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## Skyler Joins Platform Race for High-End Trading Applications

Competition in the high-performance data management segment got keener this month with the emergence of Skyler Technology's C3 Database for Dynamic Data, whose early-access developer programme is being announced at the SIA Technology Management conference in New York. Skyler is seeking to differentiate itself within this growing market segment with a three-in-one offering that it believes gives it a unique appeal to institutions seeking off-the-shelf solutions for managing high-speed streaming data in support of electronic trading applications.

Skyler, whose activities have received the endorsement of electronic trading pioneer Bill Lupien, co-founder of Instinet, believes that the market's massive increase in data volumes and compliance requirements are forcing institutions to look beyond their traditionally in-house developed solutions for managing high-end real-time data management tasks. As such, the Walnut Creek, Calif.-based company is joining the likes of Aleri Labs, Progress/Apama, Streambase and Vhayu in what it sees as a burgeoning market segment.

Valerie Bannert-Thurner, Vice President of Business Development at Skyler, reckons upwards of 85% of the technology infrastructure currently used within financial services organizations to handle high-performance real-time market data processing is homegrown. She cites TowerGroup estimates that suggest a current third-party packaged solution marketplace of around \$150 million annually, indicating a potential marketplace of close to \$1 billion.

Whether this can be realized by the slew of providers chasing these data management dollars remains to be seen. But what is clear is that dealing with the combination of higher order and quote volumes- generated in part by the explosion in algorithmic trading- with the ever-growing regulatory requirement posed by Regulation NMS and MiFID, is crystallizing the market's view on handling low-latency data for trading applications.

To meet the growing demand in this area, says Skyler President and COO Michael Lenahan, the company has combined three key capabilities in C3 that can be used in an integrated fashion or as individual components within an electronic trading platform environment.

C3 combines a real-time cache, a stream processing engine and a time-series database. Skyler is stressing the high throughput of the C3 platform, both as real-time cache capable of delivering update speeds in excess of one million messages/second into its time-series database or other relational database management system, and as a platform capable of delivering value-added, derived data at rates as high as 200,000 messages/second. These value-added data types, Lenahan says, could be calculations of total volume, open/high/low/closes or VWAP values.

The platform is aimed at helping financial institutions to design and create such applications as equity ticker plants, order book management, and real-time calculations engines in support of automated and algorithmic trading strategies.

The platform itself makes use of 64-bit computing for the database and runs in Linux, with ports available to Windows and Solaris. The APIs and GUIs are 32-or 64-bit and can work with any kind of operating system.

C3 is currently in alpha evaluations phase, following a development period that has involved consultation with an advisory group from the financial and development communities. Skyler is now inviting developers to join its early-access programme.

Through that programme, the company aims to target developers at hedge funds, brokerages and prime brokerage operations, ECNs and exchanges, and information vendors. The C3 platform can also be embedded within specific trading applications offered by the likes of Charles River Development, Sungard and others.

The early-access programme will give qualified organizations access to the Skyler product for application, testing and analysis, and includes a free 30-day evaluation period.

While the stress on reaching developers is important for such a high-performance capability, Bannert-Thurner also acknowledges the need to reach business decision-makers and ultimately CIOs and CTOs. Lupien's involvement certainly won't harm upstart Skyler's credibility. Like Remington's Victor Kiam, Lupien apparently liked the product and business concept so much that he joined Skyler's board of directors this year (although he didn't buy the company...).

While all of this bodes well for Skyler, the proof is ultimately in the pudding. Skyler executives will spend the SIA Show demonstrating capability to market developers, with a view to kicking of a beta programme later in the summer. The offering may be compelling- in terms of performance and cost- but the high-performance data management space is becoming crowded and so the company must move quickly to prove its credibility and gain traction as the third-party marketplace begins to materialize.