



## Customer Profile

### Solution Summary

#### Industry

Financial Services

#### Challenge

Enable real-time dealing for private investors with a fully automated, online trading service to expand market share.

#### Solution

A VeriSign managed Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) to enable digital certificate-based identity authentication and to protect the integrity of personal financial information

# Barclays Stockbrokers Limited

## One of the UK's Largest Retail Stockbrokers Launches Online Trading to Increase Market Share

The name Barclays has been synonymous with banking and investment in the UK for more than 300 years. It's also been synonymous with trust. With help from VeriSign—the leader in Internet trust—Barclays Stockbrokers is moving confidently into the new world of e-trading.

Barclays PLC is a London-based financial services powerhouse with global operations that include Barclays Stockbrokers Limited, one of the UK's largest retail stockbrokers. In 1999, with the Internet emerging as an e-commerce environment, Barclays Stockbrokers launched an online version of its popular ShareDeal by phone service for private investors trading on the London Stock Exchange.

"ShareDeal is ideal for the occasional transaction or for frequent traders who prefer to hold their own certificates," says John Rowberry, e-commerce manager for Barclays Stockbrokers. "We were confident that we could increase our market share by offering real-time Internet dealing." Barclays Stockbrokers wanted its online service to be completely automated, including credit and identity checks. And that meant it had to be completely secure. "Security is an important feature of ShareDeal Online," says Rowberry. "For the online service to succeed, customers have to feel confident that their personal financial data is protected with the same level of care as any other Barclays transaction."

#### COMBINING PROTECTION AND EASE OF INSTALLATION

Rowberry considered a system of passwords to secure the Internet ShareDeal service, but felt it would offer inadequate protection because passwords are hard to remember and easy to guess. Barclays Stockbrokers needed to provide a high level of authentication to ensure privacy and security of individual accounts, while still making it easy for Barclays customers to use Internet ShareDeal. VeriSign's leading managed Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) service was the one solution that could meet these requirements. "I knew VeriSign technology would tie in with our processes and be up and running quickly," says Rowberry. "The implementation was smooth, installation was simple, and support was very good. In fact, it was all more straightforward than we expected."

"VeriSign enabled us to expand our business and acquire 125,000 new clients in one year while offering a convenient, easy-to-use service."

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*John Rowberry  
E-Commerce Manager,  
Barclays Stockbrokers Limited*

Rowberry collaborated with VeriSign over a six-month period, launching a pilot version of Internet ShareDeal in October 1998 and launching the service publicly in April 1999. During the pilot phase, usage climbed from 0 to 500 investors. Today more than 125,000 customers are registered on [www.barclays-stockbrokers.co.uk](http://www.barclays-stockbrokers.co.uk)

#### **READY TO TRADE SECURELY IN MINUTES**

One reason for this rapid growth is the easy, free registration process. New or established Barclays Stockbrokers customers sign up for ShareDeal Online by completing and submitting an application form online. The company's registration system automatically performs a credit and voters-roll check and issues an account number. The customer then receives, via VeriSign managed services, a digital certificate that authorizes access to the Internet ShareDeal service. The entire process, which is transparent to the customer, lasts just three to five minutes.

Registered investors automatically receive an initial credit limit of £7,500 (\$11,000), so they can start trading right away. The Barclays Stockbrokers customer database quickly verifies their identity each time they sign on to the site by automatically checking their digital certificates. Investors are then able to browse stock information, see the most competitive share price available, and accept it immediately. The ShareDeal service instantly confirms the buy or sell transaction online, following up with written confirmation by post. All transaction data is encrypted.

#### **APPEALING TO A NEW KIND OF CUSTOMER**

In late 1999, ShareDeal Online was processing 400 to 500 transactions daily. Now, in peak periods\*, that quantity is up to ten times greater. And although the service already accounts for 46 percent of the company's certificated trading volume, ShareDeal Online is not stealing customers from the ShareDeal call center, even though online commission rates are lower. "It's all additional business," he says. "We're now reaching a whole new set of clients, especially those interested in trading in stocks that are not Blue Chip companies." "We could never have handled such explosive growth in the call center alone; it would be impossible to staff it adequately. On the Internet, however, we have far greater capacity."

#### **AN OPERATIONAL ROLE MODEL**

A recently launched feature of Barclays Stockbrokers enables investors to view their account portfolio online. Over time, Barclays Stockbrokers will enhance the service further. "To launch and successfully operate ShareDeal Online, we had to have reliable security," says Rowberry. "VeriSign enabled us to expand our business and acquire 125,000 new clients in one year while offering a convenient, easy-to-use service. If it wasn't for VeriSign, we might have gone with a more paper-based online solution that couldn't provide the real-time registration and account opening we needed to be competitive. Our ShareDeal Online model proves that a secure online financial service can work for a general audience, not just a technical one."