

# Gen-i Provides Web Services Gateway for Aon

Gen-i helps Aon New Zealand reach out to partners through a new standardised Websphere Web Services Gateway.

## Background – About Aon

Aon is New Zealand's largest insurance broking and risk consulting company. With over 500 staff operating through a network of 50 branches Aon offers world leading risk management, retail, reinsurance, wholesale brokerage, claims management, specialty services, and human capital consulting services.

## Challenge – Finding the right technology for growth

As an organisation that prides itself on development and innovation, Aon New Zealand had a vision to grow its business by delivering more of the company's services through its community of business partners. To do this in a way that best met its partners' needs Aon needed to find the right technology for business growth.

The main problem for Aon was that its existing IT technology restricted partner access to Aon's business data and relied on partners having to log in twice to access their records. In addition, the current system was not as time or cost effective as required and with a large portion of its partners with disparate systems, Aon needed to unlock its data in a standardised way for easy access by all business partners.

As Shankar Krishnamurti, Gen-i Principal Architect explains, Aon needed to find a way to enable effective data sharing.

"Aon's old system was not meeting its needs. Aon wanted more of its partners to be able to access their information in real time from one web interface and the challenge it faced was how to unlock the business data so partners had direct exposure to it when they needed it," says Krishnamurti.

## Solution – Standardised web technology for partner access

To achieve its aim of business growth via the partner channel Aon decided to provide access to application and business data using web services technology. This technology would be easily accessed by partner systems and thereby had the potential to increase the scope of delivering Aon's business through many competitive business partner channels.

With the help of Gen-i, Aon New Zealand put in place the IBM Websphere Web Services Gateway to provide access to Aon's application and business data contained in an insurance system hosted in Aon Australia. Aon's business partners in New Zealand can now use these web services to benefit from Aon's application and business data. This has allowed them to integrate more tightly with Aon's systems and, in turn, allowed Aon to offer a more sophisticated service to its partners.

"Web services is standard technology, any system can talk to it, so business partners don't need to worry about conforming to the technology to take the data out, they just need to use the web service to access the information and this is standard and repeatable through all of Aon's business partners," says Krishnamurti.

As Steve Gawne, General Manager - Information & Technology (NZ / Pacific), Aon New Zealand Limited explains, the system has the potential to be scaled internationally.

"The use of IBM's Websphere Web Services Gateway provides seamless connectivity between the host application and client interface irrespective of where either are located globally," says Gawne.

Gawne says Gen-i's expertise in web services was invaluable.

**"Gen-i provided a quality end to end service and strong project management. Web services is leading edge technology in what is perceived as quite a specialist field; we were looking for a partner who could provide expertise in this area and found this with Gen-i," says Gawne.**

"The web services allow Aon to deliver a key superannuation application to our New Zealand clients allowing them to integrate the application into their own internal portal."

### Benefits are realised through web services gateway

The Websphere Web Services Gateway went live in September 2006 and Aon New Zealand is already enjoying the benefits this system can bring. Krishnamurti says Aon is impressed by the functionality of the web services, which is currently providing instantaneous information to a key partner who is enjoying efficiencies created by the 'self help' nature of the system.

"The solution allows the Websphere Web Services Gateway to access the old Aon system, get the information and send it out to their business partner and this provides a very real benefit in terms of customer service," says Krishnamurti.

Furthermore, as Gawne explains, Websphere Web Services Gateway has the ability to see who is calling a particular service and who is evoking the service. This means Aon can now offer its business partners different packages based on their usage.

**"We can now 'tailor map' different application and business data required by individual business partners," says Gawne. "We are very happy with how the project turned out. We believe the benefits we and our partners will receive will only increase."**

Currently the system Aon is using enables business partners to access information and data from the service, but does not present them with a customised web site. Aon's plan for the future is to provide tailor-made websites for its partners.

"Aon wants to present the data so that is pre-packaged for partners. We have started prototyping and exploring options of how we would make it available via customised client portals for partners," says Gawne.

"We are an innovative company and pride ourselves on using leading edge systems. With Websphere Web Services Gateway we have found one such system that is going to make a big difference in the way we provide information."