



FORWARD

IG Group Speeds Customer Onboarding by 7X and Improves Change Efficiency with Forward Predict

Proving Change Outcomes Before Production Accelerates Outcomes and Increases Uptime

A Global Trading Leader Built on Trust and Resilience

IG Group Holdings plc is a global fintech company, providing over 1.3 million customers with access to more than 21,000 financial markets. Founded in 1974 and headquartered in London, the Group offers leveraged trading, stock trading and investments, and cryptocurrency trading through its proprietary platforms.

Operating in a highly regulated industry where customer trust is paramount, IG Group runs a global network that must be secure, resilient, and available around the clock. Balancing constant change with the predictability customers expect is one of the defining challenges for the IG network engineering team.

The Challenge: Confident Change at the Pace the Business Demands

Without pre-change verification, the change window itself becomes the test. Validating in production means the risk has already been taken. Forward Predict moves verification upstream, evolving the change window from a moment of exposure into a controlled deployment.

IG Group is actively building toward an autonomous networking future. After more than a year working with Forward, the team relies on the platform for trustworthy network insight. Pre- and post-change configuration checks validate that new updates never break network compliance and always keep connectivity intact.

Even so, every significant change involved weeks of meetings and approvals that consumed several hours of engineering and required late-night maintenance windows with no certainty of the outcome until the change was live.



Mathematically Accurate Confidence

Forward Predict enables them to make and verify changes in the mathematically accurate network digital twin, which virtually replicates the entire production environment. It moves verification upstream, evolving the change window from a moment of exposure into a controlled deployment. This step proves the outcome before deployment to the production network and gives the IG Group team confidence that every proposed change will maintain compliance and deliver the intended result.

"Once you see the platform, you understand how it works, and trusting it is easy," said Steve Bamford, Senior Network Engineer at IG Group. "I have deliberately tested scenarios that, if pushed live, would have isolated parts of the network and taken the network down. Predict catches them. Being able to test changes across our entire production network before they go live is a game-changer, and it accelerates our autonomous networking journey."

Validating Failover Without Risk

The IG team also uses Forward Predict to test failover scenarios. In one exercise, they modeled an error that would have isolated one of their primary U.K. data centers, then ran their rollback procedure entirely within the platform. The result was a fully documented scenario, complete with evidence that the rollback would have returned the network to full connectivity, all without disrupting production infrastructure.

"Attempting that on the live network would have meant at least ten minutes of disruption, which simply isn't practical in our industry," Bamford said. "With Forward Predict, we can prove our rollback works without taking anything offline. It is a one-to-one copy of our environment, and we can use that as evidence with auditors and the business leadership."

Faster, Safer Changes

Evidence-based documentation of change impact before go-live has transformed IG's review process. Using Forward Predict to validate outcomes in advance, the team can move from sequential approvals to rapid sign-off, materially accelerating the pace of change.

"If it works in Forward Predict, we can comfortably say we can deploy it without risk," Bamford said. "It also reduces the number of late-Friday-night change windows. A lot of changes that used to require a 10 PM slot we can now run with confidence at the end of the day."

BGP Complexity, Harnessed

As IG's entire leaf and spine fabric runs BGP, small mistakes can have outsized consequences. A common example is the difference between "no neighbor IP address shutdown" and "no neighbor IP address." The text is nearly identical, but the second command tears down the entire neighbor relationship and the connectivity that depends on it. In a long, manually reviewed change script, that kind of mistake is easy to miss.

"Our whole infrastructure runs on BGP. The leaf and spine, our connectivity to ISPs, CDNs, all of it. Changes to the routing between data centers, or even within a data center, are complex and critical. Being able to predict the outcome before executing a change means we deliver it right the first time and in a shorter window," according to Bamford.

Accelerating Customer Onboarding by 7x

Onboarding FIX (Financial Information eXchange) clients is one example where pre-change verification translates directly into business outcomes. The process demands a 100 percent success rate and previously required input and approvals from multiple teams. With Forward integrated into the automation flow, IG has compressed this from a weeklong process to a same-day delivery following security approvals, improving customer satisfaction and allowing the business to recognize revenue sooner.

A network engineer is no longer involved in any of the QA steps that Forward Predict manages. That has cut the time it takes to onboard a new revenue-generating client. Depending on the change window, updates that used to take roughly two days now are possible in under six hours — an 89 percent reduction in delivery time, all without a human from the network team in the path. In addition to the increased speed, the team now has full evidence that the changes are proven to deliver the intended behaviors.

"The approval-to-close time is where Forward really comes into its own," Bamford said, "the process has gone from nearly two days of waiting to under 90 minutes — a 96.9 percent improvement."

95% Reduction in Delivery Time for Firewall Changes

Building on the results from client onboarding, IG Group has extended the use of Forward Predict to validate firewall rule changes. Now, automated path search checks whether a requested rule is even necessary before it's implemented — a check that has already caught three occurrences where a rule wasn't needed, saving the team from processing requests that didn't need to happen.

The team saw major improvements in key metrics for their firewall workflow:

Metric	Current Average	Improvement
Creation to Close	1 Day 9 Hours	90.03%
Approval to Close	1 Hour 27 Minutes	99.53%

Based on these early results across IG Group's typical 30 firewall requests a month, they expect the firewall automation will cut delivery times by roughly 95 percent. This will save engineers more than 30 hours of manual work every month.

Answers in Minutes with Forward AI

Beyond change validation, Bamford relies on Forward AI to get quick, verified answers about the network, such as confirming whether a given subnet is free. Questions that previously required searching through documentation, checking with colleagues, and running manual searches now take minutes to answer.

"I got the answer almost immediately, and because of the source, I trusted it completely," Bamford said. "That's the real value; it's not just fast, it's accurate. I know I can rely on what it tells me."

Looking Ahead: Error-Free Migration

IG Group's vision extends well beyond faster changes. Specific future use cases include validating configurations during major migrations, modeling the impact of large infrastructure shifts before pushing to production, and using Forward Predict as the verification step inside automated fault-resolution workflows.

"Forward Predict is key to our drive toward autonomous networking and will be central to any automated fault resolution we build," Bamford says.

To learn more about how Forward Predict can help your team move fast and break nothing, visit forwardnetworks.com/predict.