

clarity.[®]



**Why Accounts + Legal use clarity. as
the “gateway to advisory” and how
they generated a staggering return**

Accounts
 **Legal**

About Accounts + Legal

A+L was created in 2014 and now has offices in London, Brighton and Manchester. They were born to do accounting differently; to make the financials forward-looking rather than backward-looking, to look beyond the balance sheet, to set entrepreneurs up to succeed and fundamentally to help small businesses grow.

We spoke with one of the regional directors, Stuart Hurst, about their challenges with business advisory and how they have used Clarity as a gateway to advisory, increased their average revenue per client and generated a staggering return, quickly.



accountsandlegal.co.uk

Highlights

- ✓ Clarity is the “gateway” to, not only advisory but, upselling and generating an ROI from the other apps we use as a firm
- ✓ It has given us a scalable way of delivering advisory that the whole team can use and is changing the way we go about advisory conversations with clients
- ✓ We have quickly seen an increase in fees and generated a staggering return on investment, with competition between our offices!
- ✓ Clients love it, the wins they are making are snowballing and we’ve been blown away by the impact it’s made! We’ve seen clients come out of slumps, smash growth targets and improve processes
- ✓ It is helping build confidence for the team and gives them the ability to create forecasts in minutes, whilst giving clients something that finally makes sense to them and that hasn’t cost the earth
- ✓ Clarity has quickly become part of our 5 year plan to improve profitability in the firm and to provide the best possible service for our clients
- ✓ Clarity is our favourite app right now it’s almost tattoo worthy!

About you and your firm

For me, everything changed about 6 years ago, when 2 things happened in the same week. Firstly, I went to Xerocon for the first time... and it blew my mind. I never realised accounting software could do so much. Secondly, I watched Simon Sinek's "whats your why" video and it inspired me.

I realised I wasn't an accountant because I was good with numbers. It was because I wanted to help business owners achieve more and to sleep easier at night. That was my real buzz!



Outside of accounting, I'm a super geek and love board games and Pac-Man.

As a firm, I think we're only just getting started. There's still so much that can be done to help business owners. Firstly, we're opening at least one new office this year, so our expansion means we can help more clients.

Secondly, the app stack and advisory offering just gets better and better. So we are getting better at getting under the skin of the business and not just improving processes for them, but introducing them to others in our network that can assist.

What problems have you had before in scaling advisory services?

Everyone was aware, and agreed that our problem was that we wanted to help more clients, but we didn't have a scalable way of doing it that the whole team could use. "Advisory" was only ever delivered by the directors of the business and not in a structured or systemised way.

10-20% of our client base were getting detailed management information with accompanying meetings, but we couldn't find a way of engaging the other 80-90% of our client base. And even if we could, we couldn't see how we could resource and deliver that level of service.

Each director was delivering advisory differently and it took a lot of time. We were concerned that smaller businesses wouldn't want to pay for advisory services delivered by us, and weren't sure how we could get our more junior team involved. Would they have the skills, confidence and ability to do so and would clients be prepared to be dealt with by our more junior team?

Why was Clarity going to help solve those problems?

We could see straight away how Clarity could make things so *much simpler in the firm*. And that meant it could be *rolled out firm-wide*. Our younger team members are already super fans of the platform!



It's changing the way we go about advisory conversations with clients from the get-go. For the younger team it's improving their confidence and making a huge difference to their soft-skills. They are quickly understanding that advisory is not about knowing all the right answers (no-one does!). Instead, it's more about asking the right questions.

We see Clarity as being a *great training tool for both our team and our clients*; stripping back the key numbers of any business into understandable chunks, from which we can build impactful and meaningful action plans.

To start with we weren't sure how the team would respond to yet 'another new app'. But they've quickly realised that Clarity is different and is *more than just a piece of software*. It can help us grow better relationships and have better conversations with our clients. And it can even help us get better engagement of the technologies we use and generate an ROI on those other apps.

How has Clarity helped?

We've been blown away by the impact it's made and we absolutely love it! For me, *Clarity is the 'gateway', to not only advisory, but to upselling the other apps we use as a firm in our tech stack*.

Clarity is one of the first apps we use to assess the current situation with a client; both in terms of the financial health of the business, but also to evaluate just how much the client knows and understands about the numbers in their business.

We are on Clarity's top package and made an ROI within a couple of months. All 3 offices are rolling out Clarity and are even starting to be competitive between one other. The younger team are already in love with the financial plan function in Clarity.

It gives them the ability to create low level forecasts in minutes, while *finally giving the client something that makes sense to them* that hasn't cost the world. Previously only our more senior and experienced accountants could produce forecasts.

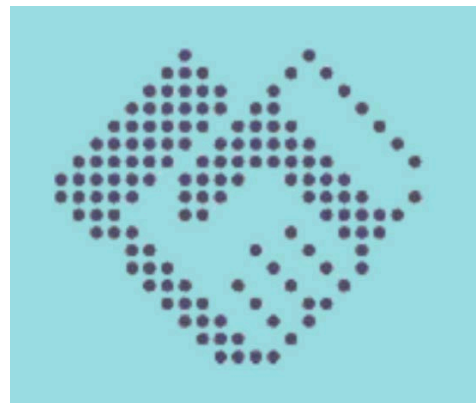
Our biggest highlight so far was landing a £12k per annum upsell to a client. Clarity gave me a structure to set out what we could actually do to help the client and present it in a way that the *client could finally understand the value of our additional services*. They bit my hand off with the offer to help them grow the business.

Overall, the platform is *helping to build confidence for the team* (both by having the numbers there with transparent calculations and by understanding how to tell better stories with numbers). Currently younger team members are shadowing the more senior accountants in Clarity meetings. Before long though, they will have the confidence to run impactful meetings themselves.

How have team members found the time to deliver on top of their already busy day?

You will always find time to do the things you really want to do and that you enjoy. Once I proved the concept myself, the others naturally got curious and wanted to learn and be a part of it themselves.

It has quickly become a key part of our 5 year plan to improve profitability in the firm and to provide the best possible service for our clients.



The team have realised that actually a little goes a long way and that *if you break it down even to just engage with one or two clients per week, you can still make a huge amount of progress*.

What has been the impact on your firm and clients since using Clarity?

It helps them firstly understand their numbers. It is so easy to forget, when you're an accountant, that most clients don't really know their numbers and for example, what net current assets mean, or even what gross profit is. So it helps us speak in plain English and not jargon.

Secondly, it helps us keep them focused and accountable to make sure the big stuff gets done, and owners don't end up working 'in' the business too much.

Clients have already seen their numbers improve and we've seen some come out of slumps, smash growth targets and also improve processes in their business. From our point of view, our average fee is also on the rise, and that's thanks to clarity

" I just love this Clarity® HQ project". Not my words the words of Lucy Mountain (check her out on Instagram). Lucy has a fitness guide and has just launched an app to support this.

We're working with her using Clarity to -

- build a plan to get more customers
- review the marketing process
- build a weekly schedule to manage workload
- review current operating systems and processes and improve

This is way more than just the numbers. It's about helping the client:

- prioritise the big picture stuff
- keeping her accountable for actually doing it
- help her understand how activities drive the numbers and profitability.



Moving forward we'll be catching up with her weekly for the next month so we can really get this stuff habit forming.

I actually think this is *my favourite app right now... it's almost tattoo worthy!*

What would you say to anyone thinking of joining the Clarity community?

Its a no brainer – do it!!!! *Clarity is one of our four foundation apps and is only one of two apps ever where we've been able to roll out straight away,* need minimal training and see a profit from the word go. Every other app needs 3 months or so to get to grips with, takes more time to learn and it is not as easy to make a return on investment. This really is the gateway app to advisory.

We love clarity and are really starting to see the wins for clients snowballing.

You've regularly attended the Clarity member-exclusive events. How useful have they been for you and your firm and how is the member success team different to other apps?

Yes we have, they've been a great sounding board with other accountants and we've pinched a good few ideas from there! It's also a really honest forum, so you can share your struggles as well as your successes, which is a bit like therapy for me.

The Clarity Member Success Team are completely different from what we've come across with most other apps. For starters they are all accountants themselves and so speak our language and have been in our position before. They also *really are with you every step of the way*. You don't just sign up and then are left to it. They work with you on a weekly or monthly basis and help you to overcome any challenges that could become potential obstacles.

Impressively, they have worked with each of our offices separately. Understanding that each has different challenges, different personalities and different types of client bases.

We have to say a special thank you to the team who have been amazing mentors and task masters holding us accountable to take action!



We help you tell better stories with numbers

Clarity® is the complete business advisory platform that can help you introduce and create a profitable, repeatable and scalable business advisory service for your firm.

Our multi-award winning solution creates an additional revenue stream in excess of 40% for you, whilst increasing your bottom-line profitability by 125%.

In the past, business advisory hasn't properly leveraged the right combination of people, process and technology. It has been heavily reliant on partners or managers to deliver, there isn't enough time, it's difficult to scale and only the top 10/20% of clients can typically afford.

Using Clarity adds significant value to your small business clients, at a price they'd love to pay.

Clarity combines the power of:

- a technology-led platform - to do the heavy lifting;
- hi-impact systems and processes - to get the same great result every time for the firm and client;
- education, implementation and accountability programmes- beyond advisory, helping you and your firm; and
- member events and a vibrant community - empowering your team, firm and clients to achieve success.

Contact us

Why not book a discovery call with one of the team to see what a difference Clarity could make to your firm?

www.clarity-hq.com