

Dext | Commerce

Accounts and Legal

Accounts and Legal have been supporting small businesses across the UK since 2014. With a forward-thinking approach to technology, the firm has always looked into smart software and automation to streamline processes, save time and ensure quality. Here, Director Stuart Hurst explains how the firm has been using Dext Commerce to help its growing number of digital commerce businesses and how that decision has allowed Accounts and Legal to expand in this industry with customised services.



About the firm

Founded in 2014, Accounts and Legal is a firm specialised in supporting small businesses across the UK. The proposition was to make accounting simple and useful for entrepreneurs by going beyond compliance and into valuable advisory. It didn't take long for their London office to start receiving hundreds of enquiries from business owners every month. Two years later, the second office in Brighton was opened.

The team agreed from the beginning that technology would be essential to establishing Accounts and Legal's mission. By automating day-to-day processes such as data entry, bank reconciliation and payments, the firm was able to reduce costs and free up time for accountants to focus on advisory services. This forward-thinking approach allowed the company to expand into legal services as well - a bold move in such a regulated industry.

In 2020, under the guidance of Stuart Hurst, Accounts and Legal opened an office in Manchester and, not long after, in Liverpool as well. An experienced accountant and tech enthusiast, Stuart joined as a Director and has also been acting as a true cloud champion: by finding the best tech solutions for his team, he ensures Accounts and Legal continue to support their clients in the most effective way whilst future-proofing the business.



E-commerce clients are harder than probably any other industry we work with. It might start as a very small business doing 10 sales a day, but that soon becomes thousands. So the biggest pain point for us was to deal with sheer volumes of data and controlling this data to ensure accuracy”

The Challenge

Stuart and his team were aware that looking after commerce clients can be difficult because of the volume of transactions and the different sources of data. The time demanded to deal with them, the speed of growth and the risks that come from manual errors put off many practices.

But he knew that digital commerce isn't going anywhere and accounting firms need to adapt and find a solution. Thankfully, Accounts and Legal is a firm that has always been open to new technologies, so he was confident the team would be happy to explore automation even more.



The Solution

Accounts and Legal have been using Dext Prepare for over seven years and, more recently, Dext Precision. The excellent experience they've had with those products gave the team the confidence to give Dext Commerce a go.

But such a decision doesn't come easy. The team analysed rigorously all the options available, watched product demos and joined a few calls with customer support to understand everything Commerce could and couldn't do. Finally, they presented the idea to a client.

"We made it clear to the client that we were testing new technology, but we believed in it because we had a good track record with Dext. We've researched it thoroughly and found that Commerce ticks more boxes than any other e-commerce solution. They were happy to tag along on a few hours of training, which was great because we needed the client's input as well."

Stuart explains that the client in question has had a few negative experiences with previous accountants who overpromised and didn't deliver, so the fact they accepted to give Commerce a try was an important vote of confidence. After a few calls to set it all up, they were relieved.

"Once they saw things come together, all the data came through, they loved it. We've had next to no pushback as a result of implementing Dext Commerce from either side, it's been quite a nice process," he says.

The ability to customise everything was crucial to ensure the client was satisfied, and the intense customer support throughout the implementation process gave Accounts and Legal the assurance they needed. Stuart remembers the team's excitement because they knew that, if this first trial went well, it could open the doors for so many more clients.



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A lot of these e-commerce apps are a bit flaky. Dext Commerce was much clearer than other platforms we've tried and became this one-stop-shop for everything we need - but still allows us to be very granular in the data that's pulled from all those sources. That's very powerful."

The Impact

For Stuart, having a well-structured training with a step-by-step process to implement the software was very important - but the clincher was finding a single solution for everything his digital commerce clients need.

"You don't want to end up with four different apps and logins, then train your staff in all those four apps, that's a lot of hours spent on training... When you have 10 trainees to use four different apps, that's 40 logins that will cost you a lot. And the bigger your firm is, the more that escalates. So being able to keep it streamlined all in one app for our firm has been really, really useful."

The team at Accounts and Legal previously experimented with a variety of e-commerce plugins and platforms such as A2X, but Dext Commerce proved to be the best option for them. The first client introduced to the platform was impressed with the solution they found as it could be tailored to their needs, and the team is now able to deliver even more value.

Another important aspect is growth. Dext Commerce saves Accounts and Legal's team hours every week, which allows the company to take on more clients without increasing prices - vital for small businesses. As the digital commerce industry has been constantly growing for years with no signs of slowing down, that represents a significant opportunity for accountants. But having the right technology is key to keeping up with the volume of work it demands.

"If we're doing it all manually or if we had to log into four different software, it would cost a small fortune and the client wouldn't want to pay. To be fair, I wouldn't get the value from it either. Whereas this way we can stay competitive but still make a profit, and clients get the best value, best service and accurate real-time data."

Moving Forward

In the past, according to Stuart, if an e-commerce client came along, the team would of course take them onboard, but the firm wasn't actively looking to expand in that industry. Now he knows that Accounts and Legal can market to more digital commerce clients with the same confidence.

"Dext Commerce allows us to deliver that same high levels of service that other industries get from the firm."

Accounts and Legal have included Dext Commerce to their permanent tech stack, having now introduced several clients to the platform. They're continuing the rollout through northern clients, and will then implement it in their London office, where they have the largest number of digital commerce clients.



We are expanding our client base and remaining competitive, whilst our clients are getting even more value from us and the support of a product that fits their business really well. It's a win-win."