



Citi Adds Futures to Velocity Platform

Citi now provides users of its Velocity electronic trading platform with direct market access to major futures exchanges around the world. Citi developed the platform to provide professional traders and other institutional clients with advanced electronic trading functionalities for interest rate and foreign exchange markets. Clients can now monitor prices and place orders for futures side by side with rates and FX products, making it easier to engage in cross-asset class trading strategies. Orders can be managed with drag-and-drop functions and a number of algorithmic order types are available.



SGX Revamps Trading Technology

Singapore Exchange has announced two significant investments in its technology—an upgrade to its derivatives trading and clearing platforms and the construction of a new platform for trading bonds.

The upgraded derivatives platforms which the exchange has named “SGX Titan” are scheduled to go live by the end of 2016 and are based on the Genium Inet solution provided by Nasdaq. The upgrade will provide increased efficiency and lower costs for market participants as well as strengthened risk controls and system safeguards, the exchange said.

“We are proud to continue our longstanding relationship with SGX and partner with them as they continue to build and strengthen their core market technologies,” commented Lars Ottersgard, executive vice president, market technology, Nasdaq.

For the new bond trading platform, SGX is partnering with TradingScreen, an independent software vendor. The new platform will support electronic trading in Asian bonds, which according to the two companies has an urgent need for new trading mechanisms to meet the demand for liquidity.

“We are very pleased to be working with SGX, a gateway for investment into Asia and a constant innovator, to launch a bond trading platform that will both respond to the current liquidity challenge and provide customers with additional choices and increased trading efficiency,” said Philippe Buhannic, chief executive officer of TradingScreen.



CBOE Expands Index Options Suite via MSCI License

The Chicago Board Options Exchange announced a licensing agreement with index provider MSCI that will significantly expand the range of index options offered at CBOE.

Starting in the first quarter, CBOE will begin offering trading in options on two well-known international equity benchmarks: the MSCI EAFE index, a leading benchmark for European and Asian stocks, and the MSCI Emerging Markets index, which covers 23 emerging markets. Four other MSCI indices are part of the agreement.

Options already exist for ETFs based on these two MSCI indices and rank among the most actively traded options in the U.S. The CBOE products will differ in that they will be based directly on the indices. In addition, the license is exclusive in the U.S., meaning that no other U.S. exchange can offer the same products.

MSCI has separate agreements with ICE, Eurex and Singapore Exchange for the licensing of futures on MSCI indices. Trading in these products has grown dramatically over the last three years, particularly on the former Liffe platform.

“We are delighted to have licensed the CBOE, the global leader in index options, to list options on six of our most popular global equity indexes,” said Baer Pettit, head of MSCI’s index business. “We’ve seen record trading volumes in 2014 for futures based on the MSCI indices.”



OptionsCity Acquires Optionshop

OptionsCity Software in November acquired Optionshop, a futures trading technology provider that uses cloud-based technology for trading. Both companies specialize in providing services for electronic trading of options on futures. The deal will add new technology features to OptionsCity’s set of existing products and give it access to brokers that use Optionshop’s trading solutions.

“We are pleased to add Optionshop’s talented development team and innovative product-set to OptionsCity,” said Hazem Dawani, chief executive officer of OptionsCity.



Orc Adds Tech Edge with Tbricks Acquisition

Two Scandinavian providers of trading technology—Orc Group and Tbricks—are set to combine following the acquisition of Tbricks by the owner of Orc.

The deal will bring together Tbricks software with Orc's technology and distribution capacity, the two companies said. Orc is a leading provider of technology for trading exchange-traded derivatives. Tbricks provides market makers, proprietary traders and banks with low-latency technology for automated trading and specializes in providing trading applications with open source code, which allows users to quickly modify their trading applications in response to changing market conditions.

"I anticipate the acquisition to significantly strengthen Orc's offering in the trading domain and help us continue servicing the most sophisticated participants in global capital markets," said Torben Munch, chief executive officer of Orc Group. "The Tbricks team constitutes some of the most skilled, passionate and experienced technologists in the trading domain today, and the addition of them to our team will greatly enhance our competitiveness going forward."



Deutsche Börse Buys Stake in FX Trading Platform

Deutsche Börse announced in November it acquired a minority stake in R5FX, a financial technology company based in London that is developing a new interbank liquidity pool for emerging market currencies. The company has signed letters of intent with more than 20 banks interested in joining the platform and expects to launch by the end of the first quarter.

Brendan Bradley, chief innovation officer at Eurex, explained that the investment is part of the exchange operator's broader strategy of investing in start-up companies and exchange infrastructure. "These investments are complementary to developing our wider footprint in the global financial marketplace," Bradley said.

The new venue was developed to help market participants comply with the migration from voice to screen trading in emerging market currencies. The new venue also is aimed at supporting new regulatory requirements for foreign exchange trading, such as the implementation of mandatory clearing for non-deliverable forwards.

R5FX will be accessible through both API and GUI interfaces, and will use a central limit order book. It will also be connected to all the relevant clearing and reporting venues to solve credit, compliance, counterparty and liquidity issues.



HKEx Brings Futures and Options into Orion Market Data Platform

Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing in December completed the migration of its futures and options products to its Orion Market Data Platform, the last stage in a major upgrade of its market data services.

"The completion of the OMD rollout is a significant milestone in the evolution of our market platforms," said Roger Lee, head of market operations, global market division at HKEx. "OMD is a transformative system because it now brings all of our HKEx markets to the same high level of customer service as well as extending direct distribution of our market data to the mainland."

The OMD platform uses technology provided by Euronext to offer low-latency market data for all asset classes in a common message format. Through this service HKEx provides a range of data feed products with different content and other features to meet the varying needs of information vendors, exchange participants and investors, HKEx said. These include a "full tick" service that streams the full depth of the order book in real time.

As of year-end, the exchange had migrated nearly all of the existing clients of its legacy datafeeds for derivatives to the OMD platform and expects to decommission the legacy datafeeds by February.