

* Case Study

Brookson Accountancy and Support Services

Oyster IMS help Brookson to implement a timely re-structuring of their Accountancy and Support Services business model

The company

Brookson are a leading provider of accountancy, tax advice and other financial support services to contractors.

Specialising in the contracting market, their role is to provide tailored advice and business services for individuals who operate through a limited company or as a self-employed sole trader with an emphasis on ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation, including IR35.

In addition, Brookson provide an umbrella company service for those contractors seeking an employment option rather than taking on the responsibility and risk of running their own business.

The background

Owing to changes in legislation relating to contractors and self-employed individuals, which became effective on 6th April 2007, Brookson needed to change their offering to clients who were members of Managed Services Companies (MSCs) to allow them to continue to enjoy the benefits of dividends and expenses which they had experienced prior to the legislation change.

Their solution was to offer clients the option to disband their MSCs in favour of becoming non-executive directors of newly set up Private Services Companies (PSC). As the consultation period for the legislation, in which Brookson played a prominent roll, only concluded on the 2nd March 2007 there was limited time to re-engineer the business model, educate their clients, get them to sign up to the new regime and register the new PSCs with Companies House - all of which had to be completed by 6th April 2007.

Brookson put together Conversion Packs that would serve the purpose of informing and educating their client members of the advantages of switching to the new Private Services Company model. The packs consisted of explanatory material together with up to eight forms that clients were required to complete and return to Brookson.

The challenge that Brookson set for Oyster IMS was to cost effectively scan to PDF and capture the required data, with the utmost accuracy, from the many tens of thousands of forms which they expected to receive back from their clients. And, this

The solution

process had to be completed within a period of two weeks.

Oyster IMS designed and implemented a solution using Kofax Ascent Capture software with one Kodak i620 production scanner, two smaller Kodak i1320 desktop scanners and five indexing stations.

Key to the project's success was the design of the forms. Oyster IMS recommended that each form should have a barcode identifying both the Brookson Client Member's unique identification number and the form type on which it appeared. This facilitated the automatic capture of this information with virtually one hundred percent accuracy. The Client Member's unique identification number could then be used to perform a search against an MS SQL database to retrieve other client details significantly reducing manual keying of data from the forms. The client data retrieved would also be used to create the image archives directory structure and to name the images. All of the relevant data captured from the forms together with the paths and filenames of the relevant image files would be written to an MS SQL database for subsequent retrieval and reporting.

Additionally, the data and images captured were used to initiate the creation of new Personal Services Companies by Companies House. Some of the data captured was also used to update client e-mail, security and contact method details.

The result

Brookson were satisfied that they managed to successfully process all of the returned forms within the specified deadline set by the HSRC legislation. Companies House were somewhat less satisfied with the deluge of requests to set up thousands of new Private Service Companies and could not meet the deadline of 6th April. However, HSRC recognised Brookson's mammoth efforts and extended the new status required under the legislation to Brooksons clients whose PSC's had not yet been processed by Companies House in time to meet the deadline.

Following the success of this project Brookson have used Oyster IMS's services, Kofax Ascent Capture and their existing scanning infrastructure to implement four other projects for VAT Registration Forms, Certificates of Incorporation, HMRC PAYE Reference Forms and Client Member Expense Forms.



Professional Information Management is vital for all businesses, whatever their size. Dealing with the flow of information, both internally and externally, is the key to managing business efficiency and effectiveness. Oyster IMS provides consultancy and project management services in the field of Information Management. Areas of expertise include information audits and strategy; document and records management; data analysis and migration; document scanning, indexing and recognition; digital mailrooms.

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