

## CASE STUDY

# Cihan Bank goes live with Path Solutions' iMAL R14.0



Erbil, Iraq, where Cihan Bank is headquartered

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**C**ihan Bank is an Islamic bank headquartered in Erbil, Iraq. Established in 2008, the bank has 13 branches in all the major cities of Iraq from North to South. The bank is a member of Cihan Group, one of the largest business groups in Iraq with operations across many sectors including construction, automotive, education, media, insurance and general trading. Cihan Bank provides a range of Islamic banking products and services compliant with the principles of Islamic Sharia.

The vendor, Path Solutions, is a Kuwait-based company that provides banking technology solutions and services across multiple areas including core banking, investment banking, fund management, treasury and trading in GCC and global capital markets. iMAL is the supplier's flagship core banking platform catering to Islamic banks, Islamic financial institutions and Islamic microfinance companies.

Cihan Bank has been an existing user of iMAL 09 (Release 2.4.0.x). However, the bank wanted to upgrade to the latest version of iMAL R14 (Release 14.0) to leverage the enhanced functionalities of the new release including a digital banking layer, Java operating system and a multi-tier, customisable banking services platform. Furthermore, the upgrade would involve a complete update of its infrastructure including Oracle database upgrade from 11G to the latest 12C version, hardware and operating system which offers a comprehensive end-to-end solution including security.

According to Rana Riyadh, Cihan Bank's IT manager: "The project was initiated in May 2017. From Path Solutions, a total of four resources were involved including one project manager and one ICT consultant at the offsite location, and two onsite technical consultants. From Cihan Bank there was the IT department, along with super users from the business side.

## The modules that were implemented

- 1 Accounting
- 2 Batch Processing
- 3 Customer Service Management
- 4 CSM Admin
- 5 Financial Template Reports
- 6 Integration Manager Console
- 7 IIS Batch Processing
- 8 Trade Finance
- 9 Islamic Treasury
- 10 Islamic Profit Calculation
- 11 Reporter
- 12 System Administration
- 13 Report Designer
- 14 SWIFT
- 15 Islamic Invest

“Cihan Bank opted for a bank-wide implementation,” said Riyadh. “All existing modules were upgraded to iMAL R14, across the bank’s 13 branches in Iraq. The bank also opted for minor customisation to meet KYC and FACTA regulatory compliance requirements of the Central Bank of Iraq, by leveraging the new system feature of dynamic screens in R14 version.”

The entire project took about seven months for the analysis, implementation and go-live stages. There was a minor issue regarding availability of Path’s resources in Erbil, due to the delay in visa processing time, which led to an offset of one week from the planned go-live dates. However, the project was completed within the original scheduled time. The bank staff were also provided with business and technical trainings on the new system.

One of the few challenges during implementation was mainly related to the conversion of a huge number of old reports developed by Cihan IT staff in PowerBuilder to Java and the conversion of existing business processes (wherever applicable) to newer processes. Nevertheless, “the overall implementation was successful”, stated Riyadh. “Functionally, the bank witnessed a vast improvement in the user interface operational efficiency, and an increased speed of batch processing by more than 70%.

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“The new application being web-based, N-Tier JEE architecture offers better scalability

better scalability as compared with the older releases and helped in reducing the application deployment and routine maintenance costs. Furthermore, it also provided the additional interfaces and features which were not supported in the older version, such as advanced searching options, screen customisation and labelling, new screen creation, 360-degree customer information view, dynamic creation and customisation of reports, and new modifications to the profit calculation system.”

Cihan Bank was quite satisfied with the results of the implementation. Post-implementation, Path Solutions will continue to provide technical assistance to make sure Cihan Bank is able to meet the new regulatory compliance requirements dictated by the Central Bank of Iraq.

### KEY FACTS

**Bank:** Cihan Bank  
**Assets:** \$516 million (2017)  
**Location:** 13 branches across the country  
**Supplier:** Path Solutions  
**Solution implemented:** iMAL R14.0  
**Modules:** Retail  
**Timeline:** 7 months

