How embracing digital innovation drives efficiency

Kevin Lord, Digital Enablement Manager
- Founded in 2007
- 230 Staff
- 90,000+ Users
- Micro Business focussed
- UK headquartered, developed & supported
- Focus on simplicity and compliance
- Multi Award winning for SME business
- Edinburgh
“Artificial intelligence”

The theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence
How does this affect my role as an accountant?
What’s the least enjoyable part of your work as an accountant?

- Chasing up information: 9%
- Sorting out messy books: 10%
- Correcting client mistakes: 10%
- Other: 16%
- Performing basic bookkeeping and/or data entry tasks: 53%
- Completing/submitting tax returns: 2%
How embracing digital innovation drives efficiency

1. Winning the system v software battle - digitising internal processes

2. Using your clients to build your app stack

3. Using social media to add value and attract tomorrow’s clients
Will Farnell  ·  1st
Accountancy Practice Founder | Speaker, Consultant and now Author - Th...
1mo

We are pretty excited at FC, after two years of planning on 1st Feb we are making some big changes for our team.

Out goes the 37.5 hour working week, out goes the 20 something days annual holiday entitlement, instead, in exchange for exceeding performance expectations and continuing to deliver great client experiences, our team can work when and where they want.

They can take unlimited holiday as long as the job gets done, on the days they work it’s six hours to fit around their personal life rather than 7.5 with some core hours in the office.

It’s taken two years to plan to allow us to create a culture that lets us do this with the right people, process and technology. We had to move to a place where we can measure output effectively rather than simply measure input in the hours our team work.

Our teams will manage their work patterns between them to ensure clients needs are front and centre whilst giving them the work/life balance they need to be productive and efficient when their mind and body are in work mode.

We are really excited to see how this pans out. What one big change are you going to make in your firm in 2019?

#thedigitalfirm #6hourday #culture #accounting
Systems
Software
How you do things
Tools to help you do it
Systems 1st
Software 2nd
Think about what you repeat!!!
Example: Telephone tennis

How many times a day?
How many clients?
Solution: Appointment App
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My Journey to you
Mobile phone usage

- Alarm
Mobile phone usage

- Alarm
- Bus timetable
Mobile phone usage

- Alarm
- Bus timetable
- Bus ticket
Mobile phone usage

- Alarm
- Bus timetable
- Bus ticket
- Podcast
Mobile phone usage

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- Flight ticket
Mobile phone usage

- Alarm
- Bus timetable
- Bus ticket
- Podcast
- Flight ticket
- Social media x 3
Mobile phone usage

- Alarm
- Bus timetable
- Bus ticket
- Podcast
- Flight ticket
- Social media x 3
- Email
Mobile phone usage

- Alarm
- Bus timetable
- Bus ticket
- Podcast
- Flight ticket
- Social media x 3
- Email
- WhatsApp
Mobile phone usage

- Alarm
- Bus timetable
- Bus ticket
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Mobile phone usage

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- Email
- WhatsApp
- Banking
- Citymapper
- Apple Pay
Mobile phone usage

- Alarm
- Bus timetable
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- Apple Pay
- Expensify
- Slack
- Trello
- Amazon
- Candy Crush
Mobile Phone Usage

- Instant information
- Accurate
- Convenience
- Safety
- Efficient
My clients won’t do that!

Really?

Have you asked them?
By 2025, 75% of your clients will be millennials
Think older people are technophobes? Think again

https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/05/think-older-people-are-technophobes-think-again
87.9% of adults in the UK have used the internet in the last 3 months

Almost all adults aged 16 to 44 years have used the internet recently...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 to 44</td>
<td>98.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54</td>
<td>94.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 64</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 74</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 and over</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

... but just 4 in every 10 adults aged 75 and over have used the internet in the last 3 months.
Millennials lead on some technology adoption measures, but Boomers and Gen Xers are also heavy adopters

**Own a smartphone**
- Millennial: Born 1981-96
  - 92% in 2018
- Gen X: Born 1965-80
  - 85% in 2018
- Boomer: Born 1946-64
  - 67% in 2018
- Silent: Born 1945 and earlier
  - 30% in 2011

**Own a tablet computer**
- Millennial: Born 1981-96
  - 45% in 2005
- Gen X: Born 1965-80
  - 31% in 2005
- Boomer: Born 1946-64
  - 17% in 2005
- Silent: Born 1945 and earlier
  - 3% in 2005

**Use social media**
- Millennial: Born 1981-96
  - 81% in 2012
- Gen X: Born 1965-80
  - 64% in 2012
- Boomer: Born 1946-64
  - 40% in 2012
- Silent: Born 1945 and earlier
  - 23% in 2012

Source: Survey conducted Jan. 3-10, 2018. Trend data are from previous Pew Research Center surveys.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
● “Tech adoption in 18-34 year old business owners is faster and easier”

● “Tech adoption in 35-60 year old business owners is slower”

BUT

“.....this profile of users tend to be more proficient in software and need less support in the long term”

https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/05/think-older-people-are-technophobes-think-again
Segmenting your clients

- Client name
- Entity - Ltd, Partnership, ST
- Year End filing date - *best time to convert!!*
- Turnover
- Sector/Industry of main source of income
- Employee numbers
- Age
- What technology/apps they use
- Bank (challenger banks?)
- Common problems
- Current frequency and format of communication
- Grading (mindset, services, repeat offenders)
Confidence in recommending tech

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segmented Clients</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Individual Solution</th>
<th>Common Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Confusing and timely systems to manage stock and payments</td>
<td>Goodtill</td>
<td>FreeAgent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Services</td>
<td>Company losing money as expenses from staff are late or receipts are missing.</td>
<td>G Suite</td>
<td>FreeAgent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairdresser</td>
<td>Missing clients, no shows</td>
<td>Calendly</td>
<td>FreeAgent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradesman</td>
<td>Job tracking and allocation</td>
<td>Tradify</td>
<td>FreeAgent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prepping your business

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There are...

45 million active social media users in the UK

People spend an average of 1 hr 54 mins daily on social media

People turn to social media for information and reviews

78% of people said that posts by the businesses they follow impact their decisions

90% of social media users use it to communicate with businesses
Keeping engagement and adding value

- 5 mins: check feeds daily and respond promptly
- 5 mins: follow clients, their businesses and industry leaders
- 10 mins: ask clients/colleagues to write reviews/endorsements
- 10 mins: share practice news & insights
- 20 mins: share content from third parties
- 60 mins: write a blog post/article
- 60 mins: make sure all platforms are consistent
It’s ok to let go!!

- Try carrot - using software benefits you as a business
- Try Stick - include being digital in your Terms of Engagement
- Is it worth having the client?
It’s ok to let go!!

- Keep reviewing & renewing
- Get rid of systems/software that you have outgrown
- Be prepared to step away from the operational tasks!
Thank you!

Questions?