



MS2M makes Financial Services sector compliance easy and affordable, thanks to 7global's Software-as-a-Service model



COMPANY
MS2M

www.ms2m.com

INDUSTRY
Financial Services

SERVICES
7global Managed
Hosting Services
for ISVs

BENEFITS

- Giving customers more choice in the way they procure essential software
- Rapid speed to market
- Unprecedented flexibility on functionality and ongoing ownership

The UK financial services sector is under unprecedented pressure today, with compliance issues and intense competition conspiring to undermine even the strongest brands.

Spotting a gap in the market, independent software specialist MS2M has responded with a unique business solution: a suite of software which meets all of financial services organisations' most pressing business needs, yet which requires no upfront investment and boasts rapid speed to market, so that customers can tap into the functionality they need almost from day one.

The MS2M business model has been developed with an eye firmly on the future of the needs of the financial services sector over the next 10-20 years, in an environment that is constantly changing and where rapid implementation of change is a pre-requisite.

Where the only constant is change

As might be expected, given all the regulatory changes that are affecting financial services organisations nationally as well as globally at the moment, compliance dictates much of the work MS2M does for its clients today. At the same time, continually intensifying competition is putting a strain on companies to go the extra mile to secure and retain their business.

Julie Alderson is Sales Director at MS2M and comments, "Over the last five years, there has been unprecedented market consolidation as a result of mergers and acquisitions in our target market. This means our clients look for more ways to acquire and then retain their own customers and market share. There becomes an urgent need for highly sophisticated customer relationship tools, which are flexible enough to cater for diverse distribution channels and more importantly are highly scalable, being able to cope with a sudden increase in the size of the organisation."

MS2M's specialist software addresses all of these requirements. Yet having the functionality alone is only part of the solution.

Flexibility is paramount

Responding to the financial services sector's complex demands, MS2M has developed a software business model that is built on developing flexible, component-based financial services application products that can be deployed with ease and speed, with minimum disruption to the customer's business and minimum initial outlay.

MS2M's products can be deployed together or separately, allowing clients to add functionality as and when required without the need for additional IT architecture or additional hardware. Not only that, but they can be acquired on a Software-as-a-Service basis, whereby customers simply pay a low, fixed monthly fee to gain access to the software functionality they need - leaving someone else to own, run and manage the software.

"Compliance, training and competence have become a costly necessity, yet often the cost is disproportionate to the size of the business. Managed Services are an obvious solution to this problem. Paying for compliance on a per-head, per-month basis makes it cost-effective as well as extremely timely. We recognised these key drivers and that is why we took the decision to start delivering our solution this way."

-Julie Alderson, Sales Director, MS2M

Customer choice

"Our model is all about giving our clients as much choice as possible," Julie continues. "In this way we believe we give our clients the greatest chance of success in the future. Software-as-a-Service is not a new concept, but it is not one that has been widely adopted by the financial services sector. Sales-based organisations have been buying this sort of service for some time; the success of Salesforce.com is evidence of this, for example."

MS2M's mission is to give financial services organisations access to all the same benefits, especially in this, their particular hour of need.

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A win-win situation

Of course, MS2M isn't being purely altruistic in offering this option, it has much to gain itself. The benefits are clear: ongoing revenue streams; not having to support dozens of different implementations; and a much greater opportunity to work with clients who otherwise would not have been able to afford its offering. In addition, MS2M had the chance to explore vertical markets for its applications and make them easily available and affordable.

The benefits to users are also obvious with proportionate cost based on size; flexibility and a short circuit to development time; no expensive IT infrastructure or hardware costs; and little or no internal IT support requirements. "For many clients" Julie explains, "it is not the initial cost of acquiring business-critical solutions that is prohibitive, but the ongoing cost of ownership. This is largely because applications rely on the supplier for relatively minor changes in configuration. The MS2M system has been developed specifically to allow maximum user configuration, keeping costs to a minimum. This is crucial in a sector where change is the norm."

About MS2M

MS2M has been developing highly technical solutions to common business problems in the financial services industry for 15 years and offers a wide range of products and procurement options. Products include: *TrackRecord* - a training and competence/compliance system; *Personal Investing* - for authorising and tracking personal trades in banks; *Registrations* - for FSA registrations and foreign exchange registrations; *TestMaster* - online or paper-based knowledge testing; *Point-of-Sale system* - with full connectivity via the Internet/intranets; *Sales Management System* - a customer relationship management solution, designed specifically for the financial services industry. For more information, visit www.ms2m.com.

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.

Why 7global?

"In identifying the potential of the Managed Services market in financial services, it was important for MS2M to identify a managed hosting partner that could guarantee the same level of professionalism that we offer," Julie says. "That meant choosing a provider that could be responsive and which could provide the secure, quality environment that major blue-chip financial organisations would expect."

As part of the selection process, MS2M's enterprise manager and managing director conducted a series of site visits to prospective services providers. Key in the selection process was not just how good the operation looked from a security and technology perspective, but also the quality of its people. MS2M wanted to establish a long-term working relationship with the company it selected. This could only be achieved if the collaboration was with people who were of the same mindset.

MS2M has always prided itself on its responsiveness as a business, plus its ability to establish close relationships with its business users. This has been achieved by having an 'open door' approach; that is, being receptive to the needs of its clients and having a 'can do' attitude. These were the attributes MS2M looked for in its provider.

A partner we could do business with

Throughout all the negotiations, Julie and her colleagues found that 7global displayed these qualities in abundance. "And our initial impression has not changed in the light of the last 12 months' experience," she adds. "Change requests are performed with speed and accuracy and, if downtime is needed to apply changes, these have always been programmed to take place at the most convenient time for our clients, thereby maintaining business as usual."

We look forward to continuing the relationship in the future and in developing our mutually beneficial partnership for a long time to come."