

Software as a Service - SaaS



What is meant by Software as a Service or SaaS?

In general, software is installed locally 'on premise', either on a desktop machine or a server on the company network. The company buys a licence that gives each user the right to use the software.

SaaS means that instead of installing software locally, at least some elements are accessed from a remote location. Rather than buying a licence that gives the company the right to use the software indefinitely, SaaS allows companies to pay a subscription giving access for a specific period. This means that software can be delivered 'down the pipe' in the same way as electricity, water and gas is purchased.

Gartner defines SaaS as made up of three essential elements:

1. The application is owned, delivered, and managed remotely by one or more providers
2. The application is based on single set of common code and data definitions which are consumed in a one-to-many model by all contracted customers at any time
3. The application is licensed on a pay-per-user or subscription basis

While this mainstream definition is usually applied to software such as email servers or web portal hosting, SaaS can be used to describe a wider range of software. In many ways, SaaS is the most sensible way of using software.

SaaS overcomes the main problems faced when services such as large database and email, backup and web portals are required. The software used to provide such systems is large, complex, and expensive to buy and maintain. Additionally, ensuring these services are running correctly takes a lot of time and expertise.

When these services are provided by SaaS, businesses receive all the benefits of the large system with minimal expense. The time and costs needed to maintain servers is also removed. Taking this into account, SaaS seems to be particularly relevant for smaller companies or branch offices.

If a business has a small number of PCs, it is unlikely that a full time system administrator will be on hand. In many cases, the role of the administrator falls to the person who knows a little more about using software than the other users. In this case, the nominated administrator will neither have the time nor the expertise to devote to fulfilling the role meaning that small companies may have to work with an inadequate setup.

Continued Overleaf.....

Software as a Service - SaaS continued...



SaaS can also be very cost effective. Maintaining software such as email servers and web portal servers is expensive, and the hardware needed to run them is equally expensive.

When a software company releases a new version of the server software with increased hardware requirements, new hardware may have to be purchased or a business risks falling behind.

Many companies run multiple servers at less than full capacity to avoid problems with cross-application compatibility and demands, and to avoid the risk of poor performance.

If businesses use SaaS, hardware purchase and maintenance is removed to the SaaS provider. The only cost involved is payment for the number of users connecting. There is no need to build in room for expansion or upgrade planning this responsibility is removed to the SaaS provider.

When a legal practice considers their software needs, SaaS from DPS offers a complete service. The complete desktop including case management, accounts, web portals for legal information, emails servers, spam and virus filtering are all provided providing a practice with a single turnkey solution.



To view our online demonstrations visit www.dpssoftware.co.uk or for further information of this or any other DPS application please call us on 020 8804 1022 or email info@dpssoftware.co.uk

DPS Software, 288 Southbury Road, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 1TR

