

# End user experience enhanced as NTT Europe provides CIMA with virtualized hosting together with global content delivery network



Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

“ The NTT team is a genuine extension of our own operations. They have become a key partner in helping us consolidate and develop the quality of how we serve our community online. It has not only been about delivering the right technology, we have often sought their consultancy and have involved them in the selection of other business partners as we progress. We trust them implicitly and they genuinely understand our business ”

Mie Mun, CIMA

## Background

The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) is a leading professional body of management accountants serving members and students in 168 countries. CIMA is committed to upholding high ethical and professional standards through its accredited courses, seminars and publications. CIMA's website [cimaglobal.com](http://cimaglobal.com) has always acted as a 'hub' for communication amongst its growing student and member base.

## Objectives

In recent years, CIMA's aspirations to deliver education through more innovative and tactile multimedia formats, has driven them to demand more from their public facing website and the infrastructure that underpins it.

CIMA began plans to capitalise on the potential of region's thirst for quality education and the global prestige of a Chartered Management Accounting qualification. Top on the list of priorities was a stable ICT solution that would deliver knowledge to the 172,000 students and members scattered across the globe.

## Challenges

CIMA previously employed the services of a regional web services organisation, but the development of Web orientated business meant that it needed to partner with a forward looking ICT solutions partner. The increasing global reach of the CIMA student client base meant that the organisation needed to continually innovate and update their existing services to cater for their demanding and burgeoning student membership.

Developing a strategic, web based service meant creating and hosting a web application capable of delivering video, forums, user-generated content and a growing database of student information.



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“When you are constantly under pressure to innovate and introduce new services, the last thing you want to be worrying about is your IT infrastructure. Your IT has to support you and facilitate growth and NTT makes sure the team here has one less thing to worry about. The next step for us is moving into even more new geographies.”

Mie Mun, CIMA



It was vital that CIMA's online presence was available to its global audience around the clock throughout the year, but it was also important to consider how to provide the extra capacity needed to endure traffic spikes.

Many students access their course results and update their user profiles during key periods in the academic period. It's essential that [cimaglobal.com](http://cimaglobal.com) is available in these peak times. It was clear that the underlying hosting infrastructure needed to scale to accommodate the load on demand.

CIMA's disparate global user base posed another challenge. The web application needed to be responsive regardless of where it was accessed across the world. To achieve this, NTT implemented a reliable content delivery network that would cache rich and static media at a peering point close to the customer and provide uninterrupted service.

“Our approach was to identify a long-term strategic partner that had both the technical and operational experience to support our business model now and in the future. As CIMA expands into new regions, it is vitally important that we can deliver the same high standard of service to all our markets. We therefore wanted a partner that mirrored our own international presence and that could deliver the services to meet our technical demands in any country.”

Mie Mun, CIMA

### Solution

NTT Europe rationalised CIMA's existing infrastructure into a single managed hosting solution. Initially, CIMA hosted their client facing corporate web site with NTT Europe as part of a staged migration from its incumbent provider. In addition they contracted an MPLS network. The web platform was innovative in that it was based on a Dual Site, Active / Active platform together with Smart Content Delivery.

CIMA later added Phase 2 to the platform development by deploying a Siebel based back end CRM platform. This enables student to view personalised web content and allow's CIMA staff to manage their membership. Additional tactical platforms have been added such as a financials platform and a new virtualised CMS platform based on Episerver.

The site is supported locally by a high-speed connections between the two NTT data centers and CIMA's head office in the UK. In turn, this connects to NTT's content delivery network, which caches and distributes site data globally to safeguard the performance of the site wherever and whenever it's being accessed.

“NTT has a reputation for delivering top quality services, particularly managed hosting, which has made it easier to very quickly roll out changes to our key web application. Additionally, using NTT Europe’s international content delivery network has made us confident that our partners and members are still receiving quality content without interruption. It’s effectively enabling us to reach more people in more places and justify further international investment.”

Mie Mun, CIMA

## Benefit

A lot of functionality has been integrated into the site since its launch. Cimaglobal.com is now used to promote the skills of their graduates potential employers; advertise events, briefings, seminars and courses; stream educational videos; run discussion boards, blogs and members forums.

CIMA has reported that the global response times for its solution had reduced across the board, which met a key objective in enhancing the end user experience. The solution has also remained stable and able to service the peak loads they demand. Operationally, CIMA has reported that the response from the NTT Europe support centre is far better than the previous service provider, which means the internal operations staff can focus on core business issues and developments.



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