

OBC Accountants

OBC Accountants do more but pay less with IRIS OpenAudit in the cloud

OBC Accountants are a chartered accountancy practice, based in Eastbourne, Sussex, with 20 staff and 150 years of combined professional experience in a range of business advisory and tax planning areas.

"Our clients must have thought we were moving in," says Lee Bowden, client services manager at OBC Accountants. "The audit team would arrive with bags bulging with papers. Our whole approach was very low-tech with hand-written notes and ageing technology. When finished they'd have even more papers to cart back to the office. It's the same for auditors everywhere, but it doesn't really give the right impression."

OBC was on a mission to modernise its entire operations. This wasn't just to change client perceptions, although this was a consideration. The firm also wanted to reduce duplication and generally make its operations more efficient. As Bowden explains, OBC's previous auditing software amounted to nothing more than a series of linked spread sheets; it was expensive and upgrades were installed by disk so the team were never certain if the program was entirely up-to-date.

Elsewhere in the company OBC had already relied upon solutions from IRIS - the market leader in accountancy and payroll software - so IRIS OpenAudit was a natural choice.

IRIS OpenAudit is the UK's first cloud-based audit solution. It combines all the cost-savings and environmental benefits of using a paperless audit solution with the convenience, accessibility and resilience of cloud technology.

Bowden explains that OBC had no qualms about this as it already uses cloud-based software elsewhere in the practice.

Cutting costs and driving process efficiencies

"IRIS was already a trusted supplier, but the fact that we could import figures from our accounts production software to the auditing solution was a huge plus for us too," says Bowden.

"Also, because IRIS OpenAudit works to the Mercia methodology, it meant that our auditors could use the same processes as they always have done." Indeed, by applying the market-leading methodology, IRIS OpenAudit delivers a vigorous framework for the audit process.

To complete the transformation, OBC has also supplied its audit team with portable tablet devices. This plays to one of the most compelling benefits of IRIS OpenAudit: enhanced accessibility. Using the IRIS solution, audit documents can be accessed from any web browser and audits can be completed and approved at any time in any location from any web-enabled device.

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OBC auditors can now work directly on their tablets, producing the final version straightaway and file it in the cloud so that it is immediately available to any other authorised person who needs it. This reduces the workload when they return to the office, eliminates the files of paper and provides centralised visibility so directors and managers not at the audit site can monitor progress. "There's no more duplication, lost files or having to go through reams of paper documents with clients," says Bowden. In addition, we don't need to worry about updates as these happen automatically.

However, it's when Bowden begins to talk about costs that the full value of IRIS OpenAudit can be appreciated. "We are now paying less than we were with our previous solution," he explains. "But we now have a much more streamlined and efficient approach."

It's clear too that the IRIS solution has been good for OBC's image and morale - "the audit team have been really positive and it's given them a clearer direction and purpose," says Bowden.

Looking to the Future

Today, auditors are moving away from their old-fashioned, paper-bound image. With IRIS OpenAudit, auditing can now be completely paperless, eliminating all of the associated costs of purchasing, storing and printing paper and helping practices reduce their carbon foot print. The fact that the cloud can now also streamline their work, making them far more productive, is a huge added bonus.

Solution summary

- *Combines the cost-savings and environmental benefits of using a paperless audit solution with the convenience, accessibility and resilience of cloud technology*
- *Works to the Mercia methodology, so OBC auditors can use the same processes as they always have done*
- *Enhanced accessibility: using IRIS OpenAudit, audit documents can be accessed from any web browser and audits can be completed and approved at any time in any location from any web-enabled device*
- *Helps support a streamlined, efficient and cost-effective auditing process*
- *Enables figures to be imported from accounts production software to the auditing solution.*