



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

INDUSTRY

Financial Services

GEOGRAPHY

San Francisco, CA

CHALLENGES

Needed a configurable, open-architecture platform for corporate payables, receivables, and integration with commercial customers, including robust reporting capabilities

SOLUTION

- Axway B2B Integration
- Axway SecureTransport

RESULTS

- New services on par with or exceeding the country's largest banks
- Staged platform deployment, on budget, with no internal development required
- Met all "service pillar" requirements under the bank's SecureDirect initiative

Bank of the West

Bank innovates for customer growth, leverages on proven track record

Since 1874, when Bank of the West first opened on the California frontier, the company has helped people prosper and businesses grow. Throughout its history, Bank of the West has remained financially strong because of its stable foundation, sound banking practices, and passion for customer service. Today, as a wholly owned subsidiary of global financial services leader BNP Paribas, Bank of the West operates nearly 700 branches and commercial offices in 19 states with 10,000 employees. It is one of the largest regional banks in the United States, with more than \$63 billion in assets.

Many banks, particularly larger institutions, have portfolios of cash management products and services they offer to commercial clients. These services, such as receivables and payables management and liquidity management, are largely dependent on a bank's technical capabilities, as well as its ability to integrate with customers in order to share information.

Recently, Bank of the West reviewed its cash management business with the goal of building on its reputation for operational excellence and outstanding client service. To continue to grow and improve its offering to new and existing clients, the Bank decided to add innovative products and services that would extend its capabilities and improve its competitive position in the industry.

Bank of the West set out on a mission: Build on past success in cash management with new innovative products that meet the needs of current customers and attract new commercial clients.

The mission – govern the flow of data

Go beyond what's needed now

Bank of the West quickly realized that it had to go beyond an off-the-shelf integrated payables solution and instead pursue a more strategic approach. “We presented to executive management an idea that pushed the envelope further,” said Omar Loya, CTP Product Group Manager, VP, Bank of the West. “We wanted to find a comprehensive solution that set the stage for further growth, rather than just meeting the immediate need. We call this initiative SecureDirect.”

The search begins

Whittling down the vendor list

With executive approval, the team began searching for the right platform vendor for SecureDirect, asking critical questions related to technical capabilities, development requirements, scalability, architecture, and more. Along with integrated payables and enhanced Automated Clearing House (ACH) file processing, Bank of the West also sought a solution that would require little to no development, with an open architecture the bank could configure and control, and with the capacity to field a range of tasks and customer demands, including:

- Receivables reporting
- BAI reporting
- Web services for real-time integration of payments initiation and reporting
- Increased efficiency and automation for both the bank and its clients
- Internal visibility tools and client alerts
- Customer billing

“We were looking for a package, a toolset, or a platform that would be ours,” said Loya. “We wanted to control the configuration and be able to handle pretty much everything on our end without much development, and at a cost that makes sense for us.”

After closely reviewing several solutions, Bank of the West chose Axway based on three primary criteria:

- The Axway platform had all the technical capabilities the bank was seeking, including an on-premises implementation
- Overall solution costs met the bank's parameters in terms of being flexible enough to meet current and future requirements
- The Axway solution would integrate extremely well with existing systems, including the SecureTransport gateway already in use at the bank

Rolling deployment

A phased and strategic process

Implementation of the Axway solution has been completed in phases, with testing and training every step of the way to ensure that Bank of the West staff was knowledgeable, up to speed, and ready for customer onboarding.

Supported by the Axway platform, Bank of the West's SecureDirect initiative includes three primary services pillars:

01 Banking integration

Includes payment instructions, banking information, and communications between the customer and the bank – for payables, receivables, and information reporting. Using the Axway platform, all of this data is transmitted between the customer system and the bank's systems automatically as either traditional batch files or in the form of real-time web services, reducing the need for portal-based communication.

02 Enterprise integration

Includes integration with customers that can't support standard industry formats. Axway's mapping component eliminates this problem and solves file-related issues, bridging the gap between corporate accounting or ERP systems on the one hand, and the new platform that is able to provide Bank of the West's back-office systems with the expected format on the other. Enterprise integration is also the "governance pillar" of the platform, where business rules are set and configured, telling the platform not just to move data between the client and the bank, but how to inspect, authenticate, validate, transform, and provide visibility into mission-critical, "big-value" financial data.

03 Technology partnerships

Using Axway technology, Bank of the West is now able to work with software and ERP vendors to help its customers meet their business efficiency and cost-saving goals. Leveraging the Axway platform, SecureDirect can be extended to customers that don't have the capability to integrate technologies on their own. For example: A trucking company that uses ERP software to handle shipments, invoicing, and payments would like direct communication between that software and Bank of the West. Using the Axway platform, the trucking company can process electronic payments and reconcile information received from the B2B software, automatically. Other banks provide these services only to their larger customers, but Bank of the West now extends technology cooperation to midsized organizations as well.

Reaping the benefits

Bank of the West and its satisfied customers

With the Axway platform, Bank of the West can now respond to requests for services such as integrated payables, real-time machine-to-machine communication, and much more. Axway technology has laid the groundwork for a much-needed expansion of services.

Leveraging the Axway platform, Bank of the West now offers customers and prospects the following key competitive benefits:

- **Flexibility to support any client format, standard or proprietary.** The bank's customers can now simply provide their file format information, and Bank of the West can map it to whatever format is needed — a high-value service that saves their customers the time and money required to do the mapping themselves.
- **Real-time, multichannel monitoring and reporting.** These capabilities deliver a deeper, broader level of data-flow visibility to Bank of the West, enabling its customer service, IT, production support, and product management staff to view transactions in detail, in real time. "How do you know when the system is down?" asked Loya. "How do you know when a transaction is stuck? With the new reporting capabilities, as well as alerts and rules we can now build into the system, we know when issues — or even potential issues — need attention. This lowers risk levels considerably, and it's easy for everyone on the team to use."
- **Automation of mission-critical processes.** For instance, one Bank of the West customer — one of the largest title companies in the U.S. — uses Bank of the West's SecureDirect service for automating outgoing wires and reporting, including wired funds for closing escrow on real estate deals. This means that SecureDirect automates a vital process that was formerly manual — not only speeding up closings, but in addition, eliminating the risk of human error that could potentially extend the process by hours or up to days. And using Axway's robust reporting features, the bank can see in real time when a wire has been confirmed, without having to pull up the database every few minutes — a feature especially important for time-sensitive closings. As a direct result of new capabilities delivered using the Axway platform, the title company plans to expand the list of banking services it receives from Bank of the West.

New services + new customers

It all adds up to positive ROI

In the short timeframe since initial deployment of SecureDirect, Bank of the West has been able to offer new and innovative services that meet the needs of new and existing clients. Those using SecureDirect have seen immediate benefits, including:

- Cost savings through the elimination of manual processes
- Reduced risk of human error in processing
- Faster transaction processing times

The expanded offerings developed with Axway have helped create new opportunities for Bank of the West, including state and municipal governments and other organizations looking for new banking providers.

A bright future

A great relationship

With Axway, Bank of the West has added critical technology to its infrastructure, enabling the bank to offer a broad new spectrum of products and services to commercial clients. “We now have a seat at the table with this technology,” said Loya. “We have all the resources to make things happen, and to discover new ways to help our customers be efficient and effective. We have a great relationship with Axway, and we look forward to continuing it into the future.”

“

We now have a seat at the table with this technology. We have all the resources to make things happen, and to discover new ways to help our customers be efficient and effective.

Create an IT architecture that has your future in mind →