Isabel was set up in 1996 to provide companies in Belgium with a way of conducting electronic transactions securely. Owned by the country’s four main banks, Isabel provides a mission-critical service to a community of 20 financial institutions and 45,000 companies located in 53 countries, 24x7.

Over the past two years, the number of messages exchanged using Isabel’s systems has doubled to 24 million a month. Although this has placed considerable pressure on the company’s technology infrastructure, Isabel has been pursuing a strategy aimed at continually improving its service levels, not only for the benefit of domestic customers, but also to prepare for international expansion.
In order to support current and future growth while setting new standards for availability and performance, Isabel decided to implement a new server infrastructure. Although the quality of the technology was a key factor in selecting a supplier, the services element was equally if not more important.

“We needed a company capable of adapting its technology to meet our highly specialised requirements in areas such as security. Of all the companies we looked at, only HP offered the right combination of industry knowledge and breadth of services,” said Philippe Dermine, CIO at Isabel.

**comprehensive services**

To provide resilience and disaster tolerance, Isabel opted to implement a cluster of four HP AlphaServer GS160 systems. Uniquely, this cluster is divided redundantly between two separate sites, with sufficient flexibility to run services on any available node.

HP designed and implemented the server and storage infrastructure as part of a comprehensive suite of services. Other services included: customisation of system management tools; migration of infrastructure and data; training in system operation; and ongoing Business Continuity Services. HP also supplied two-node clusters for testing purposes. Both hardware and services were supplied under a leasing agreement.

The major challenge of the project was the need to migrate to the new infrastructure in a single operation. In Isabel’s view, the risk posed by running the old and new systems in parallel, with the consequent need to process every client transaction twice, was too great. After a year of preparation, the migration itself was achieved over a single weekend and the project delivered exactly to plan and to budget.

**successful outcome**

Isabel now has a stable, cost-effective infrastructure which can support continued growth. Customers are seeing the benefits in the form of enhanced service levels.

“Our customers are experiencing better access than ever before: availability, speed of transfer and speed of treatment are all higher. We were already offering service levels of 99 per cent, but we are now in the 99.99 per cent range,” said Dermine.

“Our requirements for this project were very stringent and HP met them all. Although the success of the outcome rested on a combination of services and hardware, I would single out the knowledge and dedication of HP’s people for special mention. HP’s involvement was a major motivating factor for our own people.”

For more information on how working with HP can benefit you, please contact your local HP sales representative or reseller, or visit: http://www.hp.com

**why HP?**

- Industry knowledge
- Breadth of services
- Ability to modify solution to meet client’s specialised requirements
service highlights:

• Infrastructure design and implementation services
• Provision of customised system management tools
• Migration of infrastructure and associated data
• Training in system operation
• Supply of two test clusters
• hp Business Continuity Services
• Leasing arrangement with hp Finance
• 4 x hp AlphaServer GS160 Model 8 in stretched cluster across two sites
• Tru64 Unix 5.1a
• TruCluster 5
• 4 x FiberChannel SAN switch
• 4 x MSL5026 tape library
• EMC Symmetrix storage solutions
• Cisco routers and switches
• Isabel Business Suite 5.0
• X.500 directory
• X.400 message transfer agents
• Oracle database