

# Software as a Service comes of age

Banks are finding that Software as a Service (SaaS) can deliver a powerful, global, efficient, and flexible platform to serve their bank-wide needs for trade and cash management.

As the global market emerges from one of the most devastating financial crises in modern history, financial institutions are examining past practices as they create a transformed future. Many of these companies still operate with costly proprietary or licensed systems, and outdated processes and infrastructures that inhibit growth and innovation. Forward-thinking financial institutions recognise the critical need to stay ahead of intensified competition by enhancing their global offerings beyond traditional trade and running their trade business on one platform

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## A critical business solution

Once considered a "one size must fit all" solution, SaaS has evolved into highly-

customisable, essential global platforms providing strategic advantages that would be difficult for enterprises to provide in-house.

A 2010 *InformationWeek Analytics* survey ["Why You Need a SaaS Strategy," InformationWeek, January 2010] of business technologists found that three-quarters of companies using SaaS considered application services extremely or critically important to their organisations. About one-third described their SaaS applications as mission critical. Another report from Forrester Research ["The ROI of Software-As-A-Service," Forrester Research, Inc., July, 2009] examined a range of companies that chose SaaS solutions.

Key benefits of SaaS cited by the report included:

- Rapid deployment
- Increased user adoption
- A high level of security and mobility
- Reduced support needs
- Lower implementation and upgrade costs

In trade banking, regional and global banks can gain access to flexible software applications by utilising SaaS platforms that can quickly and efficiently provide traditional and emerging trade offerings to their clients.

## The ideal trade partner

CGI's Trade360™ (formerly Proponix360™) is a prime example of a SaaS solution providing essential trade and supply chain finance capabilities – including traditional trade, open account, supply chain finance, receivables management and cash management – on a single integrated platform that supports a bank's global trade business.

With Trade360's rapid deployment and no maintenance fees, benefits are realised almost immediately. Its highly customisable, rule-driven architecture, gives the bank tremendous flexibility in defining local and global business rules and operating models. As a SaaS platform it is

## Trade360 Helps Smaller Banks Win Big Business

A mid-size bank using Trade360 won the business of a large US retailer for their bank-assisted open account and Letters of Credit (LC) services.

The retailer directed its most complex business to the bank exclusively, because according to the retailer, the top-tier trade banks' technology couldn't handle them.

As a result of the enabling capabilities in Trade360, the bank was able to compete head-to-head with other banks that clearly outsized them and were recognised as supply chain leaders.

deployable across the bank, around the globe, with virtually no technology footprint within the bank. New market leading solutions are developed and delivered to production in a fraction of the usual time, providing a dramatically improved “time to market.” With its functional, synchronous customer portal, CGI’s Trade360 is the only complete front-to-back, end-to-end integrated trade, supply chain, and cash management platform available. This model is a powerful solution for client banks who want to keep pace with the increased level of technology investment required to remain competitive with the largest banks in the industry.

### Customer satisfaction

Trade360, now in its tenth year of operation, gives banks a significant advantage in the market. The SaaS model delivers a proven technology and a partner that offers substantial infrastructure, application, and development support to make a bank’s trade and supply chain business work, thus freeing the organisation to focus on market leadership and innovation. Over the past 25-plus years, CGI’s trade and supply chain group has made it a top priority to partner closely with clients to support their business strategies. This is why the Trade360 banks are among the most efficient and highly regarded trade banks in the world.

As a case in point, two of CGI’s clients, The Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited (ANZ) and Bank of Montreal (BMO), both won the “Best in Country Trade Bank Award” from an industry magazine in July 2010, for their respective home countries. Using Trade360, both organisations have been able to provide a robust, efficient and flexible solution for every aspect of their global trade operations.

Upon receiving the award, Sara Joyce, executive managing director and head of trade finance, BMO, noted, “BMO has leading capabilities to assist customers engaged in world trade. BMO’s trade finance group advises companies at every stage of development across a wide variety of industry sectors. We help our customers anticipate and respond to changing market conditions, manage relationships with their trading partners and navigate through a rapidly changing risk and regulatory landscape.”

### Looking to the future

CGI continues to enhance the Trade360 platform, so banks can keep up with the increasing global demands from customers. In 2009, CGI launched new global trade services in receivables management and deployed fully integrated cash management capabilities to support a client’s expansion into Asia.

Banks can leverage Trade360’s cash management functionality to initially win new business, with integrated trade solutions becoming the logical cross-sell opportunity, resulting in additional revenue streams for the bank.

However, banks can opt to implement the appropriate mix of Trade360’s extensive capabilities in any order. The bank has full control over the services it wants to offer, as well as the pace of rolling out new capabilities. And, as an integrated platform, the new features can be launched in all of a bank’s markets simultaneously.



### CGI Trade360 Global Trade Platform

