

A Lindenhouse Case Study

GT IFA
Marlow, Buckinghamshire



GT IFA is a busy and respected firm of financial advisers with about 25 staff based in the attractive Buckinghamshire town of Marlow. Its location provides access to affluent residential and business communities around the Thames Valley and Chiltern Hills areas and beyond. Clients expect and receive the highest standards of personal attention, the delivery of which necessitates ready access to reliable client records for either planned consultations or ad hoc telephone and email enquiries.

Rapid growth and an active, varied client base had inevitably resulted in the generation of large quantities of paper records, which can place heavy demands upon floor space and clerical resources. GT IFA certainly found this to be so in the day-to-day work of providing independent financial advice services to its many clients and administering investment holdings. Fortunately, its on-the-ball management team was quick to recognise that technology held the key to dealing with the growing mountain of paper records.

"In common with most businesses these days, we function in an extremely competitive and pressurized marketplace," explains practice manager Sam Hughes. **"So we must make the most efficient use of our office and storage space to ensure that we can we operate cost-effectively and prevent overhead expenses from spiralling in future years. We came to the conclusion that expenditure on a document management system would make us more efficient and therefore be recovered within a reasonable period of time."**

"We, like many investment and financial planning firms, operate the 1st Adviser Office system. It was crucial for us to select a document management system that could work in conjunction with this. After examining the various options, including Xpro, we found ourselves greatly impressed with the capabilities and cost benefits of the Invu system proposed by Lindenhouse Software. Lindenhouse clearly showed that they had in-depth experience of Adviser Office and offered the complete integrated solution we needed. What's more, we judged their system to be more user-friendly than its competitors as it seemed less complex to operate and its presentation looked more familiar and consistent with our existing set-up."

The strength of the Lindenhouse proposition stems from a collaborative agreement in 2005, under which 1st and Lindenhouse achieved the total integration of their respective top-selling products: Adviser Office and Invu. This has given financial advisers and intermediaries seamless back-office-to-document-management integration. This collaboration has brought users of Adviser Office the ability to store and access documents in the Invu document management system while working in their usual Adviser Office environment. Adviser Office references and activity options are maintained but with the added searching, security and audit trail benefits of Invu.

"Lindenhouse took the trouble to really understand our needs

and presented a solution that addressed them fully," Sam Hughes adds. **"They also explained their impressive user-training package, designed to make sure that we would benefit rapidly from our investment in the Invu system. We decided to proceed with implementation of the Lindenhouse proposals and found their people both expert and helpful during every phase of the project. The Invu installation process was well planned and implemented, as was the hands-on familiarisation and training delivered to our personnel."**

"This experience, backed by the quality of technical support received throughout from their immensely competent team, leads me to say that that we would unhesitatingly recommend Lindenhouse to other progressive and successful firms like ours. Even the one or two non-believers in the firm have now been converted and acknowledge that Invu is tangibly benefiting our business. Among the many pluses for us is that we can even use the system to aid the process of submitting client records to our regulator, the Financial Services Authority, for review purposes. We have also begun using it on the accounting side for things like commission statements and may further extend it into the personnel area."

"When we recently acquired new computers, the Lindenhouse team took just half a day to tweak the system to ensure full compatibility. On a very practical level, we no longer have to carry heavy files around the premises. We have laptops in the meeting room, so it's just a matter of advisers logging on and calling up the necessary documents without having to involve administration staff. This saves valuable staff resources and we are now about to reap space-saving advantages as well. We have not back-scanned documents but, after a year of using the system and completion of all client annual reviews, it is now possible for us to move our old file records off-site to give us more floor space."

With everything they normally need now on the system at GT IFA, the difficulties of records storage and retrieval are reduced, freeing up more time and resources for the primary task of advising clients as professionally and effectively as possible. Invu stores scanned images and other crucial back-office material in a central customised filing structure. Emails, MS-Office documents and other key items are captured into Invu, yet appear as normal in Adviser Office. Invu substantially cuts paper consumption, enhances productivity and reinforces archive security.

GT IFA is one of many financial firms to have recognised the potential benefits of the Invu document management system from Lindenhouse Software, whose expertise also extends to delivering system integration solutions to ensure compatibility with other systems that may be in use. GT IFA can now look forward to continued growth without concerns about being overwhelmed by paper-based records that may become increasingly difficult, inefficient and costly to store and retrieve. Swift access by authorized staff to records on-screen makes life easier for them and therefore benefits clients too.

About Lindenhouse

Lindenhouse provides quality IT products and services to a wide range of clients. The company is focused on document management solution provision and develops bespoke software to provide integration to all insurance and financial services back-office systems and to practice management systems in both the Accountancy and Legal sectors. Lindenhouse have installed 1700 document management systems to date and are rightly proud that it retains 95% of its support contracts – a testimony to the dedication and professionalism of the company's technical staff and help desk.

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