data

SMA Expands Sentiment Dashboard

Financial sentiment provider Social Market Analytics (SMA), which produces trading signals derived from social media sentiment analysis, plans to add more sources to its web-based dashboard, and will expand its monitoring to cover commodities, currency, futures and exchange-traded funds within the next two months.

SMA is adding the new markets in direct response to customer demand, says SMA chief executive Joe Gits, adding that the vendor is also exploring expanding into European equities. "We hope to at least carry the FTSE 350 early next year, and we are looking at other European and Asian exchanges as well," he says.

"The use of social media on currencies and commodities lagged equities. There are growing mentions of these asset classes in social media, and we are now able to generate a signal. Clients that started with our equity feed are now asking for this new data," he adds.

Adding the new asset classes presented new challenges for the provider, Gits says, "The conversations are much more technical trading-focused than what you see in equities. Earnings, product, corporate and technical data drives sentiment on equities, whereas commodities is much more macro and technical. Your scoring dictionary needs to account for these differences."

Currently, SMA's dashboard uses feeds that track all US equities in real-time, scanning conversations and social media mentions before publishing the data on a visual interface for analysis. Users log in to the dashboard and are alerted to stocks that are moving or making gains, and can then drill down in greater detail to conduct more research. The dashboard alerts traders to stocks which receive little publicity elsewhere, bringing them new trading ideas and making them aware of "movements they wouldn't normally have seen or considered," Gits says.

Increasing the body of sources available is a natural progression for the dashboard, Gits says. "We want to get signals from as many sources as we can… [though] Twitter and StockTwits are the two that people are really looking at," he adds.

As well as adding more social media sources, the company will soon introduce topic-level information that will "aggregate information on what tweets are about. So if a thread for a particular security is earnings-related… we're going to track that kind of information," Gits says. "People are interested in what a conversation thread is about. It is primarily overall sentiment, but if there are earnings coming up and people are talking about other things in conjunction with earnings, people want to know that," he says.

Users have also asked for enhancements to help them drill down on account-specific information, which SMA will shortly add to the dashboard, to allow subscribers to identify the most popular influencers, which can be tailored to a user's selected "universe" to only show tweets from specifically selected, certified accounts. "You pick a stock—Apple, for example—and we can tell you who are the most influential Tweeters on Apple, the most positive and the most negative…. Immediately you know if an influential account is saying something important," Gits says.

Joanne Faulkner

HERD

TheScreener Nabs ABN Research Vet Roth for Asia Growth

Quantitative equity research and analysis platform vendor TheScreener has appointed former ABN Amro equity strategist **Daphne Roth** as executive director, based in Singapore, to help the vendor "enhance and expand" its activities in Singapore and the Asia-Pacific region. Before joining TheScreener, Roth was Asia equity strategist at ABN Amro, where she spent more than 15 years, including as head of equity research in Asia, based in Singapore, and equity research manager and debt capital markets product specialist, based in Switzerland. She reports to **Andreas Lusser,** chief executive of TheScreener Group.

GBST Names Network Vet Jack CEO, Capital Markets UK

Trading and fund administration software vendor GBST has hired **Ian Jack**, a veteran of the data networks and infrastructure industries, to serve as chief executive of its UK capital markets business, with responsibility for growing the vendor's business into new markets in Europe. Jack was most recently head of US infrastructure business at NYSE Technologies, prior to which he was business development manager for financial services at Colt, and also served as an account manager at Radianz, and as a business development manager at LogicaCMG. At GBST, he reports to group CEO **Stephen Lake.**
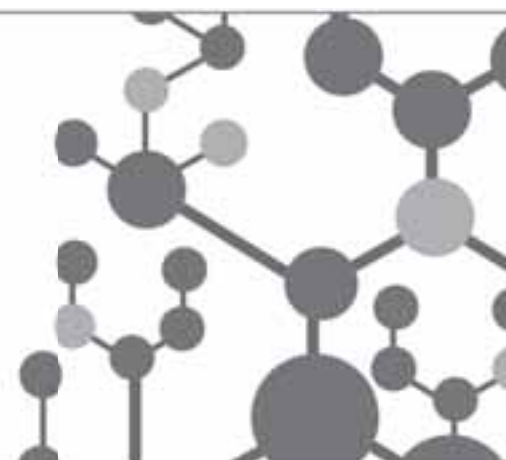
TraderMade Launches Portal for Online Historical FX Data Search

UK-based foreign exchange charting software and research provider TraderMade has rolled out a new historical database of FX prices that banks, buy-side firms and others can use to source prices for reporting and validating evaluations.

TraderMade chief executive David Upton says the vendor developed the service, dubbed FX Quest, after finding that some clients were using the vendor's Maverick charting display to verify FX prices.

"We were expecting them to use Maverick to draw lines to predict the future, not go back and look at past prices," Upton says, adding that using the charting tool is a slow way to access underlying price data, whereas FX Quest updates in real time and allows users to search around 40 years of historical data for mid-price high/low, open/close prices for any point in time or time period on any date or and for any currency. Users can search the database online at fxquest.tradermade.com, and can also upload a file of queries, or access the database via an API.

Initially, FX Quest contains data on 50 currency pairs based on those most used by clients among major pairs and some emerging market currencies, though since the data is the same as that used to power Maverick, Upton says the vendor could add any other currency pair that exists in Maverick within 48 hours.

"This is addressing the transparency and best execution themes in regulation at the moment," as well as any distrust between FX market participants where the buyer doesn't know how fair the price the price they've been offered is—though only post-trade, rather than something that could be used for pre-trade price discovery, Upton says. "There is definite interest on the sell side within the framework of compliance. Banks have to collect data to prove best execution and support post-trade transparency. So, for example, they could make our data available to their clients."

Other potential clients include banks' treasury areas that may not have a fast and easy way to access historical FX data, as well as fund managers wanting to check the accuracy of fund administrators' valuations, intermediaries such as auditors and accounting firms, and transaction cost analysis consultancies that need a reliable source of data to support their analysis.

In addition, TraderMade can expand the database to allow users to search any other instruments that might be relevant to FX traders, such as forwards, spot metals and non-deliverable forwards. Upton says the vendor has seen specific demand for forwards and will add these within the next six months, followed by other asset classes as and when it receives sufficient demand.

Max Bowie

SCROLLING NEWS

>>Options Increases Velocity with European Feeds

Data and trading infrastructure-as-a-service provider Options (formerly Options IT) has expanded its managed co-location service, adding the SIX Swiss Exchange, Wiener Börse and Nasdaq's OMX feeds to its Velocity electronic trading infrastructure. The new European feeds will be available for clients of Velocity, which links each venue through the Velocity hosting service to allow electronic trading firms to access equities and derivatives markets across Europe. As part of this latest expansion, the vendor has made a number of improvements to existing European markets, including upgraded fiber paths to datacenters in Basildon, UK and Frankfurt.

>>FactSet Begins Carrying Trendrating Momentum Reports

FactSet Research Systems has added a sub-set of momentum ratings from momentum analytics provider Trendrating to its FactSet Research Connect service, a channel for research providers to deliver research to investment manager clients. The sub-set of ratings on FactSet includes Trendrating's weekly and monthly Smart Momentum reports on countries, markets, sectors and themes.

>>Bloomberg Preps Deeper Twitter Data Integration

Bloomberg plans to enhance the Twitter data included in its Bloomberg Professional terminal to include contextual data linked to its own market data, after signing a "long-term" data agreement with the social media platform. Bloomberg first integrated Twitter data into its terminal in 2013, and as a result of the new license, will allow users to track tweet volumes and sentiment relating to stocks, commodities, foreign exchange or specific topics, and to overlay this information against real-time data on their terminal display, officials say.

>>Contix Bows Social Media Alerts for Commodities

Contix, which provides alerts and event detection based on real-time analysis of social media, has expanded its asset class coverage to include commodities in addition to its existing equities coverage,

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Top Quotes

"Information has no value unless there's context: a time, a place, an identity. Until then, it's just a number." **—JP Rangaswami, Deutsche Bank**

"Without governance, your data lake becomes a data cesspool—a place where you just throw a load of stuff. Without data governance, you can't understand the quality and what you can actually do with your data." **—Stephen Line, Cloudera**

"Have a data culture. Seek a way to get value out of data. That way, everyone who touches the data is a data scientist." **—Zhiwei Jiang, Capgemini**

"[The problem is] the client doesn't want better data, they want cheaper data." **—Tom Dalglish, SmartStream**

"Year on year, we spend more with exchanges, and my thing is, if you're spending more, you should be able to get more value for it." **—Ravinder Bhadal, Man Group**

"As consumers of market data, we're often beholden to monopoly-like suppliers. Those stuck on leveraging monopoly-like power should be put on notice that those days are coming to an end." **—Ed Flynn, Morgan Stanley**

CDOs: Data Quality Needs Board Sponsors

Although increasing numbers of firms are tackling market and reference data quality issues by appointing chief data officers, the individuals assigned to these roles say data quality should not be the responsibility of one individual, but should rather be the responsibility of everyone within an organization, with the company's board prepared to take ultimate responsibility for good data governance, said panelists at the European Financial Information Summit.

Indeed, Chris Bannocks, chief data management officer at ING Bank, said this board-level responsibility is probably lacking at many firms, and may only be stimulated by regulations such as BCBS 239. "When it comes to data quality, the board is making decisions every day based on what they receive. If they're not looking at data quality, I'd be concerned about the decisions they are making," Bannocks said.

"Boards don't have someone responsible for X, Y or Z—for example, data—but really, everyone is responsible," said David Grant, chief data officer at Lloyds Banking Group, while Julian Dorado, director of data management at M&G Investments, cautioned against the practice of naming one person to lead data governance "because then everybody looks to them [to take care of it], whereas >8

EFIS Keynote: Deutsche Bank's Rangaswami Describes Challenges of Evolving CDO Role

The role of the chief data officer is no longer just about managing large volumes of data, but is evolving to a position with full ownership of the end-to-end data management processes, enterprise-wide, according to JP Rangaswami, global CDO at Deutsche Bank, who delivered the opening keynote address at last week's European Financial Information Summit.

In the past, financial institutions were less complex and generated more data internally, so managing the ecosystem of sources, databases and standards was a simpler task, Rangaswami said. As a result, firms had a clear understanding of their data infrastructure, trusted their vendors, and providence, lineage and linkage were all natural. However, today, firms consume more market data, reference data and transactional data from outside their organization, and the firewall has become "porous," he added.

Though the role of chief data officer originally emerged in response to "mushrooming" volumes of data within financial organizations, today's biggest challenge for CDOs is providing context to that data. "Information has >8

User Panel Weighs Cost vs. Value of Data

Exchanges and data providers should do more to support—rather than enforce—compliance with license policies, and should be prepared to deliver more value to justify price increases, according to a panel at last week's European Financial Information Summit. However, data consumers and providers differ on how they assess value.

In an increasingly complex data landscape, managing costs while maintaining data quality continues to be a pressing issue, the panel agreed, particularly when negotiating better terms with exchanges to avoid rising costs. "If you're spending more, you should be able get more value," said Ravinder Bhadal, global head of market data and commercial management at Man Group. "If they're going to charge us more… they should be collaborating with us to make things simpler."

And with data providers allowed to put disclaimers such as "the data as is" in contracts yet say, "We will charge you top dollar for this…but it's all on you… is like them having their cake and eating it," with exchanges avoiding liability for the data they provide, said Rafah Hanna, principle at data consultancy DataContent, who moderated the discussion.

Panelists also bemoaned the fact that >8

Keynote: Deutsche CDO Rangaswami

<7 no value unless there's a time, a place, an identity and a value. Until then, it's just a number. It's the metadata that provides the meaning. We need an industry-wide view of metadata," Rangaswami told attendees.

In addition, CDOs must address an "old world" attitude towards data quality in organizations, where users simply trust that data is accurate and believe in the providence of vendors' data quality models.

**JP Rangaswami
Deutsche Bank**

In the future, CDOs may be asked by compliance and legal departments to formally attest to the quality of data, and should be prepared to take ownership of where data comes from, who touches it once it enters the organization, and even storage procedures, Rangaswami said, adding that "'Garbage in, garbage out' hasn't changed."

According to an audience poll during Rangaswami's speech, 37 percent of attendees have a CDO at their firm while 47 percent do not. In response to a question from the audience about how to deal with siloed data within organizations, Rangaswami said data officers should work with every department that uses data. "The idea of governance is central, but data is everywhere. You can't create a new silo to deal with the problem of silos," he said.

Rangaswami acknowledged the "hard work involved" in managing data correctly—from testing data, having a full registry of sources and what each source provides, to understanding data usage patterns and knowing underlying standards—but that if done correctly, CDOs are capable of delivering efficiencies for their firms.

Faye Kilburn

CDOs: Data Quality Needs Board Sponsors

<7 it really needs to be across the organization."

Indeed, the panel agreed that in addition to board-level accountability, data governance needs to be a cultural responsibility instilled into all employees within a firm. "The board holds responsibility for that, and so does everyone else in the business," Bannocks said.

To achieve this, Pioneer investments will next year appoint "data stewards" from across the firm to identify data issues, who will have this included in their targets, said Edward Boag, chief data officer at Pioneer.

The danger of not having controls throughout an organization is that poor-quality data becomes more common. Having the wrong data doesn't just impact financial firms; it also has a detrimental impact on customers and their relationships with the firm, Grant said.

However, whereas in the past it has proved hard to find and attract qualified staff to perform these roles, panelists said the area is becoming more attractive to potential employees, since it develops highly transferable skills and offers exposure to all parts of the business, providing a stepping stone into other banking roles. "You get someone with a CFA qualification, but after four years in data management, they know all of the business… and it's hard to retain them. As a career, data management has a lot going for it, and is cross-industry," Dorado said.

Max Bowie

James Humphrey Evans, David Grant, Julian Dorado, Chris Bannocks, Edward Boag

User Panel Weighs Cost vs. Value of Data

<7 exchanges also sometimes update their licensing agreements without any standard practice for notifying customers. "Policies can change pretty much underneath your feet, which presents its own challenges," Bhadal said.

Therefore, ensuring compliance with these policies becomes a moving target, and Ed Flynn, vice president of global market data sourcing at Morgan Stanley, urged attendees to pursue "proactive compliance," where data managers "parrot" back what they believe the contract agreements allow them do, placing the burden on the exchange to confirm or clarify their interpretation, while fostering a discussion. "The ideal is to create a two way street of communication so nothing is left to interpretation," Flynn said.

Adding to this complexity is the sheer scale of data consumption within firms, accompanied by resistance to fund more resources to centralize management of that demand, said Aske Wind Hansen, head of global market data at Nordea Bank. "We have one manager for thousands of applications…. It's difficult to get a good business case to say we need five more guys in order to control this," he said.

Ultimately, negotiating better terms remains a challenge because there is no standard by which what value is measured, and data consumers and producers assess value and innovation differently. For example, Hansen said, "We're asking for the same basic data, the same top indexes… they try to innovate and say 'We have 8,500 new indexes,' [but] we're not interested in a single one—we just want the top one. Innovation for us is changing the way we can use that data more efficiently."

Joanne Faulkner

Rafah Hanna, Ed Flynn, Aske Wind Hansen, Ravinder Bhadal, PJ Di Giammarino

Automation Key, But People Trump Tech for Governance

In an industry obsessed with robo-trading, technology and processes, the fact remains that the data strategies to set processes and orchestrate change hinge on a very human element—people themselves and their individual skillsets, said panelists at the European Financial Information Summit.

When moderator Chris Bannocks, chief data management officer at ING, asked the panel what they consider the best tools for monitoring overall data quality most effectively, panelists stressed the importance of having the right team in place.

"The most important tool is the person, or group of people. Whatever tool you use, if you have people who don't understand data, they will misuse the tools," said Ian Race, head of technology design and estimation technology at Royal Bank of Scotland.

Panelists agreed that the lack of proper training and decline of department numbers should take precedence over other data governance challenges. "We don't pay teams the way we should; we've outsourced our intellectual property to people who know nothing about data," said Tom Dalglish, head of transformation at Smartstream.

In contrast, "If you bring someone on board and pay them a six-figure salary, and say 'You have to get this data right or you're going to get fired,' they're going to get it right," said Simon Feddo, director of group data services at UBS.

Stephen Line, vice president of Northern EMEA at Cloudera, emphasized developing new utility services may prove futile without a proper team. "Without the right people to drive the technology, you're not going to achieve great things," he said. However, Line also said that people are not the only problem, adding that firms must also devote resources to improving automation levels around the data quality process.

In addition, without the right people involved, it becomes harder to communicate the importance of proper data governance and a philosophy of good data management to the business. "It's key to bring the stakeholders along with you. We need to make it clear that data governance is an enabler to making their job easier and to using, manipulating and getting value out of

data," said John Parkinson, UK head of data governance at Capgemini.

When beginning the data governance "journey," it's important to remove complexity and lay out a simple roadmap or risk stakeholders being daunted by the scope, Bannocks said. However, without governance, "Your data lake becomes a data cesspool—a place where you just throw a load of stuff. Without governance, you can't understand the quality of the data and what you can actually do with it," Line said.

The panel concluded that data governance is not just a technology and communication problem, but is a business problem, with having the right people at its heart.

Joanne Faulkner

Ian Race, John Parkinson, Stephen Line, Tom Dalglish, Simon Feddo, Roberto Maranca

After Cuts, Regulations, Firms Eye Smart Analytics

While innovation in the market data has slowed overall as firms focus their efforts on budget cutting and regulation, it has picked up in the emerging area of smart analytics and machine-learning tools as firms seek to provide staff with additional sources of insight, according to a panel discussing the next frontiers in market data technology at last week's European Financial Information Summit.

Chris Donnan, chief technology officer at Tyler Capital, said market data technology has not evolved as quickly as he expected, though his particular grievance was around standardization. "My wish in market data is for it to be more homogenized. I thought market data might converge into one body, but that's not happened because there's a lot of competition in the exchange space, so there's still a lot of diversity out there," Donnan said.

There has, however, been evolution around integration—if not homogenization—of data sources. For example, Indata president David J. Csiki said the vendor is leveraging Big Data technology to unify real-time and historical data, overcoming the historical "disconnect" between the two. "People can access whatever data they want quickly, without having to go to multiple systems," he said.

Richard Bell, program manager for performance and data in BNP Paribas' electronic fixed income IT division, said that while most of his budget is allocated towards complying with fixed income regulations and "simply staying afloat," smart analytics could be the next frontier in market data.

Tony Chau, executive director at UBS, said his firm is also more focused on administrative tasks such as consolidating

IT spend, rather than on innovation, saying that the bank finds a lot of duplication in its historical exchange data. However, he also stressed the importance of smart analytics, and said UBS is also focusing on providing its quants with a good IT environment for statistical analysis, back-testing and machine-learning, which panelists generally agreed holds great potential.

Armando Gonzalez, chief executive of sentiment data vendor Ravenpack, cited sentiment analysis, relevance and consensus scores as new frontiers, adding that technology that emulates artificial intelligence "doesn't have to be science fiction." However, he also said it can be difficult to sell to firms that take a scientific approach to trading, and who demand proof that new datasets have demonstrable value and can provide unique insights.

Faye Kilburn

MTS Expands Delivery Options for B2Scan Bond Inventory Data

London Stock Exchange-owned European bond trading platform MTS has expanded the delivery mechanisms for pre-trade information on banks' bond inventories from its MTS BondVision platform, in response to ongoing electronification of the fixed income market.

In January, MTS announced an initiative in partnership with French fixed income technology provider B2Scan, to supplement its raw BondVision data with pre-trade information on banks' bond inventories, which allows buy-side traders to identify which banks are willing to buy or sell a particular bond or list of bonds.

The information is sourced by B2Scan, which provides a web-based engine for users to search the data for a specific sector and maturity, and B2Scan provides a list of banks with positions available.

MTS chief executive Fabrizio Testa says the project with B2Scan is now complete, so MTS' buy-side customers can now search for specific instruments and receive a list of dealers who have positions available. "This is a more efficient and informed way to trade. By facilitating searches and matching demand with axes from a bank's inventory, we can improve hit ratios and reduce execution times," he says.

In addition to B2Scan's web platform, MTS has created a range of delivery mechanisms for the data to cater to different levels of technological sophistication among user firms, including a real-time API using the FIX Protocol or the LSE's own proprietary data format; via third-party market data vendors and trading software vendors; and through MTS's standard front-end trading interface, with non-real-time data delivered via FTP download.

Testa says the fixed income market is currently in an "evolutionary phase," as more trading becomes electronic. Recent estimates from research and consultancy firm Celent suggest that electronic trading of bonds has recently overtaken voice trading for the first time. "So we needed to provide solutions at the lower and higher end of the [electronification] scale," he says. "Fixed income is lagging behind equities and derivatives when it comes to electronification, but the advantage of having other asset classes go first is that you can see what works well and what doesn't, and adapt it to fixed income."

By accessing the B2Scan data via MTS's delivery methods, buy-side firms no longer have to spend time and resources sourcing information on banks' bond inventories themselves, while banks can reach customers more easily. "There's no concern about sharing inventory data with the buy side. MTS B2Scan gives dealers full control of who sees their data without the threat of information leakage," Testa says.

As well as supporting technical advances at fixed income trading firms, MTS is also preempting upcoming regulations likely to drive more bond trading onto electronic markets, Testa says. Supplementing its raw data with additional "color" and making the pre-trade process transparent will provide additional value to traders, he adds.

Faye Kilburn

SR Labs Relocates SuperFeed PoP to Equinix Datacenters

Low-latency feed handler and market data platform provider SR Labs has completed the migration of its SuperFeed consolidated datafeed from NYSE-owned datacenters in Mahwah and Weehakwen, NJ in the US, and Basildon in the UK to nearby Equinix datacenters in Secaucus, NJ and Slough, respectively, in a move that officials say will deliver cost and latency savings to customers.

SuperFeed is now available in Equinix's NY2 and LD5 facilities, and clients can either cross-connect directly to the SuperFeed ticker plants for the lowest latency, or connect via vendor partner such as TMX Atrium, BT Radianz, 7Ticks, Options and NYSE's SFTI network.

At the beginning of this year, SR Labs began a program to relocate SuperFeed—essentially a hosted Wombat ticker plant—and to end its use of the NYSE datacenters in favour of Equinix's NY2 facility in Secaucus and its LD5 facility in Slough.

The vendor issued a request for Proposal for network and hosting vendors in each location in the fourth quarter of 2014, enlisting managed service and IT infrastructure provider Options in the US, and Interactive Data's 7Ticks global managed services offering in Europe.

SR Labs previously partnered with both vendors as preferred infrastructure providers, but chose the two for this migration as they provided the "best performance, latency, value for money and customer service," says Ian McIntyre, chief operating officer for Europe at SR Labs. "It was crucial that this migration provided a performance improvement in addition to relocating us into Equinix, which was a key part of our selection process," he adds.

Many of SR Labs' clients are already co-located in NY2 and LD5, which will reduce the latency of SuperFeed since customers no longer have to connect over the extra distance to Mahwah and Basildon. In addition, SR Labs has deployed the latest version of its Data Fabric middleware for the Wombat software, which includes TCP offload and kernel bypass to improve throughput and latency determinism. The vendor has been working on the middleware since before the ICE acquisition, which is "the key to how we have reduced our hardware footprint in the new facilities by 68 percent," McIntyre says.

SR Labs has run its PoPs in parallel in Weehawken and Basildon, Secaucus and Slough over the past few months, but has now completely decommissioned its rack space in the NYSE datacenters.

"We structured a parallel running period to provide enough time for our customers to test the new environment and be comfortable with our plans. The initial migration had customers move without changing their connectivity model, and following that, customers have been considering their connectivity options—particularly those in Equinix, where cross-connecting gives the lowest latency path to our feed, and where they can save money compared to the leased-line connectivity required previously," McIntyre adds.

Faye Kilburn

OpenFin Floats Version 5.0 of HTML5 Container Software

HTML5 runtime technology provider OpenFin has released version 5.0 of its HTML5 Container software, with new functionality that allows banks and trading platforms to embed HTML5 windows in non-HTML5 applications.

Until now, the OpenFin Container—which runs on the Chromium open-source web browser project from which Google Chrome draws its source code—allowed banks and trading platforms to run high-performance, multi-window HTML5 applications on their desktops.

Version 5.0 of the Container software includes a major upgrade to allow firms to embed HTML5 windows in non-HTML5 applications, such as an HTML window or a panel displaying content in a market data application written in .Net or Java.

"In the past, people have used a Project Chromium embedded framework, which is an open-source framework… [that] gained popularity with banks and information providers as it gives you the tools to embed HTML5 content into a .Net window," says OpenFin chief executive Mazy Dar. "What they've found is that it suffers from memory and performance problems, and those are problems that get more acute as time goes on. Also, because it is an open-source product, there is no support for it to help fix problems."

In response, OpenFin built new functionality to enable firms to embed HTML5 into applications without having to rewrite them. "For example, say you are using an existing market data application and there are a lot of things you like but you want a better charting tool. You find a HTML5 charting tool

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"Say you are using an existing market data application and … want a better charting tool. You find a HTML5 charting tool, but you need to get it running inside your application. Now you can embed it in your application."

Mazy Dar, CEO, OpenFin

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with all the bells and whistles you need, but you need to get it running inside your application. In a web browser, there's no way for it to communicate with your application. But now you can embed it in your application. That's an example of something people are doing today," Dar says.

In addition, firms can embed applications built using OpenFin's high-performance Hypergrid framework, which the vendor open-sourced at the beginning of this year. Typically, open-source

HTML5 frameworks for computing grids are "clunky," so OpenFin built its own version, which Dar says is a critical missing piece of the puzzle. "If HTML5 can't do grids, then most things capital market firms use them for won't be possible in HTML5. Now users can run Hypergrid inside their window and get significantly better performance than with their native-language applications," he says.

The vendor has been carrying out compatibility testing with its community of firms, before releasing version 5.0 of the software last week.

Until now, OpenFin's main focus has been trading applications and single-dealer platforms, but the vendor is currently in talks with an unnamed large information provider that is about to roll out its Container software to update its own data platform from legacy technologies to HTML5, Dar says.

"We are actively speaking with market data vendors, who over the years have tried to write portions of their platforms in HTML5. But they can't do it overnight. We can help build an application that can looks like any market data terminal, and that can be easily integrated with Java or .Net or Flash. If you are a provider of market data terminals, it's possible to do a phased upgrade," he adds.

Faye Kilburn

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in response to client demand. Contix will now be able to provide institutional and retail commodities traders with alerts on agriculture and meats, base and precious metals, and the oil and gas markets.

>>Telx Rolls Out Improved Datacenter Provisioning Portal
Datacenter operator Telx has released improved versions of the ordering and inventory management modules of its MarketplacePortal site, which allows clients to remotely order and provision services within its datacenters. In the ordering module, Telx has improved the forms for ordering interconnection products, and has made it easier to track and comment on cross-connect orders by creating individual

case numbers for each cross-connect order. Meanwhile, Telx has rolled out a new user interface for clients to manage their cross-connect inventory, allowing them to assign their own IDs to network panels in its "Meet-me" room, to order cross-connects directly from the GUI, and to request disconnects by selecting ports in the GUI. The vendor has also improved the reports that users can download for their inventory records.

>>Metamako Taps Westcon for Client Delivery Services
Australian low-latency switch vendor Metamako has entered into a global supply chain services agreement with New York-based network infrastructure and data-

center solutions provider Westcon to help the vendor reach more clients, particularly in Europe and the US. Established in response to a rise in sales, officials say the partnership will see Westcon take lead responsibility for providing global fulfillment and logistics services to Metamako's growing client base.

>>Rimes Adds China Data to BDS
Benchmark data management provider Rimes Technologies has added China-Bond benchmark pricing from the China Central Depository and Clearing Co to its Benchmark Data Service. The agreement includes pricing for more than 50 indexes operated by ChinaBond covering the Chinese markets.

Symphony Unveils Data Partners, Icap Plans Rollout to 'Thousands'

[<1] of Icap's e-commerce division. In addition, "Icap has thousands of brokers, who will all eventually have access," he says.

To access pre-integrated data from its partners, users must first subscribe to the data sources—though S&P Capital IQ is making basic company data available for free to all Symphony users. Then, when they hover over a hashtagged stock symbol in a message, they are presented with a pop-up containing a series of options, where they can choose to set up an alert for that symbol, or to display a window of each vendor's data. For example, Dow Jones will provide access to premium news from Dow Jones and *The Wall Street Journal*, relevant to specific countries or topics; while Symphony users will be able to access S&P Capital IQ company financials, estimates, ratios and ownership data for free, and—for S&P Capital IQ subscribers—link to its analytics platform; and Selerity will provide access to contextually relevant news from its new Selerity Context recommendation solution.

"We've received a significant amount of inbound interest from many different partners, so we expect to see this accelerate," Gurle says, describing Symphony as a "launchpad" that provides access to different forms of collaboration, which he believes will be more critical to data platforms of the future than content alone.

"What we see happening is that because messaging is so core and central, firms want to eliminate the distance between the content they use and share, and make it as close as possible to the communication platform they want to use—for example, they don't want to have to paste a URL into an email; they just want to drag and drop content," he says. "The focus of the partner ecosystem is to find a way to bring content and communications into one platform."

Indeed, Joanna Appleton, head of EMEA partnerships at Dow Jones, says the news provider integrated its content directly into Symphony's workflow so that users wouldn't need to leave the messaging interface to read news stories.

The first stage of creating that ecosystem is creating a sandbox where providers of third-party tools can make their offerings available to clients, which in the second quarter of next year will become an app store of third-party services. The second phase of the ecosystem will provide deeper collaboration tools, such as integration with audio and video sources, though this could also extend to group chat programs or even to a company's trading floor PBX system. In fact, the vendor has already integrated with Google Hangouts to allow users to invite colleagues to participate in live chats through the messaging interface.

In addition to integrating more content providers, Symphony will benefit from making more data available as existing content partners expand the data they make available via the platform. "We will bring more and more content [onto Symphony]—for example, Platts for energy and commodities data, and S&P ratings—over time," says John Macdonald, general manager at S&P Capital IQ.

However, Gurle insists that Symphony doesn't want to be a data aggregator—and certainly isn't trying to be the Bloomberg-killer that the market is casting it as. "People are positioning us against an incumbent player, and we are really not after that market. We don't want to be an information terminal," he says. "Other vendors provide 'information terminals,' not collaboration platforms, and we think that era is over where you use content to jump into interaction. There are different ways of operating a partner model—you could be an aggregator, but we decided against that. The universe is unbundling, and … it's better to be a rendezvous facilitator between providers and customers."

Nevertheless, potential users *are* hoping to displace incumbent messaging solutions. "There's one big one out there, and it's a very good one, but if it is only used for messaging, then on a per-word basis, it's very expensive," says Icap's Berry.

Symphony's service will be available free of charge for individuals, while Symphony for businesses of more than 50 users costs $15, as does Symphony for enterprise.

The formal launch and partner announcement comes as the New York State Department of Financial Services announced it has reached agreements with Symphony and four of the vendor's bank backers—Goldman Sachs, Deutsche Bank, Credit Suisse and Bank of New York Mellon—to retain storage of certain records and chat messages for seven years, and also have the participating firms store duplicate copies for their own. Officials said at the time that Symphony's claims of "Guaranteed Data Deletion" would make it harder for the firms to conduct market surveillance, and spot any anomalies that might signal market abuse.

"We agree with Wall Street: Cloud is not a secure infrastructure… and so we had to think hard. So before the word you are typing leaves your computer, we encrypt it with a secret key that is only known by the sender and recipient. So there are multiple layers of security that provide protection against cyber attacks," Gurle says, adding that the NYDFS ultimately gave Symphone a clean bill of health. "Regulators have a significant role to play in our economies, and everything depends on their success."

Max Bowie

xCelor Slashes Switch Latency

[<1] specific applications."

Making its own FPGA boards offers two additional benefits to xCelor, Walker says. First, self-manufacturing makes the overall cost of FPGAs much cheaper, he says, while the second avenue is that xCelor can begin selling FPGA cards. "We are considering selling this as a generic FPGA card for other people to program," he adds.

Meanwhile, the SSD ports "allow you to troubleshoot your network with minimal effort," by supporting "high-fidelity" data capture and replay with timestamps accurate to 10 nanoseconds, and to record and replay data on a rolling basis without having to deploy expensive appliances at different locations on a firm's global network—or, since these devices are often expensive, send the same appliance to different locations.
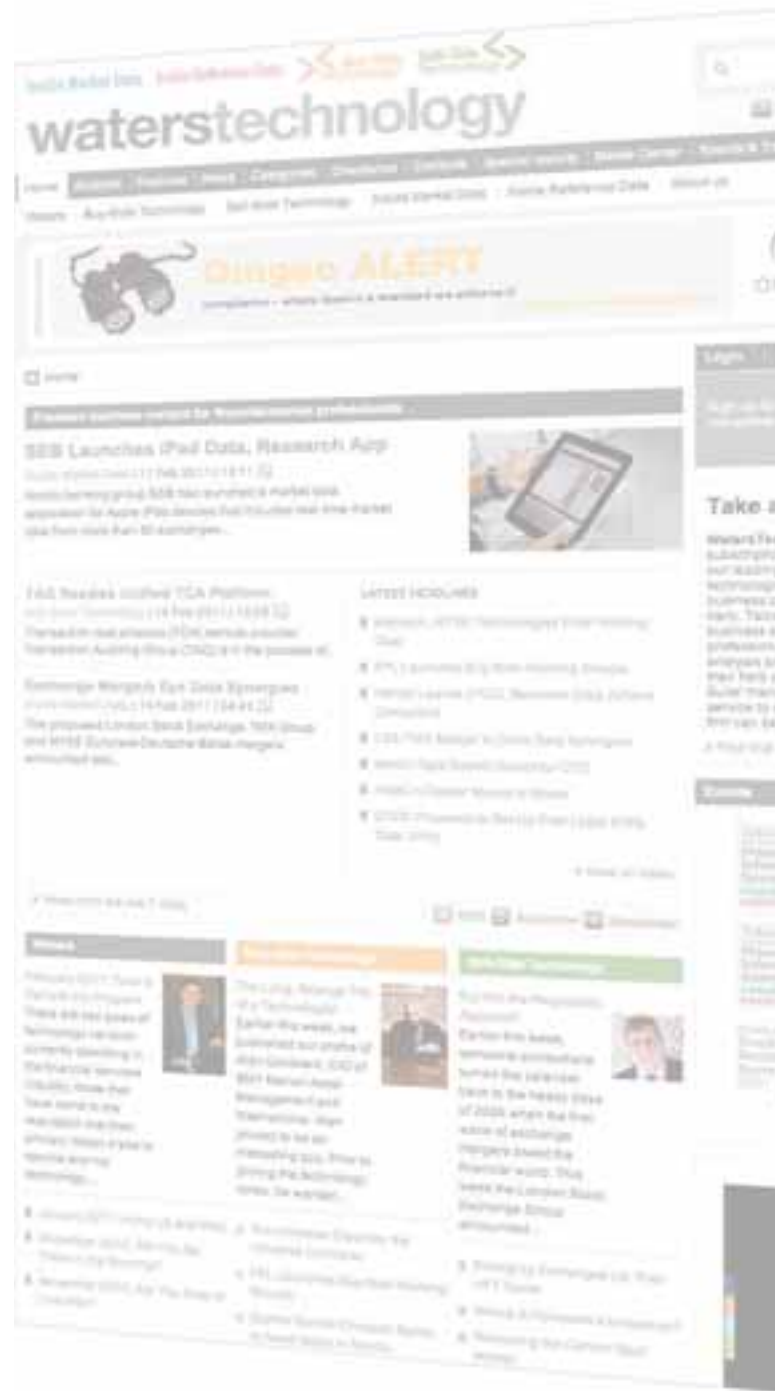
Max Bowie

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