

# £900,000+ raised in 12 months: how Brown & Co launched a proactive advisory service

*“Capitalise has really bolstered what we do as a small firm. We understand the different types of funding out there, we’re more confident in talking to clients about them, and we’ve got a lot of resources to tap into.”*

- Chris Brown, Partner at Brown & Co

**Brown & Co is a forward-thinking accountancy firm that works with businesses of all types, ranging from owner-managed businesses to international corporate groups.**

Having offered ad-hoc business advice in the past, Brown & Co’s Managing Director knew they wanted to standardise those services and strengthen their role as expert, trusted advisers. At the same time, they wanted to start proactively answering clients’ funding needs without having to direct them to a third party.

Capitalise allowed them to do both, offering its own Capital Advisory services through an intelligent, data-driven platform, and using those insights to drive its clients’ success.

The firm has since gained a great deal of confidence in those services, completing several funding searches with a 57% approval rate, and raising more than £941,000 for its clients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## FINDING A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Chris Brown, Managing Director at Brown & Co, came across Capitalise when the practice was looking for a funding partner.

**brown&co**  
chartered accountants

### FAST FACTS

**Accountant**  
Brown & Co

**Location**  
Lancashire

**Size**  
10 specialists

#### About Brown & Co

A commercially focused business who are 100% cloud based and always looking to utilise the latest technology to help drive efficiencies for the people and businesses we work with.

***There aren’t any other accountants in the region that offer this kind of service, so we saw it as a way to set ourselves apart from the competition.***

Chris Brown, Managing Director at Brown & Co

“At the time, we’d had a few clients come to us asking about funding, but we didn’t have a way of offering it. Sending clients to a broker has never sat well with me – I like to have control of the process, but I also want to understand how it works.”

Engaging with Capitalise meant the firm could respond to its clients’ needs, while getting education and support on the funding process. It also meant they could establish new services beyond a traditional accountancy offering, to retain and attract clients.

“You can’t really compete on compliance, because all accountants do that,” said Chris. “But if you tell clients you can help them get funding to grow their business, then they’re interested.

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## CHANGING THE DEBT MINDSET

With many business owners still wary of loans, Chris needed to communicate to clients the advantages and opportunities that would come with raising capital.

Chris said: “A lot of our clients are still of the mindset that debt’s a bad thing, but Capitalise has given us the confidence to shift that by showing them the benefits.”

To start with, Capitalise offered support ahead of any client calls – Chris was able to send a list of names to his Partnership Manager, Alice Garvey, who would review the data on those clients’ credit history and growth, and get back to him with suggestions about questions he could ask.

Other members of staff at Brown & Co are also aware of the ways they can help clients through Capital Advisory, allowing them to weave those services into the interactions they were already having. Chris catches up with Capitalise on a monthly basis.

“We can just pick up the phone and speak to the team, and they always go out of their way to help,” he said.

“We’ve learned a lot in the last 12 months – they’ve given us a real insight into the current funding market and what lenders are looking for.”

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## GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH CBILS

When the Government-backed coronavirus business interruption loan scheme (CBILS) rolled out during the pandemic, Brown & Co didn't wait for business owners to talk to them about it.

Instead, it launched a campaign to personally reach out to any clients who might benefit from a loan. The team picked up the phone to talk to each client individually, while Capitalise carried out portfolio reviews to find out how much they could borrow.

Altogether, the firm raised £826,000 for clients over the course of 12 months, allowing them to withstand the impacts of the pandemic and invest in the future.

One client, for example, received a loan at 3.2% interest that allowed them to purchase another property and expand. Another received two loans for separate companies, opening the door to growth opportunities they wouldn't have thought of otherwise.

## ADVISORY IS THE FUTURE

For Brown & Co, CBILS was just the start. Chris can see many more opportunities to enhance their service through Capitalise, whether that's by helping with property purchases, debt recovery, or credit improvement. He plans to continue building Capital Advisory into the standard agenda for all the firm's clients, using Monitor to identify those businesses that might benefit.

In a broader sense, he sees Brown & Co becoming increasingly important to its clients as the post-pandemic landscape shifts for financial services.

"In the last 12 months, that's been a real issue – banks just haven't been talking to their own customers," added Chris.

"Because we're talking to our clients regularly, and we have access to their data, we can spot opportunities and react to them quickly. That's something we can offer to our entire client base, not just the bigger businesses.

"I think over time, those advisory services are going to become more and more intrinsic to what we do. It's reassuring for our clients to know we can help them to grow – and working with Capitalise means we're able to do that."

## FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CAPITALISE

Your capital advisory platform, ready made.

Enabling you to build strength and resilience in your clients' businesses by helping them raise, recover and protect their capital.

Headquartered in London, Capitalise is the trusted platform of over 2,000 accounting firms, advising on £850million of approved capital to their clients.

Capitalise enables you to raise capital through lending and innovation grants. Recover capital through debt recovery, dispute resolution and R&D, whilst protecting working capital through credit improvement. Through a single platform, you can build out your capital advisory service line, increase revenue per client and attract new ones.

In partnership with the ACCA, CIMA, 2020 Innovation, Microsoft Accelerator integrated with Xero, Quickbooks and Sage.

More information

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