



Dataflow Case Study Entertainment Industry



The Sound of Music

When DeWolfe Music looked to upgrade its accounts system to Windows, dataflow~32 came straight in at Number 1

DeWolfe Music may not be a household name but there can't be many people in the UK who don't instantly recognise the Coronation Street theme tune. The rights to this famous piece of music is one of some ¼ million different titles by over 600 composers, owned by DeWolfe Music.

The London-based company provides music and sound effects all around the world for commercials, TV, radio and cable programs, corporate sales and training productions, multimedia presentations and live theatre as well as for new media applications such as CD-ROMs, DVDs and the Internet. DeWolfe's impressive music library covers a wide variety of categories including classical, contemporary, sports, romance, travel, holiday, new age, pop, comedy, jazz, blues and music from different time periods.

Founded in 1908, DeWolfe remains a family run business spanning three generations. Much of its success is born out of the company's commitment to offer a personal and professional service, whether it is providing short sound effects, or composing and recording original compositions at its state-of-the-art London Studio.

Times have changed since the company was established and technology and the Internet are playing an increasing role in every aspect of the business. And when it comes to IT, DeWolfe also has its own way of doing things.

When Mohamed Nazarali, DeWolfe's company secretary, decided it was time to computerise the accounts in the mid-eighties, he came up against some resistance. But when the first 286 PCs were installed, the benefits of computers soon became apparent.

However, Nazarali was less impressed with the quality of equipment support he was given by the PC vendors. As a result, he decided the way forward was to build and support their own IT systems.



Today, all the desktop PCs and servers are built from components bought in and assembled by the DeWolfe IT department. All three sites in London are linked by leased lines and managed from the main offices just off Tottenham Court Road.

When it came to software, Nazarali had the same philosophy and wrote his own DOS-based accounts system – some 40,000 lines of code – that ran the company's finance department for ten years.

But as the new millennium was approaching Nazarali decided it was time to move forward with a new Window-based accounting solution and started to look closely at the market.



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As someone who knows a thing or two about software he soon realised the limitations of many of the market leading packages. "We wanted a true 32-bit Windows solution and many of the products on the market were simply DOS-based packages with a Windows front-end bolted on," explains Nazarali.

Then a colleague suggested taking a look at *dataflow~32* from UK company Dataflow. "It did not take long to see

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that *dataflow~32* had been designed from the ground up and had been well thought out to exploit the Windows environment. Furthermore,

dataflow~32 was instantly easy to use, very flexible and could be customised easily to meet our own business requirements."

Although Dataflow was not a well known name like Pegasus or Sage, Nazarali convinced his Board that it was the best solution available and *dataflow~32* was soon installed and running the accounts for the eight companies that make up DeWolfe Music.

Another key factor that influenced DeWolfe was the ease at which other software could be seamlessly integrated with *dataflow~32*. This was vital, as Nazarali had taken the decision to write his own royalty software that is core to DeWolfe's business.

Every time a piece of music or sound effect is played, DeWolfe earns revenue for itself and the composer – anything from £100 for a school musical to £40,000 for producing a specially composed track. Some 30,000 different titles are used in a single year and in most cases the money from these is collected by the worldwide Performing Rights Society (PRS). The PRS then passes it on to DeWolfe who then pays the composer.

"Having written the royalty package, integration with *dataflow~32* took less than three days to complete," explains Nazarali. "Now, sales purchase and nominal transactions are posted from the loyalty software to *dataflow~32* seamlessly in seconds."

In addition to integrating the royalty system, Nazarali has also linked in other functions such as bank reconciliation, job sheets, exchange rates and the music catalogue.

As well as the ease of integration, *dataflow~32*'s powerful reporting facilities have proved a major benefit. "We can now produce any number of tailored reports for different managers and staff," says Nazarali.

Nazarali also points to Dataflow's foresight in building-in support for the Euro. In fact *dataflow~32* supports accounting in any number of base currencies simultaneously.

It not only handles day-to-day requirements such as posting sales and purchase accounts in any currency, but also allows multi-company operations to consolidate results from many different local currencies into any currency of choice, including Euros.

"DeWolfe, like many of our customers needs to gear up for the Euro," says Dataflow managing director Dariush Mogtader. "Transactions can always be viewed in Euros, pounds or any other national currency and if the British Government does decide to go for full monetary union, *dataflow~32* supports a full Euro-based operation."

The reason that DeWolfe chose to build its own computers in the first place was its experiences of poor backup provided by vendors, so support is an issue close to the heart of Mohamed Nazarali. "We run six third-party software packages from six different vendors and Dataflow provides by far the best support," says Nazarali. "When we have a query we want a quick answer. The Dataflow support team knows us and knows our business and will always get back to us within half an hour. I don't ask for more than that and simply don't understand why other companies tolerate poor support."

Mohamed Nazarali has plans to integrate more functions and do more things around his flexible accounting system. As he says, "For an accounting package, *dataflow~32* is fun to use and the more we play with it. the more we like it."

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