

A spotlight on: Advanced

An interview with Stefan Hiscock, Strategy Director at Advanced

Can you start by telling us a bit about Advanced?

Advanced, previously known as Advanced Business Solutions, has 7000 clients worldwide and is a leading supplier of software and IT services to the health, and wider public sector, as well as a number of business services sectors.

Advanced provides leading integrated business applications and services that enable public and private sector organisations to retain control, improve visibility and gain efficiencies whilst continually improving corporate performance.

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Where does CloudTrade fit in?

Advanced's software systems comprise core accounting, financial management, procurement, human resource and payroll systems. These are integrated with a range of collaborative, document management and business intelligence solutions to extend the value and effectiveness of the finance, human resource and payroll departments.

Advanced prides itself on getting close to its customers by understanding their businesses and responding to their evolving needs. We could see there was an e-invoicing requirement within our customers and we started to search the market for a solution.

We analysed a number of the e-invoicing solutions in the market and felt that CloudTrade's offering was the best fit for our solution and our customer base. CloudTrade fits very well within our existing product portfolio and helps meet a need within our existing customers, but also helps to differentiate our solution with new customers.

The partnership allows Advanced to provide its customers with an electronic invoicing service which is designed to ensure high supplier adoption and the strongest e-invoice business case.

How does the partnership benefit CloudTrade?

Advanced enables CloudTrade to provide their solutions to our client base, such as the public sector, which are otherwise very difficult for new entrants and SME's to gain entry to, due to the lengthy procurement processes.

Worldwide we have over 7000 customers, this provides CloudTrade with a large existing customer base to talk to, plus our dedicated vertical sales teams mean CloudTrade is reaching new customers and new sectors all the time.

Have many of your customers taken the CloudTrade solution?

Yes many. The public sector in particular has been very responsive due to government initiatives where in some markets they are mandated to use e-invoices, and as our reference base has grown the adoption of the CloudTrade solution has really accelerated.

We are working with Mid Yorks NHS Trust, University Hospital Leicester, Colchester Council, Aberdeen City Council, MerseyCare NHS Trust, Health and Social Care Northern Ireland (HSCNI), and East Lancashire Financial Services (ELFS) to name but a small selection.

As an example of growth, to March 2015 CloudTrade was processing less than 3000 documents per month for Advanced. By March 2016 that figure is more than 26,000 per month. We expect to at least double that rate in another year, and to triple it within 18 months.

How do your customers benefit from CloudTrade?

Adding CloudTrade to our solution set provides our customers with an easy way to adopt e-invoicing within their existing systems.

CloudTrade removes the traditional barriers to e-invoicing processing activity which usually requires the supplier to change their existing systems or duplicate invoices each month, and very often have to pay for sending their invoices. CloudTrade does not do this. Suppliers need only to create a PDF of their invoice within their existing accounting package and then email it over. The CloudTrade service then maps the data straight from the PDF and delivers it directly to our customers' systems.

Without CloudTrade many of our customers have to input invoices manually each month. This is a huge drain on resources, and there is a high incident of mistakes and rekeying through human error. With CloudTrade manual input is removed and because data is taken straight from the PDF, 100% data accuracy is guaranteed – no more rekeying!

Having CloudTrade as part of our solution set means we can provide our customers with an easy way to adopt e-invoicing, and where cost and time benefits are felt immediately.

“Newcastle Hospital adopted the CloudTrade technology through Advanced and in less than 3 months have onboarded their top suppliers and have gone from zero to processing more than 7000 documents per month.”

Would you recommend CloudTrade?

From a product perspective, the CloudTrade solution is seamlessly integrated into Advanced's financial management system [FMS] - invoices are received and processed within the customer's FMS environment within a couple of minutes of being sent by the supplier.

“CloudTrade is an excellent business partner. They are very flexible and willing to adapt things where necessary to ensure new opportunities become reality. They are a very responsive partner to work with; I cannot recommend them highly enough.”



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