

## Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

### KTP BENEFITS

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships are designed to benefit everyone involved

- 🔄 Businesses will acquire new knowledge and expertise
- 🔄 KTP Associates will gain business-based experience and personal and professional development opportunities
- 🔄 Universities, colleges or research organisations will bring their experience to enhance the business relevance of their research and teaching

### Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

Accelerating business innovation; a Technology Strategy Board programme

<http://www.ktponline.org.uk>

# VISUALSOFT UK LTD KTP HELPS VISUALSOFT ADVANCE E-LEARNING

### ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY

Visualsoft UK Ltd originally set up in 1998 to deliver free online training courses on behalf of third parties. In more recent years Visualsoft found themselves becoming more focussed on the development of technological marketing solutions within other sectors, but they still perceived the education sector to be the cornerstone of the Company. With this in mind, Visualsoft decided to concentrate their research and development efforts in the improvement of this function.

### ABOUT THE SPONSOR

The **Technology Strategy Board** is a business-led organisation established by the Government. Its mission is to accelerate research into, and development and exploitation of, technology and innovation for the benefit of UK business - building economic growth and quality of life.

### FAST FACTS

- 🔄 Development of an e-learning platform and e-bay marketing tool
- 🔄 Relationship developed between both partners to develop e-learning provision to deliver educational courses online
- 🔄 KTP has led to increased R&D activity within Visualsoft and the development of a culture of continuous innovation
- 🔄 Ongoing relationship with Visualsoft Ltd and KTP Associate on a contract basis
- 🔄 Increased knowledge had direct impact into the teaching content for the computer and network security modules of the University's Computing MSc degrees

## The Company

"The KTP has enabled us to develop an advanced e-learning tool kit with facilities for content creation, delivery and learner management. This has resulted in increases in profitability through sales of existing courses now migrated into the new interactive framework. We are continuing our negotiations with the University of Teesside to license the model for use in the delivery of their own courses."

**Richard Bendelow**, Joint Director, Visualsoft UK Ltd

### ABOUT THIS PROJECT

Visualsoft aimed to develop a flexible, client driven e-learning framework to increase their current e-learning activity by appealing to a wider range of potential re-sellers. Visualsoft did not have the skills in-house to develop this new framework as they lacked a formal approach to web engineering, and had limited skills in supporting the creation of media rich and interactive

content. The University would also be able transfer knowledge regarding teaching and learning methodologies, and learner support systems to ensure incorporation of appropriate tools and functionality of the framework. In addition the University of Teesside would look to provide links into networks which will aid the development of specific e-learning business frameworks, and provide

knowledge and guidance regarding course accreditation.

### BENEFITS

Visualsoft have been introduced to formalised coding standards, development methodologies and object orientated programming standards in the context of web engineering. These standards are now embedded into Visualsoft operations

visualsoft  
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to ensure standardisation and more effective future developments. They have also gained knowledge surrounding XML and XSD schema, used to describe data in a context which is conducive to portable content creation and delivery. They have also gained knowledge surrounding differing business models available to support this and future developments.

In terms of pedagogy and learning approaches, Visualsoft has been able to tap into the expertise available within the University and conduct e-learning research through accessing students within the MSc IT degrees.

- Development of e-bay marketing tool which will support the e-marketing of the e-learning
- Diversification of the e-bay marketing tool to incorporate the sales of products from existing and additional clients' portfolios
- The KTP has helped to establish a culture and reinforce the benefits of R&D within the Company

### RESULTS

- Development of the e-learning platform with the successful import of course content from existing courses

## The Associate

**“The KTP achieved it's aim of developing a framework to enhance the effectiveness of Visualsoft's e-learning facility. It was excellent to work within such an exciting, fast-paced company where my own professional development was enhanced not only through the work undertaken on the KTP but also within other company driven technological development areas.”**

**Kris Grundy**, KTP Associate

### BENEFITS

The KTP enhanced Kris's knowledge relating to formal software development methodologies, specifically in relation to skills in systems analysis and service orientated engineering. Alongside the development of Kris's technical skills he has also learnt some valuable project management skills, especially the value of delivering objectives as a team. He has also acknowledged the difficulties associated with project management in relation to the co-ordination of multiple partners and the communication skills required to manage these relationships.

### RESULTS

- NVQ Level Four in Management
- Enhanced personal, professional and technical skills
- Membership of Chartered Management Institute

## The Academic Partner



**“The KTP has been of significant benefit to me, knowledge regarding web based application security and tracking has directly fed into the teaching of both IT and computing MSc degrees. In addition, working alongside such an innovative and dynamic company has not only broadened my appreciation of web-based marketing and associated technologies but has also stimulated future research areas”.**

**Dave Eagle**, Academic Developer, University of Teesside



### BENEFITS

The KTP project allowed the academics to maintain knowledge of the fast paced and ever changing e-commerce market including a wide range of new technologies and tools e.g. search engine optimisation, viral marketing and cross selling. This is of direct value in teaching and support of student projects (co-ordination of 400 final year projects) as the academics require a very broad knowledge of all computing disciplines to assist with the stimulation of project ideas. The KTP has also allowed staff to develop a broader appreciation of (web and internet based) marketing, and the technologies associated with user identification, profiling, and tracking. This is beginning to inform an internal marketing group within the University (School of Computing Student Recruitment & Retention) and should lead to changes in the future.

This project is also having an impact on the enterprise strategy of the School, which now includes a focus on e-learning and content reuse in different markets.

### RESULTS

- Increased knowledge regarding web-based application security and user tracking has had direct impact of the teaching content for the computer and network security modules of the Computing MSc degrees
- A Visualsoft staff member has agreed to give 'guest lectures' on web marketing to both undergraduate and postgraduate groups
- Visualsoft benefited from three student project, two from the IT MSc and one from the MA Marketing
- Visualsoft Directors have commented and given feedback to academics on the relevance and commercial value of new teaching programmes within the University
- Visualsoft have engaged with University staff regarding facilities within the new University building (The Institute of Digital Innovation), consequently they are part of the network to participate in future Digital City activities
- The work within the KTP has lead to the development of a case study within the 'Courseware and learning technology' module within the BSc (Hons) Digital Media Applications