Twinfield Offers One-Stop Web-Based Accounting Solution

Accounting firms typically support a wide range of software solutions used by their clients. This can require the accounting firms to constantly switch between applications, deal with multiple versions of software, and even manually input data when incompatibilities lead to useless or corrupt files. The resulting headaches reduce productivity and increase the risk of errors. They also distract accountants and financial professionals from their most important work: providing financial guidance to their clients.

Netherlands-based Twinfield International N.V. offers an online accounting system that addresses these challenges and allows accountants and their clients to access and work on the same data, in real time, no matter where they are located. Delivered as a Web-based service and built on the Microsoft® platform—including the .NET Framework, Visual Basic® .NET and SQL Server™ 2005—the Twinfield technology offers customers 24/7 access to data that is stored on a central, secure server. Customers pay a monthly subscription fee based on the number of users and the level of functionality required. Included in the fee are all online support and upgrades.

The flexibility and ease of use offered by the Microsoft platform, along with tight integration with Microsoft Office, help make Twinfield's solution a compelling alternative to desktop and client/server accounting software packages.

Up-to-Date Decision-Making Information—Anywhere, Anytime

Twinfield has more than 22,000 subscribers in 18 countries—including accounting and financial auditing firms, clients of those firms, and businesses of all sizes that want a secure and easy-to-use accounting solution without the expense and effort of having to handle their own backups, software installations and updates, and maintenance. In all, the system is used for the accounts of about 50,000 businesses.

Twinfield's software as a service (SaaS) provides all the functionality of a robust desktop accounting system—including project tracking, recording of hours and expenses, reporting, budgeting, credit management and billing. Its one-to-many (multi-tenant) distribution model, in

Fast Facts

Company Name: Twinfield

Headquarters: Hoevelaken, Netherlands

Web Site: *www.twinfield.com*

Profile:

Twinfield provides a secure, easy-to-use Web-based accounting system that enables customers to work with their financial data from any location, at any time. Customers pay a monthly subscription fee that includes all online support, maintenance and upgrades.

Benefits:

- No need to invest in hardware or software
- Real-time accounting data available anytime, from any location
- Potential for greater collaboration between accountants and their clients
- Intuitive, easy-to-use Web interface
- Comprehensive security protections
- 24-hour initial conversion from any accounting system to the Twinfield service

Twinfield

> **"** *Twinfield differentiates from other suppliers by offering 24x7 availability, without us having to worry about security, backup copies, software updates, installations or maintenance.* **"**
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> —Jan Bijsterbosch, partner in BDO CampObers Accountants, an international accounting chain that is using the Twinfield system to improve the quality and speed of its recommendations to clients

which the same software installation serves multiple subscribers with separate data storage, is highly scalable, and the Web delivery capability ensures that users are always working with the latest version.

A key advantage of the Twinfield system is that it offers strong security protection. Users can log on from anywhere, at any time, via a secure Internet connection. In addition to 128-bit data encryption and a user ID and password, customers can opt for the additional security of a six-digit pass code sent to their mobile phone to enter as part of the sign-in process. Customers can also assign specific user rights and roles to individuals. The service is monitored 24/7 from a manned central control center.

Twinfield also provides customers with comprehensive backup and recovery capabilities. "Most small businesses are at risk of data loss," says David Terrar, managing director of Twinfield UK, one of several Twinfield offices in Europe. "They often don't have adequate backup procedures such as a fireproof safe for backup tapes." With the Twinfield solution, data is automatically backed up every six hours and is mirrored to servers in the United States once a day. "This offers a level of disaster recovery worthy of a major corporation," says Terrar.

Using Twinfield's conversion tools, customers can migrate data from their existing accounting application to the Twinfield system within 24 hours. Twinfield has developed conversion tools for more than 28 accounting applications. Customers can also have their existing systems communicate directly with the Twinfield service from anywhere and on any platform, using open XML standards.

Microsoft Technologies

- Microsoft Windows Server® 2003
- Microsoft SQL Server 2005 (64-bit)
- Microsoft Visual Basic .NET
- Microsoft Visual Studio 2005
- Microsoft SOAP Toolkit
- Microsoft .NET Framework
- Microsoft Internet Information Services 6.0

When Twinfield was founded in 2000, the concept of software as a service was still in its infancy. The founders looked at several options for a technology platform on which to build their software.

"Speed, reliability and security are three key factors when offering an accounting Web service," says André Kwakernaat, CEO and co-founder of Twinfield. "Microsoft provides us with an impressive set of tools and systems to meet these objectives and comply with open standards for sharing information online."

Microsoft technology was also the hands-down favorite of Twinfield programmers because of its flexibility and ease of use.

The Twinfield solution uses SQL Server 2005 as its relational database. "SQL Server provides a stable and fast relational database platform to serve our community of customers in a multi-tenant installation, while allowing for backup and easy restoration of any subset of data when required," says co-founder Maurice Tijhuis, Twinfield's chief technology officer. The software is built using Visual Basic .NET and Microsoft Visual Studio® 2005 development tools, including the Visual C#® programming language. Twinfield's system uses the Microsoft SOAP Toolkit and the .NET Framework to process XML data streams transmitted or requested by users.

The choice of the Microsoft platform means that customers who use Microsoft Office can realize the benefits of Twinfield's tight integration with Office applications. For example, customers can design custom templates in Microsoft Word to generate mail-merge electronic or paper invoices and other documents. Customers can also connect to their financial accounts directly from Microsoft Excel® to analyze and process their data in real time. Any Excel spreadsheet can connect to and synchronize with data in the Twinfield solution—without affecting the layout, calculations or formatting in Excel.

"Total cost of ownership, the learning curve, licenses, scalability—they all went in favor of Microsoft," says Kwakernaat. "Our deployment of Microsoft 64-bit editions is accessible, restorable, auditable and verifiable. All of this is helping us provide a crucial service for customers."

- *To find out more about Microsoft's Emerging Business Team and the Microsoft Partner programs available for startups, go to www.MicrosoftStartupZone.com*

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