

# Industry high flier recruited to grow Online Technology for brightsolid

---

## Industry high flier recruited to grow Online Technology for brightsolid

Fast-growing brightsolid has hired Richard Higgs to grow its online technology business, following a successful year across the range of its activities.

---

// //

Richard Higgs has started work as managing director of the online technology division of brightsolid, with a brief to continue its development as a major independent provider of hosted services and related IT consultancy.

The division is one of two created by brightsolid since its re-branding in 2008, the other being online publishing, which runs genealogy and related history web services. The group is wholly owned by major publishing company D C Thomson, and recently reported a doubling of turnover. brightsolid recently completed the acquisition of FriendsReunited from ITV plc.

“I am used to developing and implementing strategies in IT businesses, and this new post represents the perfect challenge for me, working with a highly skilled and motivated team to grow a business of scale to take advantage of convergence within the industry,” commented Richard Higgs.

“This convergence of applications, content and delivery is allowing brightsolid to develop integrated products of real value to business and the economy. This is not only about managing efficient data centres, it is also about maximising the value of cloud computing, and working closely with clients to add value to their business.”

Higgs was previously chief executive of Strategic Thought, a developer of Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) applications which floated in 2005 and served the US and UK markets. More recently he has been an investor in UK and US cloud-based companies, advising them in their growth strategies.

His appointment was welcomed by Chris van der Kuyl, brightsolid group CEO. He commented: “brightsolid is on a firm growth path now, following various strategic changes and the creation of our online technology and online publishing businesses. We needed someone of Richard Higgs’ considerable drive and experience and we’re all keen to develop the team and the company in tandem.

“brightsolid has a growing roster of blue-chip clients and we shall continue to build that portfolio, as well as providing high added-value services to our customer base. This approach is essential to our future growth and the continued success of our clients.”

### Head of Product and Marketing

brightsolid has also named Ian Webster as Head of Product and Marketing in its online technologies business.

Webster is one of Scotland’s first “Saltire Fellows”, part of the Scottish Government backed scheme that seeks to develop high flying executives by combining business school education with industry placements in the US and Scotland. He joins brightsolid from a career in the financial services and technology sectors.

## Industry high flier recruited to grow Online Technology for brightsolid

---

He began his career as a product manager at Vodafone, and also worked as an innovation manager at Bank of Scotland before serving executive internships (as part of the Saltire Fellowship) at US insurance firm Liberty Mutual and Scottish internet business Hubdub.

“This is a great opportunity to work with an experienced executive team at the heart of a growth-orientated business,” commented Webster. “The Saltire Fellowship gave me a huge appetite to come back to Scotland and find a company whose aspirations matched my own, and I believe the team at bright**solid** can grow the business into a major player in the global IT industry.”