

clarity.[®]



**How Raffingers scaled
advisory and increased
revenue with clarity.**



About Raffingers

Raffingers is a top100 award winning, full-service accountancy and advisory firm to the UK's biggest recruitment, property, construction and technology companies. With 11 partners, the firm has offices in Woodford Green and London.

We spoke with one of the partners, Lee Manning, about their challenges with scaling business advisory and how they have used Clarity to help them do just that.

raffingers.co.uk



Highlights

- ✓ Clarity is not just a piece of software, but a means to open new conversations and a framework to talk to clients about their numbers
- ✓ It pushes us to get in front of our clients, not hide behind reports
- ✓ We have quickly seen an increase in fees and generated an immediate return on investment
- ✓ Clients love it! The take-up has been astounding. It has given them a renewed energy and enthusiasm, after what has been a tough year
- ✓ It's been easy to get buy-in from the team and enables the younger team members to easily run more meaningful and impactful meetings
- ✓ Advisory is vital to growth of the practice and Clarity will help us scale advisory across the firm and achieve our 10 year plan
- ✓ Clarity is changing the way we think about the service we provide clients across the board

About you and your firm

I have been with Raffingers since I was 18. I am now pushing the ripe old age of 52 and became a partner at 26. I've helped grow the practice into an 11 partner/80 employee strong business.

My main goal for 2021 is to launch our advisory platform offering with the help of Clarity. We are different from many other accountants in that we truly listen to our clients and clearly understand their needs and wants. We live by our core values every single day. The Raffingers values are the benchmark for who we are, what we do and why we do it. They guide everything from our work approach to our relationships with people.

My motivation is constantly to push myself and get out of my comfort zone, which is why I love Clarity. *It pushes us to get in front of our clients, rather than hiding behind reports.*

I also enjoy testing new strategies and ideas and am never frightened of failing, as this only spurs me on to succeed.



What problems have you had before in scaling advisory services?

Not everyone wants detailed management information and 3-way forecasts. And, delivery of these with accompanying and impactful meetings is reliant on the more senior accountants, who are time poor. Hence advisory has been difficult to scale in the past.

Getting our advisory services in the hands of more of our small business clients has also been a challenge and it has been difficult to sell and to resource.

In the past, we approached 'advisory' in a slightly piecemeal and ad hoc way and did not have a system to deliver it to the whole client base. We have probably been guilty of assuming the majority of our clients didn't need or want this type of service. We are quickly realising that that is not the case at all!

All small businesses need a plan and we are perfectly positioned to help them make one.

Why was Clarity going to help solve those problems?

We quickly realised that *Clarity is not just a software, but a means to open new conversations with clients.*

For partners and the team, this was great news and made it so much easier to get *wider buy-in* – they didn't need to spend vast amounts of time learning yet another bit of software, that may ultimately sit on the shelf! We all suffer from software fatigue and app overwhelm but we could see how Clarity could be rolled out relatively easily.

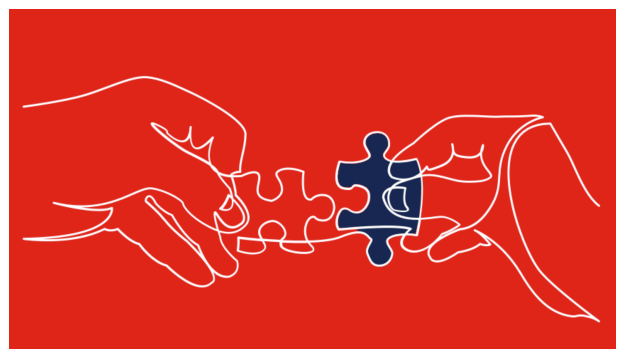
We also quickly realised that by using the Clarity advisory framework, our younger accountants coming through could now easily run impactful meetings themselves. This made us reflect inwardly on how we deliver our services and that actually, not everything needs to be partner-led.

We have all agreed Advisory is vital to the growth of the practice and is a significant element of our 10 year plan. Advisory is enjoyable, profitable and shows we are different to our clients and to our team etc. So we needed to prioritise our time for this type of work. We have now got into a regular rhythm, blocking out time in diaries every week. Setting targets and regularly measuring and monitoring results also ensures that it happens across the firm.

We also make sure that more junior team members are always involved in all meetings to take notes, observe and learn. They are also able to help keep the client accountable and to follow up tasks etc. Over time, we believe this will give them the confidence to run these meetings themselves, and of course be guided by us. *Clarity is key to enable us to do this.*

How has Clarity helped?

Clarity has given us the *tools to speak to clients about their numbers and their business*, in a way which we, as accountants, are comfortable with. Clients are so grateful for the help and advice even if it's to tell them they are doing everything they possibly can - but in reality there is always something that can be improved upon.



The secret is to ask the right questions and get the client thinking about their business with an open mind.

We've sent videos to a number of clients showing them the "Clarity effect" on their numbers and have converted many of those into advisory paying clients.

We also recently held an *Introduction to Advisory* training session with our full team in order for them to understand what our plans are for advisory during 2021 and beyond, and how they fit into that plan.

Clarity has also helped us get out of our own way! By not making assumptions about our clients and whether they want added-value services, we have been able to support more of our clients through this difficult period and our relationships have improved significantly because of it.

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

The **take-up has been astounding.** The challenge moving forward isn't about getting interest from clients, it's about making sure we are continuing to plan properly and maintaining the resources and systems we have established for the delivery of the work.



Clients love it! It's given them a new energy and enthusiasm for their business, after what has been a very difficult year. By having these close conversations with them, it has given them a more positive view of the position of their business and what they believe they can achieve in the next 12 months.

I have been pleasantly surprised that they 'get it' immediately and I'm excited to speak with even more of them.

We have quickly seen an increase in fees. In my first 'Clarity-led sale', we brought on work that meant an immediate return on investment!

Our clients want to plan for their future and get a new focus for 2021. And they have been delighted that we have taken the time to reach out and offer a different sort of support.

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

Just go ahead and do it! Uploading the data from Xero is easy, so start on those clients. You can of course manually enter data later for those clients not using a cloud solution. Do a client grading so you know who to target and then send a few videos to engage with them (Clarity has all the tools and systems to help you do that). The clients will be grateful for you being pro-active.

Pick the clients that you have the best relationships with first and just go for it. Whether it results in increased fees or not, your clients will appreciate the effort and concern. It will **create stickier relationships** and show that you can offer so much more than just a compliance service. Don't be afraid that clients won't want business advisory services. They are crying out for help and are going elsewhere, if we're not there for them!

And don't wait for the 'right time' or the 'perfect moment', there isn't one! Just try it. I honestly believe Clarity is an investment, not a cost. It's very easy to use. The support and handholding by the owners and Member Success Team (who are all successful accountants themselves) is second to none. They understand the work that's involved, the challenges that we face in practice and what it takes to roll out and service a piece of technology successfully.

Clarity is more than just a Xero add-on. **We are changing the way we think of the service we provide our clients across the board** and the Clarity team are helping us achieve that.

It provides a framework that is such an easy way to open new conversations with clients. The technical support from Clarity is excellent and the software is so easy to use. The clients love to see the effect on profits and cash by making small changes to their business. We cannot praise the Clarity guys enough!



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