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Direct Edge Builds Up Tech Staff

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Bill O'Brien

Direct Edge ECN is beefing up its technology staff to focus on handling escalating message traffic and to prepare for operation as an exchange. The ECN has boosted its staff to 33 from 20 since July, with most of the new hires concentrated in the technology area. The tech staff has been focusing on hardening infrastructure to handle message traffic. For example, it has re-architected its data feed to offer sub-millisecond latency.

Many investments being made in technology are in response to needs of customers, but also helps the ECN to get in better shape to operate as an exchange, said **Bill O'Brien**, ceo. The firm plans to file its exchange applications in a few months.

The tech staff has also been focused on developing new orders types, which were rolled out a couple weeks ago. The hidden order type allows clients to put in minimum quantities on the fills they receive, said O'Brien, noting that the capability would limit market impact. The dual immediate-or-cancel order type will allow an order to hit both of its platforms, EDGX and EDGA. Prior to the order type, clients would only be able to send an order to one of the two platforms, where it was then sent to other venues. Firms managing one single order often don't want to split that order up.

Some hires are also coming on board in sales and support, as the firm will be installing improved call center software in a couple months. The firm is also evaluating what opportunities may be in Canada, Europe, Australia and the Pacific Rim