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How to successfully outsource bookkeeping for accountants

Outsourcing bookkeeping to a trusted partner can enable accountancy firms to expand their proposition without taking on the costs and risks of scaling up.



IT'S A TIME OF real change for the UK accounting industry, with technological advancements and shifting client expectations meaning that accountants are expected to deliver more than traditional bookkeeping, tax preparation and other accountancy services now. Clients want value-added services such as real-time insights on which to base financial decisions, financial forecasting and other strategic advice to help them run and grow the business. In order to deliver this, accountants either need to expand their team of specialist staff (at significant cost) or find another solution to deliver excellent service whilst also providing the fundamentals of accountancy.

Outsourcing some of the traditional services, such as bookkeeping, to a trusted partner can bring the best of both worlds, enabling



accountancy firms to expand their proposition without taking on the costs and risks of scaling up on in-house staff.

In this guide, we look at how to successfully outsource the valuable bookkeeping services that you offer to clients, to maintain your high standards but at a managed cost that can scale as needed.

THE BENEFITS OF OUTSOURCING BOOKKEEPING FOR ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS

There are numerous potential benefits of outsourcing some of your accountancy

“You can still offer bookkeeping clients the same high levels of service, but at a lower cost to the business, which means more profit”

services, such as bookkeeping, to a trusted partner. These can include:

- It enables your in-house team to refocus their time from maintaining your clients’ books and record keeping, to more value-

added services such as offering financial insights and strategic advice.

- It offers a low-risk way to expand your capacity for clients, without needing to grow your in-house team and all of the costs and resource associated with that.
- It provides essential back-up for high demand periods, such as just before self-assessment deadlines, so you can increase your revenue without needing to bring on temporary staff to handle the extra work.
- It offers a cost-effective solution, so that you can still offer bookkeeping clients the same high levels of service, but at a lower cost to the business, which means more profit.

Add Your Voice to The 2025 'Accounting Talent Index' Survey



A groundbreaking research piece into the global accountant shortage.

Your insights and thoughtful responses will play a pivotal role in shedding a brighter light on this increasingly pressing issue and will contribute significantly to the collective understanding of its far-reaching consequences, and hopefully point the way to some constructive solutions to the problem.

[Complete Survey](#)



SOME COMMON CONCERNS WHEN OUTSOURCING BOOKKEEPING FOR ACCOUNTANTS

If you're an accountancy firm looking at potentially outsourcing important but routine tasks, such as bookkeeping services for your clients, to a partner, you'll want to do your homework to make sure that you're making the right decision.

Some of the common concerns that might be holding back accountancy firms from outsourcing bookkeeping can include:

- Worries about language and cultural barriers if outsourcing to a partner based in another country.
- Dealing with handing over critical processes that affect your clients to your outsourcing partner.
- Needing to be sure that the outsourcing partner uses fully qualified staff that understand UK bookkeeping and tax systems.
- Data security worries, or unsure whether outsourcing can ensure UK regulatory compliance.

With the [right outsourced bookkeeping partner](#), they will be able to answer all of your questions and concerns, to ensure successful outcomes and an effective partnership.

SET GOALS FOR YOUR OUTSOURCED BOOKKEEPING

Defining the specific objectives that you want to achieve through outsourcing bookkeeping services on behalf of your clients is essential. These can look a bit different for every accountancy firm, but some of the common areas to look at can include:

- Reducing costs
- Improving service delivery
- Accessing specialised skills
- Client expansion
- Freeing up a certain amount of time for your in-house team.

Having clear and measurable goals will help to guide your bookkeeping outsourcing strategy and will give you a way to track success and measure performance over time.

ADOPT A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH WITH YOUR OUTSOURCING PARTNER

Good communication and ongoing collaboration are essential when it comes to outsourcing effectively.

A great outsourcing partner is like an extension of your team rather than a separate entity, so transparency and regular communication is important to achieve this.

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“Investing a little time in the early days to align processes, document a comprehensive onboarding process and set out the open communication lines mentioned earlier can really pay dividends over time”

Tips include:

- Arranging regular check-ins with your outsourced bookkeepers, to help keep everyone up to date and deal with any blockers early.
- Have clear reporting arrangements so that you’re always in the loop with the current standing of all clients and their records.
- Utilise collaborative tools to help make communications and simple interactions between teams seamless.

BUILD A LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP WHEN YOU OUTSOURCE BOOKKEEPING SERVICES

Developing a strong relationship with your outsourcing partner for bookkeeping services will help to build better understanding, trust and improve the quality of service, resulting in better outcomes for all involved. Looking at the medium and long-term benefits, as well as the immediate and short-term assistance

that outsourcing bookkeeping can bring to your business will help to set you up for success.

In practical terms, this can look a bit different for every accountancy business. Investing a little time in the early days to align processes, document a comprehensive onboarding process and set out the open communication lines mentioned earlier can really pay dividends over time. It can also make things smoother if you suddenly need to scale up operations to meet seasonal or other peaks in client demand. All of the practical fundamentals and a strong relationship are already in place.

LOOK AT COMPLIANCE AND SECURITY

When an outsourced bookkeeping partner is dealing with your client’s data and sensitive financial information, you need to know that their security is up to scratch and compliant

with all necessary regulations. Some of the specific areas you may need to discuss with your outsourced bookkeepers might include:

- How files will be transferred and accessed
- What cloud software is being used
- Level of anti-virus protection
- Level of security with VPN connections

Any good partner will be happy to discuss their security protocols and certifications with you so you and your clients can have peace of mind about data safety and compliance.

HOW ADVANCETRACK CAN HELP

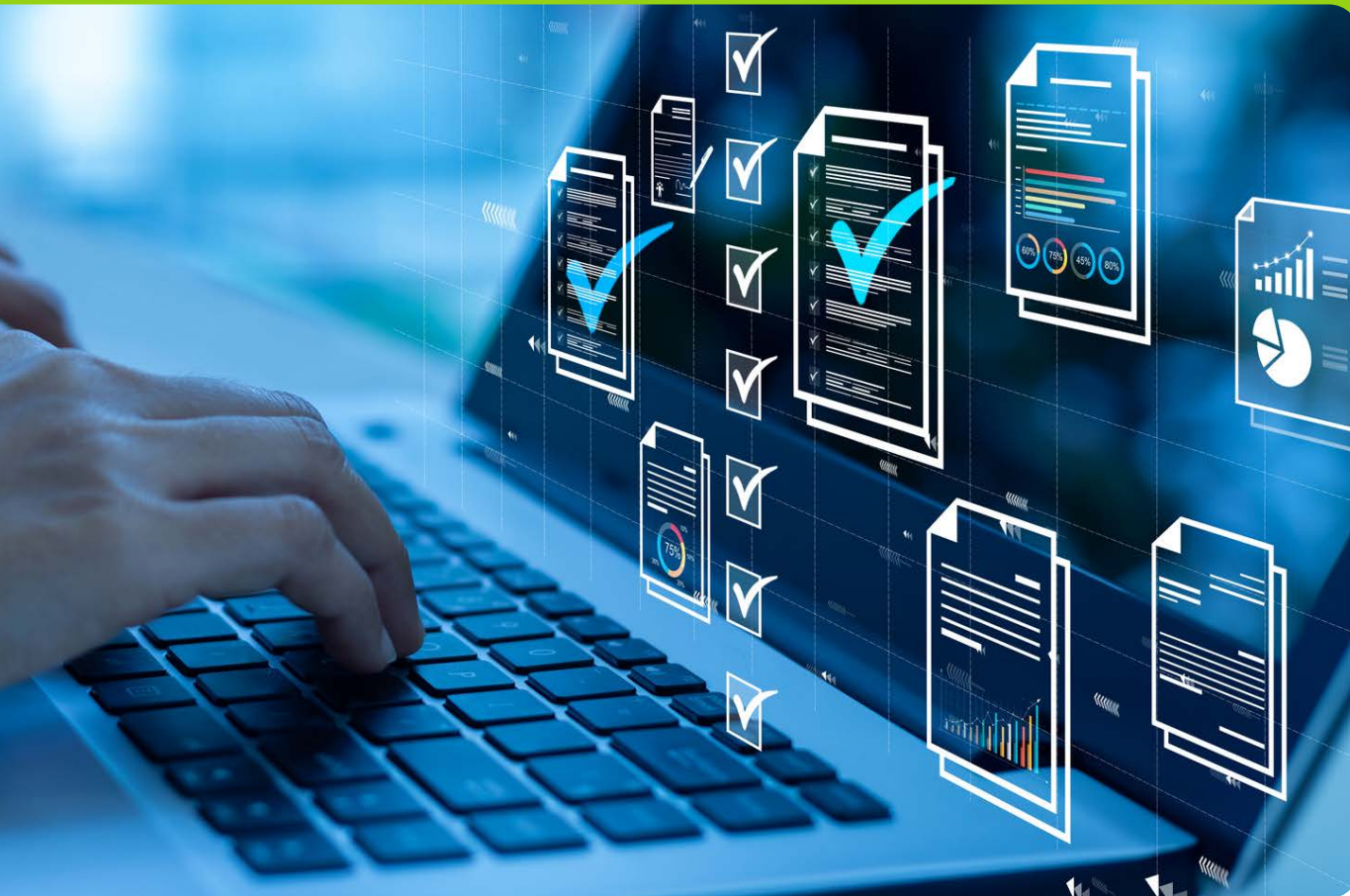
At Advancetrack, we’re a professional accountancy and tax outsourcing provider, so we understand the importance of a well-crafted outsourced bookkeeping strategy and can address any concerns or questions you might have about how it all works and why both you and your clients can benefit from taking this step.

We help firms like yours create effective, [tailor-made accounting outsourcing strategies](#) that drive your future growth and success, while meeting customer expectations and being able to scale at will. [Partner with Advancetrack](#) and start your journey to a brighter future for your accountancy firm. ■



Guest blog: ACSP delay sends an MTD chill through the profession

As Companies House's new verification system gets delayed at the last minute, accountants and tax advisers will have a familiar feeling of uneasiness, writes Kevin Reed.



IN A COMPLIANCE-DRIVEN PROFESSION, accountants need more than just their clients to provide them with their right information; they also need the government's systems and processes to be working adequately.

The drive to digitise tax filings is representative of technology as the silver bullet to improve government departments' efficiency. And its success is decidedly patchy. For each multi-million online set of self-assessment tax returns there has been a [Nirs2](#) or early Noughties [NHS IT](#).

And so, efforts to bring Companies House into the 21st century have been welcomed – but with great trepidation. For, what has been viewed as a non-digitised dumping ground of



“Further down the line, being an ASCP will see agents able to make filings on clients’ behalf to Companies House”

unverified information, can it be transformed into a digital and verifiable source of secure companies and director data?

WHAT IS AN AUTHORISED CORPORATE SERVICES PROVIDER (ACSP)?

Companies House is introducing systems to verify the identity of directors and persons of significant control of UK companies. As part of that plan, agents will be able to register as an Authorised Corporate Services Provider (ACSP).

Being an ASCP, in the short-term, will enable an agent to verify clients’ ID on their behalf for Companies House. Further down the line,

being an ASCP will see agents able to make filings on clients’ behalf to Companies House. Further details can be [found here](#).

Sadly, the first stage was postponed at the last minute, due to ‘final testing’. The system is due to go live in mid-March.

DELAYS... AND MTD

Accountants and tax advisers are used to government IT delays. Making Tax Digital, for example, has been ‘very close’ for several years. The other thing the profession knows is that these new systems don’t necessarily create efficiencies for either taxpayers or their agents.

While some may view the Companies House delay as ‘better than being introduced broken’, there is a familiar, chilly air that the delay has brought in – one that provides a wintry reminder of MTD delays of the recent past.

And, as Spring dawns on us and MTD ITSA still in beta testing, we can only hope that the new ACSP system beats it to go-live. ■

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Kevin Reed is a freelance journalist and editor of *Financial Accountant* magazine



Help us to help you!

Take part in Advancetrack's 'sequel' to our groundbreaking 2024 research into accountancy talent.

We'd love you to 'add your voice' to Advancetrack's groundbreaking research into the accountancy talent market.

Last year we launched the inaugural Accounting Talent Index, which showed global issues with skills shortages in the profession. The research showed that three-quarters of the practice leaders surveyed said they were 'significantly' or 'severely affected by a lack of skills in their business.

Advancetrack is determined to support practices by providing access to flexible and skilled accounting resources – and the

popularity of our services shows that we're having a hugely positive impact.

We'd really appreciate you adding your voice into our 2025 Accounting Talent Index – it's a set of straightforward questions gauging thoughts on your practice's talent and resources. The more practice leaders take part, the more comprehensive and accurate the research will be, and those that complete the survey can access it directly upon its May release.

The research will be launched at Advancetrack's annual gbX Conference on

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[Click here](#)

13 May. Our ever-popular event is invite only (a password is needed to register), so if you would like to come along then please get in touch with a member of the Advancetrack team. Details of the event can be found by [clicking here](#). ■



University of Warwick Science Park, Sir Williams Lyons Road, CV4 7EZ, UK

+44 (0) 24 7601 6308

advice@advancetrack.com

www.advancetrack.com

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