

# Inside<sup>+</sup> OUTSOURCING®

The newsletter for forward-thinking professionals



## Tracking talent

In the face of a talent shortage, what approaches are accounting practices taking to survive and thrive?

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## Practice Compliance Outsourcing

Final accounts production ★ Personal tax returns ★ Corporation tax returns ★ Management accounts  
HMRC-recognised iXBRL tagging services ★ Payroll ★ Cloud bookkeeping ★ Dedicated offshoring

# Vital resource

As accounting practices face a global talent shortage, they are taking a multi-track approach to their resourcing strategy, finds Advancetrack's new report.

ADVANCETRACK'S SECOND GLOBAL REPORT on the accountancy profession's talent base has revealed staffing shortages and recruitment woes leaving many unable to meet client demands.

The Accounting Talent Index 2025 was compiled by Advancetrack and is based on detailed responses from accountancy firm leaders across the UK, Australia and beyond. It offers the most up-to-date picture of how the global profession is adapting in the face of growing pressure.

According to the new figures, 94% said talent and recruitment will impact their ability to grow – with nearly 40% saying this challenge will be “significant”. A further 74% said they are being directly constrained from taking on more clients or billing more hours because they simply cannot find the talent to deliver the work.

Vipul Sheth, MD of Advancetrack, says: “This year's Accounting Talent Index confirms what many in the profession have feared – that the accounting talent crisis is not only continuing, but intensifying.

“Growth is no longer being held back by ambition or opportunity, but by a lack of skilled people.

“It's why we're seeing record numbers of firms turning to outsourcing, offshoring and tech investment – not just as a cost-saving measure, but as the only realistic route to sustainable growth in the current climate. The model has shifted, and so must the mindset.”



Sheth adds: “Firms can't simply hire their way out of this problem anymore. We're seeing a step-change where leaders must rethink how they deliver services – not just who delivers them.

“That means being smarter about structure, tech and global resourcing. Those who move early and adapt fastest will be the ones that thrive.” ■



Download the full new [Accounting Talent Index 2025](#) here





# Risky business

Cyber security and data protection are always critical – but the methods by which breaches occur can be a moving feast. Advancetrack takes you through the latest approaches to staying safe and secure.

DATA IS MORE THAN just information. It's currency. For accountants, that data is especially valuable. You're handling sensitive financial records, personal identifiers and tax information every day – the kind of data that cybercriminals actively seek.

As cyberattacks increase and reliance on cloud-based platforms and outsourced services grows, clients expect more than just financial expertise. They expect their information to be handled with the highest standards of security.

The risks are significant. According to the UK government's [2024 Cyber Security Breaches Survey](#), 32% of small businesses identified a cybersecurity breach or attack in the past 12 months. Professional services, including accountancy firms, continue to be a key target.

Trust is at the heart of your client relationships.

Protecting client data is essential to maintaining that trust.

## THE RISKS ACCOUNTANTS FACE AND WHY CYBERCRIMINALS TARGET THEM

Accountancy firms are attractive to cybercriminals for a simple reason: the data they hold is both sensitive and financially valuable. This includes bank account details, National Insurance numbers, payroll records and corporate tax data.

Some of the most common cyber threats targeting the profession include:

- **Phishing attacks:** Fraudulent emails designed to trick staff into revealing login credentials or downloading malware.
- **Ransomware:** Malicious software that locks data until a ransom is paid.
- **Weak or reused passwords:** One of the easiest ways attackers gain access.





- **Unsecured Wi-Fi networks:** Especially risky when working remotely.
- **Outdated software:** Older systems may have known vulnerabilities that can be exploited.

Cloud-based platforms and outsourced services [bring big benefits](#), but they can also create risk if not properly secured.

## HOW TO PROTECT CLIENT DATA DAY-TO-DAY

Modern security is built on the idea of ‘zero trust’. In essence you need to assume that sooner or later you will be hacked. On that basis, there is an element of security to make sure that your systems are secure, and a second to minimise the risk when they are compromised.

### 1. Ensure you have immutable backups:

- When you talk to the recovery teams of insurance companies who help their clients recover from attacks every day, the one thing they need is backups. Make sure that you are backing up your files frequently, and more importantly that your files cannot be deleted or over-written by hackers (i.e. they are immutable). This can be as simple as taking a copy onto a hard drive and

keeping it in a locked safe. Even if you only do this once a week, you will be able to keep your business alive when many have to close down.

### 2. Use strong passwords and enable Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA):

- The security industry has been nagging us about this for years – if you are not doing it you really must! A good password manager makes it a lot easier.

### 3. Anticipate lost or stolen devices:

- Laptops and phones will go missing. Make sure that they have access controls enabled, that the hard drives are encrypted and that they are set up so you can wipe them remotely.

### 4. Keep software updated:

- Make sure any devices are updated with security patches automatically – especially any servers that you own.

### 5. Use secure Wi-Fi and VPNs:

- Avoid connecting to public Wi-Fi unless using a Virtual Private Network (VPN).
- Secure your office network with strong encryption settings and updated router firmware.




## Audit Support Services

Firms looking to manage their audit resource this coming season, get in touch for quality staff on an Outsourced or Offshored basis

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## 6. Protect devices with security tools:

- Install reputable anti-malware software that checks emails and web browsing for suspicious items.
- Make sure firewalls are in use.
- Implement access controls so that only authorised users can access sensitive files.

## 7. Consider your attack surface

- The easiest way to reduce risk is to reduce the amount of data you hold and reduce your 'attack surface'. Ask yourself whether you really need all your emails going back to the beginning of time. Ask yourself if you even need email (with modern chat technology and practice management systems this is actually a good question). Question your basic assumptions about holding data.

These steps build a strong technical

foundation for ongoing data protection. However, the real weakness is your people – the most common way for systems to be compromised is by a user clicking a link in an email.

## CLOUD ACCOUNTING AND OUTSOURCING: CHOOSING THE RIGHT PARTNERS

[Cloud accounting](#) and [outsourcing](#) have transformed how firms operate. They offer flexibility, efficiency and scalability. But it's critical to ensure that third-party providers treat your client data with the same level of care that you do.

When evaluating providers, consider the following:

- ISO27001 certification or equivalent security accreditation
- Transparent data handling processes

- Full compliance with UK GDPR requirements
- Whether their staff are in a secure office environment
- Secure infrastructure, including backup systems and disaster recovery plans

There are firms that have all of these, but lack a culture of data protection and so struggle to keep up with the rapidly changing threats to your data. At Advancetrack we have built a risk-based approach that drives security in every part of our processes, with constant incremental improvements to keep client data protected.

Not sure if outsourcing is the right step for you? [See the signs your practice is ready.](#)

## WORK WITH A PARTNER YOU CAN TRUST

Advancetrack helps accountancy firms deliver secure, scalable and modern services backed by ISO-certified infrastructure and over 20 years of experience in cloud-led outsourcing.

Want to explore next steps? Here's how to [start outsourcing your accounting the right way](#), or [contact us today](#) to learn more. ■

Introducing our new  
**pod sourcing**<sup>®</sup> service  
- our tried and tested team-based approach.

★ **advancetrack**



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# Case study: Podsourcing® pioneers

A practice that has partnered with Advancetrack over the long-term looks to evolve its direction of travel – using Advancetrack’s latest service offering.

## DESCRIBE YOUR PRACTICE TO US

We’re an independent, multi-partner, practice providing a broad range of services – with specialisms in farming clients and academies.

## HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED WITH ADVANCETRACK, AND WHAT ISSUES WERE YOU LOOKING TO SOLVE?

It’s been around ten years working with Advancetrack – and our partnership has evolved over time.

At first the main reason – and something that’s still relevant – is dealing with capacity overflow. Initially it was about dealing with peaks and troughs where we couldn’t justify hiring another member of staff.

But it’s also freed us up to support trainees, as well as provide backup if there is any illness in

the team. Originally, it was solely for accounts production, but then our tax team wanted to try out what we were doing. The Advancetrack team were able to turn around work fast, and this particularly helped during tax season.

This continued for a while. We then thought it would be good practice to work with another provider too, so not all our eggs were in one basket. However, the service wasn’t as good and promises weren’t kept. At this point



we began using Advancetrack's offshoring support as well.

Offshored staff are dedicated to your firm; they join meetings and they are someone you get to know as one of your team. It also helped with consistency and communication. Due to time differences, it also means that work can be passed on and is completed when you're back at your desk the next day.

Advancetrack staff are in the office earlier than us, meaning we can send things to them and half of it is already completed, so work is constantly on rotation, which massively helps.

## WHY DID PODSOURCING® FIT YOUR PRACTICE'S PLANS?

We felt that work was good and on time, but for us we wanted a dedicated team that we could always talk to. With outsourcing you have the portal that jobs get uploaded to and then sent back to us. Having offshored, where

"We can have high-level conversations with clients having reviewed the work – it frees our time up to look at higher value offerings such as MBOs, funding and IHT"

you often have an individual far away on their own, we realised that it was better to get a dedicated team that could be a part of us.

Podsourcing® is more personal – we can speak to someone preparing the job in real-time and they understand what we expect from them. They also have other members within the pod there to support them.

We know that the accountancy world is changing – we want our people working on

the files but, once they've learned the way of doing things, then we can upskill them and ultimately deepen our offering, and then move the file-work into the pod. We can have high-level conversations with clients having reviewed the work – it frees up our time to look at higher value offerings such as MBOs, funding and IHT.

## WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE FOR YOUR PRACTICE, AND WITH ADVANCETRACK?

We believe there's as much work out there as you want – so a benefit of having a pod is we can look at our service delivery and find ways to provide deeper and more specialist advice to our clients. We expect to continue having a pod, grow it and use it to help us scale. Then look at the big changes on the horizon, such as the impact of MTD upon sole traders – what are their accountants going to do? We're trying to be ahead of the game; we're willing to take on more work! ■



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