AutoEntry boosts productivity at Zeidman & Davis

Sage software frees up accountants to take on new clients and deliver extra value

Zeidman & Davis is a small accountancy practice based in Caerphilly, South Wales, with over 40 years of experience providing financial expertise and advice.

Offering a range of services from bookkeeping and annual accounts, to corporate tax, VAT, payroll and more, the practice prides itself on guiding clients in a straight-forward manner through the complexities of business and personal finance. Typical clients range from start-ups and small businesses, through to SMEs with £1m-plus turnover.

Key outcomes
- Quicker turnaround of accounts filing, enabling higher fee-paying work
- Reduction in late filing fines for clients
- Reduced time to file clients' end of quarter VAT returns
- Freed up the practice's capacity to take on new clients
- Less printing and less paper mean practice is saving trees and money

Company
Zeidman & Davis

Location
United Kingdom

Industry
Accountants

Sage Products
Sage Accounting & AutoEntry

About Zeidman & Davis
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Limited capacity

With a team of five practice staff collectively managing 450 clients, there was little-to-no capacity for Zeidman & Davis to offer additional value-add services or take on any new business.

"We were getting to the point where we'd either have to employ an extra member of staff, or shut our books to any new business," explains Kathryn Short, Director at Zeidman & Davis. With a key driver of the practice being its commitment to finding new ways to generate value for clients, this wasn't a sustainable situation.

Bright clouds

Having undergone a successful migration from desktop Sage software to cloud solution Sage Accounting, the practice was already seeing the benefits of Sage cloud technology first-hand.

"We use Sage Accounting every day and it's definitely made the practice more efficient," says Kathryn. "Everything is updated automatically so our data is current, and the live bank feeds that pull in bank transactions automatically has dramatically reduced our manual inputting. Our year-end filing is also much faster."

So, when Sage Practice Success Manager Gray Bolam suggested a trial of AutoEntry—a cloud-based automated data entry solution that integrates fully with Sage Accounting—Kathryn was open to seeing what it could do. "It was quickly apparent that AutoEntry was going to benefit us right across the practice," Kathryn laughs.

The ultimate time-saver

Completing the practice's own VAT returns every quarter would remove Kathryn from fee-paying work for three days solid every quarter, which as director of the practice wasn't ideal, but AutoEntry has revolutionised the process. "Trying to balance the bank transactions and make sure the invoices matched up was a headache. Implementing AutoEntry has reduced the time I spend on the practice's own VAT return from one day a month, to literally about half an hour per month," Kathryn says proudly.

Invoices from suppliers are emailed directly to AutoEntry which captures, reads and then posts the information directly to Sage Accounting, making for a smooth, hassle-free process. "Sage Accounting pulls in bank transactions automatically so all the bank data is updated daily, and that mad panic at the end of the quarter has been removed," Kathryn says.

Sage Accounting offered a smooth, hassle-free process.

Sharing the benefits

Kathryn has been so impressed by the benefits of AutoEntry for the practice that she has become an advocate for the software, giving demonstrations and recommending it to clients she feels would benefit the most from using it. "The beauty of AutoEntry is that it is so easy to use. Even our less tech-savvy clients can use it," Kathryn says.

A key win has been with a client who has historically always struggled to get their VAT return in on time to Zeidman & Davis. "The company were always up against it with trying to match the statements and chase invoices," says Kathryn. "There were a lot of inconsistencies in the system with nominal codes being inputted differently each month, so it was difficult to find where everything was."

Implementing AutoEntry, the customer has, for the first time, had its creditor statements matching what is in Sage Accounting. "Everything is now reconciled, and the company can see exactly who their creditors are. It has freed up the member of staff on who's shoulders it all rested on, and removed the need to take on an extra employee," Kathryn says.

AutoEntry is also being implemented by another client that spent a lot of time trying to reconcile its statements. "The big thing this client likes about AutoEntry is the statement reconciliation, as it can now see instantly whether it has received all invoices from suppliers or not," Kathryn explains.

A win for all concerned

Without AutoEntry, Kathryn says they would have struggled to keep on top of the volume of work. "I think we'd have had to try and increase our capacity by taking on more staff or use subcontractors, and I think certain clients would have received some hefty fines for late filing."

The practice also wouldn't have been able to take on all of the new clients that it has this year. "Since lockdown we have had a lot of referrals—at one point, we were getting on average two to three new customers a week," says Kathryn. Asked if she has a target in mind of how many clients she'd like to introduce to AutoEntry, Kathryn smiles and says, "as many as possible".

"Wherever any sort of invoicing return is going to be involved, I would like to get all those clients over to it. Even if it's only to eliminate any errors in the data, that will be worth the investment for the client."

Fast, efficient and resilient

Kathryn says the Sage software has transformed the way Zeidman & Davis works. "The practice is definitely more efficient. It is doing everything we hoped it would and more."

In the year that saw a global pandemic, both Sage Accounting and AutoEntry have enabled the practice and its clients to continue operating, particularly during lockdown.

"Being cloud based, both systems are accessible from anywhere, so it's enabled practice staff and our customers to log on remotely and upload invoices and scan receipts. It has not meant a halt to any of the admin procedures."

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"I have more communication with clients now because I have time to focus on giving business advice."

Kathryn Short
Director, Zeidman & Davis

Delivering more value

Asked what's been the biggest value add from AutoEntry, Kathryn says it has freed her up to focus on additional services and advice they can offer customers. "I have more communication with clients now because I have time to focus on giving business advice. It's that value-add that doesn't always get discussed because you're trying to do all the mandatory compliance work." It's also eliminated the constant chasing back and forth with clients for missing information. "When we're preparing accounts, we're not having to go back to the clients and say, 'Can you send me a copy of such and such invoice because you haven't included it'. You just click on the paperclip link in Sage Accounting, and there it is, because it was uploaded through AutoEntry."

Gray Bolam, Sage Practice Success Manager for the South and Wales, says it's a smart move for Zeidman & Davis to recommend something that saves clients time and keeps t hem compliant. "It not only strengthens the customer relationship but boosts Zeidman & Davis's reputation as a practice that puts its customers first." Kathryn agrees, revealing that for one of the clients using AutoEntry, it has actually increased the amount of work they put through the practice. "They actually like us to check in with them more regularly to make sure everything is on track as we now have real-time reporting, and all the data is bang up to date."

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