



Online foreign exchange broker improves customer experience with cloud-based sign-in



Customer

[FxPro](#)

Products and Services

[Azure Active Directory B2C](#)

Industry

[Banking and Capital Markets](#)

Organization Size

[Medium \(50 - 999 employees\)](#)

Country

[United Kingdom](#)

FxPro is an online foreign exchange broker that prides itself on innovative offerings and an outstanding customer experience. To deliver a better customer sign-in experience to its trading platform and web properties, FxPro uses Microsoft Azure Active Directory B2C. With this service, FxPro offers a smoother, faster, more secure sign-in while reducing identity management costs. Savings in this area yield more resources for developing great products. FxPro plans to migrate approximately 700,000 accounts to the cloud.

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—Kypros Lambrou: Web Team Leader
FxPro

If you want to buy and sell stock, you go to a stockbroker. If you want to buy and sell wheat or platinum, you go to a commodity broker. If you want to buy and sell contracts for difference (CFDs) on foreign exchange and other asset classes such as shares, spot indices, futures, spot metals, and spot energies, you go to FxPro, one of the world’s leading online foreign exchange, or forex (FX), brokers. Headquartered in London, FxPro serves retail and institutional clients in more than 150 countries from offices in the United Kingdom, Cyprus, Dubai, and the Bahamas. Since its founding in 2006, FxPro has processed more than 250 billion client orders, or nearly 300,000 trades a day.

Can’t sit still

The company has been so successful in part because of its aggressive commitment to innovation. FxPro is known for its advanced trade execution, pioneering products, and professional trading conditions. “FX CFD trading is a fast-growing industry, and we can’t sit still,” says Kypros Lambrou, Web Team Leader at FxPro. “We have to constantly improve our offerings.”

One business process that surfaced for improvement in 2017 was the authentication mechanism FxPro clients used to access the FxPro trading platform and other web-based systems. FxPro used Windows Server Active Directory for on-premises identity and authentication management. However, FxPro was ready to update its technology to support the innovative services it wanted to offer. For example, FxPro wanted to customize the sign-in page for clients, while also giving them single sign-on to its various web applications—but it couldn’t do either with Active Directory.

As FxPro expanded globally, there were also performance concerns. Clients authenticating themselves through FxPro domain controllers in Cyprus would experience a delay. “A sign-in delay of even a second can mean losing a client, and that immediately affects our profits,” Lambrou says.

Lastly, maintaining the on-premises Active Directory infrastructure was expensive and consumed staff resources that FxPro would rather have focused on enhancing and extending its products.

Authenticate in the cloud

Most FxPro applications run in the company’s datacenters for performance reasons; there’s a great deal of inter-application communications that makes cloud hosting impractical. However, FxPro wanted to move any function it could to the cloud to gain elastic scalability and pay-as-you-go economy and to relieve its IT staff of infrastructure work.

When FxPro learned of [Microsoft Azure Active Directory B2C](#) (Azure AD B2C), a highly scalable consumer-focused cloud identity service, it took note. “We had used Azure for some small applications, we have a good relationship with Microsoft, and we use a lot of Microsoft development and infrastructure products,” Lambrou says. “We trust Microsoft and knew that Azure AD B2C was used by many large organizations to authenticate millions of users.”

Lambrou and colleagues also liked how open Azure AD B2C was to applications “beyond the Microsoft stack,” as Lambrou puts it, meaning those written in open-source languages such as Node.js. The FxPro application portfolio is written in a wide variety of languages, and Azure AD B2C would need to connect with them all. FxPro also liked the product’s support of social sign-ins—using Facebook, LinkedIn, and other social networks to authenticate to FxPro systems.

Migrate quickly

FxPro plans to migrate approximately 700,000 clients from its on-premises Active Directory accounts to Azure AD B2C, with no change to user credentials. Using custom policies in Azure AD B2C that interacted with corporate REST API services, FxPro delivered a migration with minimal business impact, no downtime, and a seamless user experience.

“We are really happy with the Azure Active Directory B2C onboarding process,” Lambrou says. “We also got great support from the Azure product team and our local account team.” FxPro will use Azure AD B2C to authenticate clients on multiple client-facing web applications.

Deliver better client experience

Most important, FxPro delivers a more pleasing and convenient customer experience with Azure AD B2C. When clients sign in to the FxPro client portal, they can perform multiple actions, from depositing and withdrawing funds to creating new accounts and resetting credentials, using the same sign-on.

“With Azure AD B2C, our clients can expect a very secure sign-in process, while they need only remember one username and password for all our web properties,” Lambrou says. “They can also sign in to our systems using their social accounts.”

Now, FxPro can deliver a more responsive sign-in experience. “Performance is much better with Azure AD B2C than with on-premises domain controllers,” Lambrou says. “This is critical to delivering a great customer experience as we expand globally.”

Lambrou’s team plans to use [Microsoft Power BI](#) to analyze data from the client sign-in process and learn where clients hit snags so it can continuously improve the process.

Stay ahead of threats, focus IT staff

While FxPro has used and trusted Active Directory for a decade, it trusts Azure AD B2C even more. “Thanks to the [Microsoft Intelligent Security Graph](#), we take advantage of billions of Azure authentications that happen every month, giving us confidence that Microsoft will stay ahead of threats before we encounter them,” says Lambrou. Azure AD B2C also supports multi-factor authentication, which further strengthens employee and client sign-ins.

FxPro also saved money with the move to the cloud. “The consumption-based pricing means that we don’t have to set up domain controllers for worst-case traffic, which is costly in terms of servers and staff resources,” says Lambrou. “By reducing our identity infrastructure and support work, we have more to spend on further enhancing our range of products.”

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