CRÉDIT AGRICOLE
CONSUMER FINANCE

CA-CF implements Virtel to **inject data into IMS from an external HTTP server**

THE CUSTOMER

CA-CF (Crédit Agricole Consumer Finance) is a French company resulting from the merge of Sofinco and Finaref, two major players in the field of consumer credit.

THE CHALLENGE

The CA-CF credit granting application runs on IMS in a central z/OS environment. This application required the collection of information located on an external HTTP server, hosted by a third party partner. The retrieved data needed to be directly integrated into the IMS framework in strictly less than one second. Unfortunately, due to limitations of IMS v13, it proved impossible to treat such requests with traditional ICAL and IMS-connect processes. In addition, there was a requirement to return the retrieved data in a format recognized by the COBOL end-programs.

The solution had to comply with the following requirements:

• Collection of data flows greater than 2Mb on a remote HTTP server

• Use of WSDL-generated SOAP requests to perform this collection

• Parallelization of 500 calls per hour for 6 MPPs

• Communication with the requesting IMS environment

• Reformatting of the request before it is sent (auto-completion of optional fields)

• Reformatting of the reply before it is returned (translation of numeric fields to a format accepted by COBOL programs)

• EBCDIC/UTF-8 transcodification in both directions

• Total response time (including transcodification) no greater than 5 seconds.

THE SOLUTION

The communication between IMS and Virtel Web Integration is based on an ICAL/IMS-CONNECT dialog in TPIPE-mode. A specific device allows Virtel to ensure parallel processing by managing multiple connections on the same TPIPE.

Virtel also manages the format conversion between the IMS applications and the remote server, through specific integration scenarios run in its own environment. These scenarios are automatically developed with Virtel's integrated design tool Virtel Studio, based on imported WSDL specifications.

Virtel communicates with the remote server in HTTP mode. A single call to the Web Service can generate up to 15 calls to secondary services.

THE RESULTS

Since it has been in production, the system has been scaled up: two new types of requests have been added to the initial Virtel Web Integration solution.

"*The solution provided by Virtel perfectly fits our requirements – it is both performant and flexible: the average recorded response times are significantly lower than the required values, and we can easily implement additional services or change the existing ones whenever we need to*" states CACF's Project Leader.