



Altus

clear thinking for Financial Services

Altus e-filing Gateway

The Government have set a target for HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to aim for universal electronic delivery of business returns by 2012. In response, HMRC are introducing electronic filing services for all tax reporting regimes and increasingly making their use mandatory by phasing out paper returns. Many companies view e-filing as an additional regulatory burden but some recognise that it is also an opportunity to streamline and improve control over reporting processes. The question for companies is no longer whether to adopt e-filing but how best to make use of the available services.





Altus e-filing Gateway

The Challenge

In many cases, HMRC has provided on-line forms for companies to manually type in their returns via the Internet. This offers a simple solution, but will be unsuitable for significant volumes of data and leaves some important issues unresolved.

A recent Altus survey found some key concerns of companies facing mandatory adoption of e-filing were:

- » Maintaining the integrity of data from source administration systems right through to HMRC
- » Controlling access to e-filing services
- » Maintaining an adequate audit trail in case of any dispute with HMRC

As an alternative to the on-line forms, the Government Gateway provides an XML interface allowing data to be transmitted directly from administration systems to HMRC. This not only provides the means of automating the entire process of filing returns, but is also an opportunity to resolve the risk and control concerns listed above.

However, as for any transmission of sensitive data over the public Internet, this automated approach presents some technical challenges. Government Gateway authentication, IRMark handling (HMRC's electronic receipt), secure transmission and the multi-stage protocol spanning Government Gateway and HMRC systems all need to be addressed.

The good news is that you don't need to develop all this functionality from scratch.

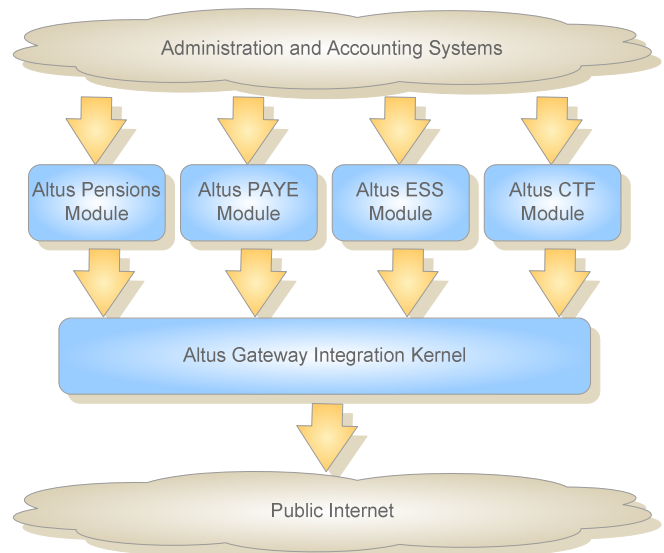
The Solution

The Altus e-filing Gateway is a suite of products supporting a range of HMRC reporting regimes. It not only handles the automatic transmission of returns to HMRC, but also manages the broader business process around HMRC reporting.

The system provides:

- » Multiple levels of review and approval by business users and, if appropriate, clients
- » Automatic transmission of returns to HMRC via the Government Gateway
- » Fine-grained control over each stage of processing and the access rights of individual users
- » Automatic recovery from transmission errors and HMRC system failures
- » A full audit trail including the original return, all responses and errors, and the actions of each user
- » Regular upgrades to comply with and minimise the impact of changes to HMRC standards

The modular design provides a consistent approach to e-filing across a range of reporting regimes. Our product is formally recognised by HMRC for Pensions, PAYE, Employee Share Schemes and Child Trust Funds.



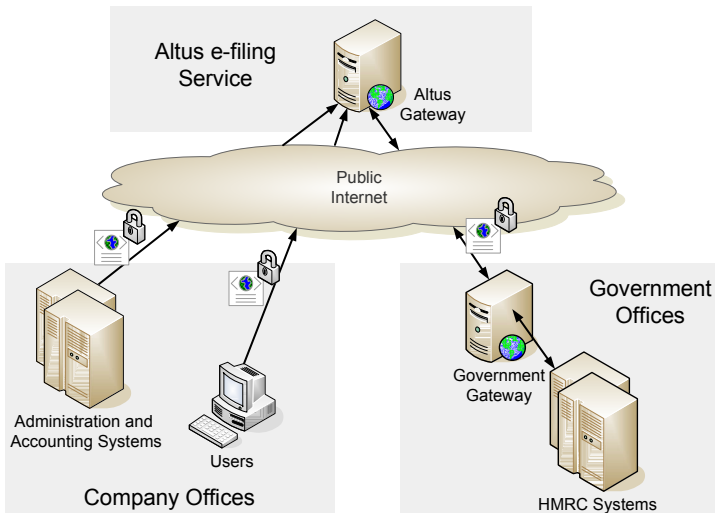


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Ease of Deployment

Altus offers the e-filing Gateway as an installed system or hosted service. Its intuitive browser-based user interface, comprehensive set of web-services and flexible data capture mechanisms combine to give a wide range of deployment and integration options.

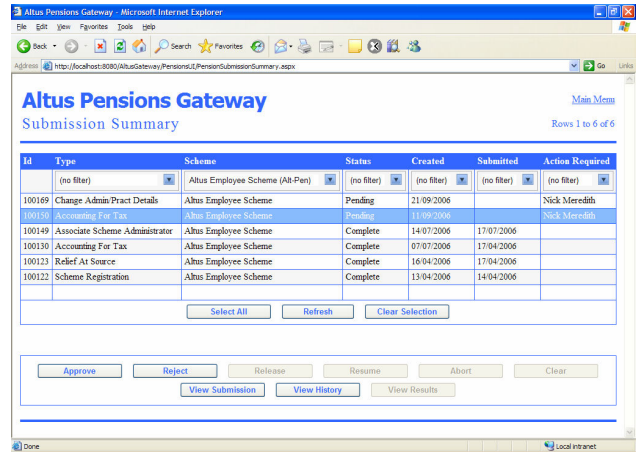
Returns can be uploaded either directly from administration systems (some system providers are including integration with the Altus service as part of their standard offering) or from a spreadsheet using the Altus Desktop Gateway application to validate and securely transmit the data.



The Benefits

The immediate benefit of adopting an automated approach to e-filing is a reduction in administrative effort through removal of manual processing steps. Perhaps more important, however, is the reduction in risk as re-keying errors are eliminated, approvals are more strictly controlled and the process more easily audited.

Altus engineers have extensive experience of Government Gateway and HMRC reporting mechanisms. Our clients have realised the benefits of e-filing without suffering the headache of having to grapple with all the technicalities. They can now view the advance of e-filing as an opportunity rather than just another regulatory burden.



Peace of Mind

At Altus, we work with some of the largest financial services companies in the world. We understand their very low tolerance for risk and high demands for security and reliability. We have taken every precaution to ensure that data integrity and security is maintained, including:

- » Authentication via digital certificate and user password, optionally integrated with corporate network security
- » Authorisation of individual users against a fine-grained access model
- » Encryption of all external network traffic
- » An internal audit trail of all instructions, responses and user actions



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Altus understand Financial Services - the products, the processes, the people and the systems that make the whole thing tick. With years of experience in complex change programmes, we understand that successful solutions begin with the business.

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