

Keltic Accounting efficiently manages growth with IRIS solutions



CUSTOMER PROFILE

Keltic Accounting Ltd is based in Inverurie, Aberdeenshire. Managing Director Sheena Martin established the business five years ago, returning to practice from a career in industry. Starting out as a one-woman business, she now has a team of five, serving customers in a very broad range of sectors.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Managing growth and using technology to enable the Keltic team to offer excellent, efficient service.

SOLUTIONS USED

IRIS Accountancy Suite
KashFlow
IRIS OpenWebsite
IRIS OpenSpace

Sheena Martin has built her practice on IRIS software for accounts, tax and company formations as well as IRIS payroll with electronic payslips.

Sheena comments, "Purchasing the IRIS statutory accounts module was one of the very first things I did. When I researched the market, IRIS seemed to be the most comprehensive suite of software - offering a belt-and-braces approach to helping us keep our clients compliant. It's very user-friendly, intuitive even. The software has provided a very reliable platform for our growth, enabling us to handle clients' statutory accounts and tax returns very efficiently."

Keeping the client's business on track

Sheena enthusiastically adopts new technology where it can be shown to improve efficiency and client service. Keltic Accounting has started to offer its clients the KashFlow online accounting system from IRIS in recent months, "Having used the IRIS suite of accounting products since opening for business, when IRIS acquired the KashFlow online accounting system I was keen to take a closer look.



Available anywhere

Information becomes accessible wherever there is an internet connection



Collaboration

Client and accountant share the same on-screen view of the client's business data



Improved visibility & control

The Keltic team can keep clients on track and resolve any issues as they arise



Paperless

Exchanging and approving documents online eliminates the delays and costs of paper-based processes



Time-saving

Regular contact, with access to live data, avoids problems further down the line

The first few months of a client's new business are critical and KashFlow is especially useful in enabling us to keep a close eye on our start-up clients, monitoring them carefully and stopping them going off in the wrong direction. What margins are they making? Is cash looking tight?"

As a successful entrepreneur herself, Sheena understands the challenges of starting up and running a business. With this new service in place, clients no longer need to find time in their busy day to visit the Keltic Accounting office. Furthermore, as Sheena notes, "The days of the periodic client-accountant meeting are gone. Clients want an answer today if they hit a problem. Using online technology such as KashFlow, we can react quickly to resolve any queries. Lengthy timescales are a thing of the past; we can both look at the same information on our screens and it makes it all very real-time. This immediacy avoids problems further down the line."

"The days of the periodic client-accountant meeting are gone. Clients want an answer today if they hit a problem. Using online technology such as KashFlow, we can react quickly to resolve any queries."

Sheena adds, "These are the clients we really enjoy working with - the ones who embrace technology and welcome the fact that we offer innovative solutions."

Added value

Sheena feels that using IRIS technology helps her team to do even more for clients: "An IT company may recommend us to a property letting business, who may recommend us to a plumber. It's exciting to see our client base expand in this way and to help them grow, not just through compliance services but with business development and specialist tax advice.

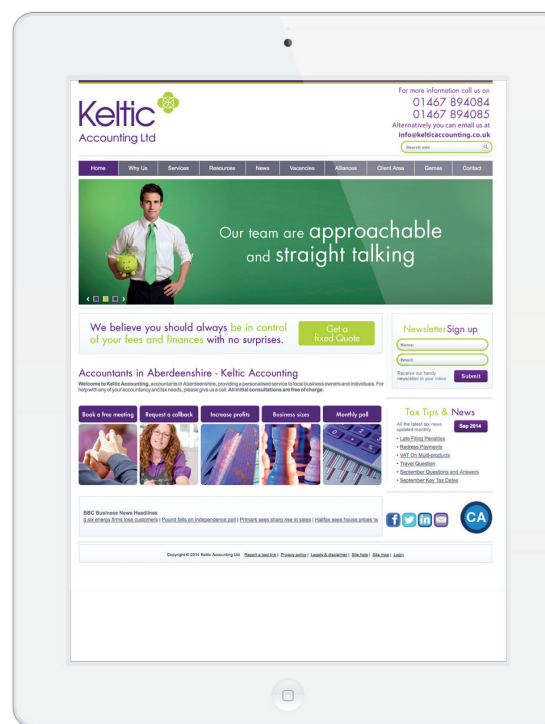
When the client's basic books are taken care of, it frees time and energy for the smart stuff that genuinely benefits the client. We can put our heart and soul into looking at their business at a higher level from a tax perspective and think of what we could do for the client's business, rather than trying to sort out the numbers. It's better for the practice as well, as we work to a fixed fee. If the client's books aren't in order, the margins fall and it becomes a case of minimising risk.

Being based in a part of the UK where adverse weather is not unknown, Sheena agrees that using cloud-based solutions also helps to maintain business continuity: "For any business today, flexible working is key to survival. The flexibility that solutions such as KashFlow and IRIS OpenSpace offer is marvellous. We're doing more and more online. Nowadays, I can be with a client in their office or at home - anywhere with an internet connection, in fact - and be as efficient as when I'm in the office."

Promoting the practice

In a parallel development, a few months ago Sheena commissioned a complete website revamp from the IRIS OpenWebsite service: "When I started the business, my husband developed a basic website for me. It was fit for purpose in the early days, but no longer reflected the Keltic Accounting business as it stands today and everything we can now offer. I expected developing a new website to be an extremely painful process, but my reservations proved unfounded. The IRIS OpenWebsite team offer a really good service and are easy to work with. They absolutely listened to what we wanted, followed the remit and customised the site to meet our requirements. It was quickly up and running."

Coming up to date, Sheena says, "Our new website (www.kelticaccounting.co.uk) has made a massive difference. It's really worked for us. It is search engine optimised to bring us higher up the rankings. At the same time, if someone comes to us through a word-of-mouth recommendation, it validates what they have been told and starts to give them an understanding of how we can help."



A streamlined approval cycle

Keltic Accounting has recently launched an online portal in the 'client area' of the website. This is powered by IRIS OpenSpace, the cloud-based solution for exchanging and approving documents in a secure environment.

The team can upload documents, such as a letter of engagement, a draft set of accounts or a tax return. Their client then accesses the document online for review and approval at the touch of a button.

Using cloud-based IRIS OpenSpace has further strengthened collaboration with clients, as Sheena reports, "The vast majority of our clients are very happy about signing online as it offers more streamlined communication.

Traditional paper documents tend to sit on the client's desk. It's understandable: sending papers backwards and forwards involves cost and effort. With IRIS OpenSpace, they can review and electronically approve documents when and where convenient to them. They just log on, electronically sign the document and it's job done. By making it much easier for clients to respond immediately, we find that we can get them over the line much more quickly."

"When the client's basic books are taken care of, it frees time and energy for the smart stuff that genuinely benefits the client."

Key benefits

IRIS OpenSpace

- Upload, store and approve documents online
- High level security - only you and your client can view documents
- Customise with your own logo and colour scheme
- Fully integrated with the IRIS Accountancy Suite
- Unlimited electronic approvals

IRIS OpenWebsite

- A brand new hosted website for your practice
- Newsworthy content for your new website or to refresh your existing site
- Affordable, monthly newsletter covering tax issues and news for your clients and prospects

Using technology to do business better

Sheena says, "At Keltic Accounting, we love using technology and look for ways to not only enhance the customer experience, but also to increase our own internal efficiency. These recent advancements are a huge step forward for us and are helping to fulfil my vision of offering a modern service to our clients."

Throughout all these developments, the Keltic Accounting team has had help from IRIS to use their new technology. Sheena comments, "IRIS offers innovative solutions backed by good service, visiting us in person to guide us through the software or to check it's all going well, and providing responsive telephone support. In short, IRIS has definitely helped me to grow my business."

IRIS KashFlow Connect Partner Programme

This comprehensive set of services gives your practice all the help you need to promote KashFlow to your clients. Increase your firm's visibility with full accreditation, co-branded marketing material, 24/7 support and a listing in the KashFlow accountants' directory.

IRIS KashFlow Connect, the free-to-use dashboard designed for accountants, is included in the programme and enables you to manage, edit and control data from all of your clients' KashFlow.

Find out more at iris.co.uk/partner