

*Integrity for your information supply chain*

*"As a user of ClusterSeven's spreadsheet management solution they were the natural people to turn to when we needed to demonstrate control over our MS Access® database applications. They delivered exactly what we wanted"*

-Head of IT, Asset Manager

ClusterSeven client

## The ClusterSeven MS Access® Database Manager

**Access Database Management (ADM) is our term for a range of software functionality that closes the gap between the use of Microsoft Access® database applications as personal productivity tools and the deeper needs of businesses. This range includes seven key functional areas:**

### **1. Elimination of audit and regulatory concerns**

MS Access® database applications are an audit risk because they lack (i) **change control** – an application validated yesterday could be wrong today and (ii) clear **segregation of duties** – where a user might benefit from making a change without any independent confirmation. Previously, addressing these concerns required impeding the business or excessive manual effort. ClusterSeven solves these problems by delivering a separate, centralized and **tamper-proof audit trail** with the **option of change sign-off** on critical changes.

### **2. Complementary control**

Access applications are typically more structured than spreadsheets, facilitating alternative technology control options. The two most common approaches are the use of MDE (Microsoft Data Engine) **file conversions or the replacement by more robust enterprise database solutions** (e.g. Oracle, MS SQL). Neither are complete answers. However, once MS Access® application control becomes a recognized business risk, the selective deployment of both these alternatives often considerably reduces the scale of the problem. The **ClusterSeven solution complements and extends these options**, providing control in the remaining unprotected areas of MS Access® usage.



# The ClusterSeven MS Access® Database Manager

*"The insight and control over the spreadsheet environment made users realize that they wanted and needed this control"*

-IDC Case Study on a ClusterSeven client (a global, US-based financial services company)

## 4. Code review and approval

ClusterSeven ADM provides **rapid views of code content** and a historical **record of all changes** implemented in the unprotected areas of the MS Access® application. From here you can drill down to the specific changes for review and approval, with the **option of implementing a formal sign-off** against these changes.

## 5. Point to point comparison

In addition to capturing the sequential evolution of MS Access® applications, ClusterSeven also enables the **comparison between non-sequential versions** of the captured files so that changes over longer periods of time may be aggregated for review.

## 6. Logic and risk checking

No technology solution alone can confirm the logical integrity of a business application, and this is equally true for MS Access® applications. Only full testing can achieve this. There are, however, certain **logic elements which contain risk** (such as links to external files) or are likely errors (such as a Query without a Where statement). ClusterSeven **highlights these concerns** for attention and remediation where necessary.

## 7. No-resistance operation

ClusterSeven solutions are designed to minimize user-resistance to achieving control. This philosophy is based on the premise that if you remove the flexibility of user-developed applications or make the control overhead too burdensome then the solution will become circumvented or obsolescent. ClusterSeven ADM uses the same **non-invasive architecture** that has proven so successful in delivering spreadsheet control. Our file watchers are simply pointed to Access Files to identify user interaction and trigger the audit of significant changes. **Users can get on with their business.**

ClusterSeven brings integrity to the gaps in your information supply chain, where business-critical data is held in spreadsheets and MS Access® databases. Clients include several global investment banks as well as asset managers, hedge funds and utilities. For more information, contact [inquiries@clusterseven.com](mailto:inquiries@clusterseven.com)