



## Case Study

# 7global

MANAGED SERVICES

## ExpenseOnDemand seizes an early share of a vast market, thanks to managed hosting from 7global

**Expense  
OnDemand**  
Time and Expense

### COMPANY

ExpenseOnDemand  
[www.expenseondemand.com](http://www.expenseondemand.com)

### INDUSTRY

Software-as-a-Service  
Online expenses &  
Time recording

### SERVICES

7global Managed  
Hosting Services for ISVs

### BENEFITS

- Ability to exploit a new market early
- Effortless scalability
- Speed to market coupled with low cost of entry
- Technical support & security are now someone else's problem

ExpenseOnDemand is a brand new venture; set up to take advantage of what analysts predict will imminently become a massive market - software applications delivered as hosted, subscription-based services.

The company, based in Marlow, Buckinghamshire, began trading in mid 2005. It is a joint venture between its founders and Computers in Personnel (CIP), a provider of online human resources software. ExpenseOnDemand's mission is just as focused - in its case, to provide centralised, online access to automated expenses and time recording functionality. The service is expected to appeal to any company whose key staff travel for significant portions of their time and who need easy access to a way of managing their time and costs while away from their office base. These could include anyone from sales reps to engineers and lawyers.

"According to Meta Group, 95% of companies still manage their expenses manually or using spreadsheets," notes Grant Oliver, ExpenseOnDemand's co-founder and a director of the company. Not surprisingly then perhaps, the market for hosted software services in this area is predicted to grow at 30-40% a year, he says. "Our advantage is that we've entered this market early and with a product that has been built from scratch to be supplied and managed as a hosted service."

### Selecting the right partner

As the company prepared for launch, the only task that remained was to find a service provider to house and manage the application centrally. ExpenseOnDemand's partner company, Computers in Personnel, recommended its own hosted services provider, 7global. "We did talk to a couple of other providers, but 7global came highly recommended on the basis of its technical capabilities and the quality of support and security," Grant added.

ExpenseOnDemand's software is based on Microsoft technology, sitting on top of Microsoft SQL Server. 7global owns and manages the hardware, so this has been something ExpenseOnDemand hasn't had to worry about.

"7global has been very helpful at helping us assess the market opportunity. The company is very good at the marketing side of hosted software provision, and is happy to introduce us to other 7global customers, so we can benefit from their experiences. As a result, things have gone very smoothly."

- Grant Oliver, Co-Founder & Director, ExpenseOnDemand

Importantly, its channel partners will benefit in the same way. ExpenseOnDemand's business model depends on selling the software-based service through third parties. Today, these include mobile phone company Orange, sister organisation Computers In Personnel and a range of payroll specialists. "It's a great business model for our partners," Grant notes. "It's easy, they have nothing to install."

Because it is relying extensively on third parties for sales, ExpenseOnDemand runs a tight ship internally. That it can lean on 7global to provide comprehensive technical support, then, is crucial.

"The technical guys are very competent and go the extra mile for us," Grant comments. "In addition to providing all the hardware, they offer technical support on our software too. So, whereas another provider might simply tell us that the system 'isn't working', 7global will diagnose any problems with our database if these emerge. That's extremely valuable to us, our partners and our clients."

Given the potentially sensitive nature of the data being input into ExpenseOnDemand's centrally hosted database, security was another critical requirement. "7global has the highest level of Government security clearance, so we didn't have any concerns whatsoever," says Grant.

As a result of scoring highly on each of these key criteria, 7global was chosen to host ExpenseOnDemand's software from the outset. In addition to enabling the company to pursue its desired business model - that of providing its software as a hosted, usage-based service - partnering with 7global has provided several other benefits.

### A scalable and mobile solution

Thanks to the economies of scale made possible by working with a hosting expert, which has facilities of the highest specification and a range of customers with which to spread the cost, ExpenseOnDemand is able to provide maximum service levels and performance and security assurances to its customers. It can also provide unlimited scalability, catering for clients with as few as 10 to as many as 20,000 users. "We don't have any scalability limits - all 7global has to do is simply provide more hardware as we grow," says Grant.

It has also been easy to 'mobilise' the software, so that customers can choose to extend ExpenseOnDemand.com functionality to PDAs and smart-phones, enabling employees in the field to attend to their expense and time records in real time, improving overall efficiency and reducing the potential for error.

### Marketing support

A final yet important feather in 7global's cap is the company's fundamental understanding of the hosted applications market, according to Grant. "They have been very helpful at helping us assess the market opportunity," he notes. "They're very good at the marketing side of hosted software provision and are happy to introduce us to other 7global customers, so we can benefit from their experiences. As a result, things have gone very smoothly."

Although it is too early to speculate publicly about business revenue projections, Grant is excited about the potentially huge market opportunity 7global has helped his company to exploit. "By getting into the software-as-a-service arena early, we are one step ahead," he says. Given the fast pace of change being experienced in so many markets today, this can only be of great competitive value.

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### About 7global

7global partners with its clients to deliver part, or all, of their mission critical IT infrastructure and application requirements. This enables them to focus on managing their core business and benefit from significant cost, time-to-market, security and staffing advantages. This service delivery capability is targeted at end user organisations, independent software vendors, systems integrators and value added resellers. For more information, visit [www.7global.com](http://www.7global.com).