

GARY L. TILKIN, President and Chief Executive Officer, Global Forex Trading

As a veteran of the financial futures and commodities markets and a professionally licensed trader, Gary L. Tilkin envisioned a better solution for his clients who were trading exchange-traded currencies. The current alternatives lacked in market accessibility and customer service, so in 1997, Tilkin set out to create a solution at his own risk. The result was the creation of Global Forex Trading, Division of Global Futures & Forex, Ltd., one of the first firms in the United States to offer online forex trading.

Tilkin invested his personal capital and resources in the venture, believing that if he created a better way to trade the markets, traders would soon follow. In the beginning, the small sales force was based out of Tilkin's home in a small Midwest city. A true speculator, Tilkin's investment paid off, and his vision was realized: Today, the privately-held company serves customers in 120 countries from offices in New York City, Chicago, Tokyo and Sydney, Australia. Tilkin led GFT to its current position as a world-class online currency trading firm that serves its customers by focusing on three principles: technology, service and integrity.

From the beginning, Tilkin recognized that technology could overcome service issues caused by the obstacles of dealing through the physical trading floor of the currency futures exchange. Tilkin had a vision of the industry shifting from an exchange-traded system to an over-the-counter model, and set out to create a top-rate company fueled by exceptional trading software that would satisfy the needs of all types and levels of traders. He realized that the cumbersome service issues that came along with calling in orders to be placed on the trading floor of the futures exchange, could be solved by providing secure, reliable, high-speed internet trading services.

Tilkin introduced GFT's DealBook® FX trading platform, providing customers with exactly what they asked for — easy market access, analysis, charting, order-placement and many other features all in one package, and all for free. Tilkin listened to customer feedback, and in 2004, introduced DealBook® FX 2 with even more integrated tools. As GFT continued to surpass its competitors in growth, Tilkin continued to focus on exceptional software, customer service and supervisory practices to set it apart from other firms. In 2006, GFT created a zenith generation of its trading platform called, DealBook® 360, which offers even more features than many its competitors.

Tilkin's focus on innovation, integrity and solid financial growth led to his designation as a regional winner in the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year® program for the financial services category. He then went on to be named as one of only three in the nation to earn the status of EOY National Finalist for the financial services category. GFT's 15,518 percent growth rate from 2004–2005 led to the honors of being named as one of "50 Companies to Watch in Michigan," and ranking 16th on Deloitte's list of the 500 fastest-growing technology companies in North America. In 2006, Inc. magazine ranked GFT 448 on its Inc. 500 ranking of the fastest-growing private companies in the due to GFT's 331 percent three-year sales growth.

Tilkin is in tune with global business demands, which drive the forex market. By creating software that adapts to multiple currency bases and creating a global workforce with offices and partners around the world, GFT identifies with the needs of a global audience, reaching customers in more than 120 countries. In 2005, Tilkin established GFT Global Markets UK Ltd., a sister company to GFT and a wholly owned subsidiary of Global Futures & Forex, Ltd. GFT Global Markets offers spread betting, contract for differences and forex trading services to customers throughout Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. Later in 2005, Tilkin created Strategic Trading Institute to further propel the company in market education and training worldwide.