



## Case Study

**7global**  
MANAGED SERVICES

# Visualfiles and 7global perfect the delivery of Software-as-a-Service



### COMPANY

Visualfiles  
[www.visualfiles.co.uk](http://www.visualfiles.co.uk)

### INDUSTRY

ISV/Professional  
services sector

### SERVICES

7global Managed  
Hosting Services for ISVs

### BENEFITS

- Ability to offer software using a cost model that mirrors how legal firms sell their own services

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Visualfiles is the UK's leading supplier of case and matter management systems. Early in 2003, having identified a need to simplify the way its clients sourced their IT solutions, while at the same time seeking to offer new customers a way to spread payments while gaining immediate benefits from new software functionality, Visualfiles chose Managed Hosted Services provider 7global to enable to offer its applications as an online service with transaction-based pricing.

In the same way that law firms charge based on the extent which their time and resources are used, many have realised that they can apply the same principle to the procurement of technology - acquiring the software-as-a-service as opposed to a fixed asset.

### Doing business the way clients want

Says Mark Armstrong, Visualfiles' business development director: "Most of our clients are lawyers. They are used to providing services for fixed fees. Managed services allow us to control the costs and distribute our solutions as a service and align the cost of this service to our clients' business model - transaction-based costing. This model also allows us to offer our software at a lower entry point, either for smaller firms as a managed portal or for start-up firms."

Mark had come into contact with managed services specialist 7global while working at a previous firm, so invited them to tender for Visualfiles' hosted services business. "We also evaluated a number of other suppliers including incumbent supplier FirstASP, PSINet, Open4Hosting and Navisite. The decision to use 7global was down to its reputation and people. We particularly liked its ISV-only approach and relationship with Progress Software and similar ISVs."

"This has created greater long-term stability as well as value in the business. The main driver, however, has been around the business model. We now have several 'portals' that enable a shared environment, which are based on a 'pay as you go' model. These are expected to yield impressive returns."

- Mark Armstrong, Business Development Director, Visualfiles

### Beyond co-location

Visualfiles also had a requirement for a mixed interface delivery, including a traditional GUI client.

"This requires Metaframe and terminal services," Mark explains. "The knowledge 7global has in this area and its understanding of 'application delivery' rather than 'co-location' was beyond anyone else we talked to. With others, we felt that we had to educate them and explain how we required it to be delivered; 7global understood this from the outset. More importantly, they understood our need to drive for subscription-based pricing model, either per-user or per-transaction. This made the early discussions a lot easier." Already, the model is proving enormously successful. "We have over 100 true 'ASP' users, paying per-month per-user."

### BENEFITS *(continued)*

- Meets Visualfiles' goal of boosting its annuity-based revenue
- Generates new business opportunities/overcomes budget issues
- Will enable Visualfiles to bring in over £5 million in new revenue in 2006.

### Developing new markets

In addition, Visualfiles is working closely with 7global on business development, to ensure that additional opportunities are exploited to the full. "We have four solutions hosted at the data centre that follow 'incubator' business models," Mark explains.

"Each of these uses multiple 'automated' users or robots, but has very few actual users. Each is very transaction intensive and has an agreed transaction model. Each relies heavily on integrating the value chain. Together these four solutions could generate over £5m next year. The infrastructure required will be considerable, but can only be offered as a managed service. 7global understands these solutions and is working with us to deliver them."

For Visualfiles, the ability to offer its applications software as an online service will form a critical part of the company's strategy for the future as it addresses one of its key business objectives, which is to grow annuity-based revenue. Mark concludes, "This has created greater long-term stability as well as value in the business. The main driver, however, has been around the business model. We now have several 'portals' that enable a shared environment, which are based on a 'pay as you go' model. These are expected to yield impressive returns."

### About Visualfiles

Visualfiles Limited (formerly Solicitec Limited), recently awarded a Queen's Award for Enterprise for the continuous development of innovative case and matter management software for professionals, provides business tools to help professional services firms become more effective and more profitable. Centered on a tool set combining knowledge management, business process automation and document management & assembly with workflow, system integration and considerable domain experience - Visualfiles not only creates timely solutions to today's problems but enables its clients to enhance and maintain their business processes as demands change. For more information, visit [www.visualfiles.co.uk](http://www.visualfiles.co.uk).

### 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).