



Think Smart
Accounts



R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T.[®]
RESOURCING REIMAGINED

Helping Jane Exit the doing, reclaim founder time, and
build a high-margin compliance delivery model.

WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED

- ▶ **A 90% gross profit** on personal tax work delivered through R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T.
- ▶ **Average 65%+ net profit** margin across wider compliance delivery.
- ▶ **80% reduction in Jane's previous delivery cost base**, with Jane describing the current model as roughly **20% of the cost** of two employed team members.
- ▶ Supported a delivery model where Think Smart Accounts plans to run around **80% of self-assessments** and **75% of year-end accounts** through R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T.
- ▶ Helped Think Smart Accounts move from delivery pressure, rework, and recruitment frustration into a scalable managed delivery model.
- ▶ Gave Jane back the time, control, and confidence to return to a **4-day working week**, with a clear aim of moving back towards **3 days**.
- ▶ Enabled Jane to take the majority of February away from the business, including a two-week anniversary cruise **without taking her laptop**.

"Rather than paying two salaries and probably making about a 30% margin on that work, I made a 90% margin on that work. This is a bit of a no-brainer."

Jane Capel

Founding Director,
Think Smart Accounts

THE CLIENT

Think Smart Accounts was founded by Jane Capel around 10 years ago, originally as JC Accounting Solutions.

Jane built the firm after leaving an owner-managed business and spending her first year actively marketing herself to anyone who could potentially bring work into the practice. By the end of that first year, she had three clients and was paying the mortgage. A year later, she took on her first member of staff.

Today, Think Smart Accounts supports small businesses across the full accounting and admin stack, including bookkeeping, start-ups, year-end accounts, statutory work, company secretarial support, payroll, and the HR/payroll crossover that many firms either avoid or undercharge for.

Alongside Think Smart Accounts, Jane also set up a HR company, giving the wider business a broader support model for small-business clients who need affordable, practical support across accounts, payroll, HR, and admin.

But as the firm grew, Jane hit a familiar founder-led accountancy problem: the business had grown beyond the point where everything could sit in Jane's head, but the internal delivery model was not yet strong enough to let her fully step out of the doing.



THE CHALLENGE

Think Smart Accounts had reached a pressure point.

Jane had two team members who were not following process, not filing things properly, not completing work correctly, and not delivering to the standard the firm needed.

That created exactly the kind of operational drag founders try to escape:

- ▶ **Jane was being pulled back into delivery.**
- ▶ **Work had to be rechecked or redone.**
- ▶ **Clients had to be updated, managed, and occasionally apologised to.**
- ▶ **The team needed more oversight than Jane wanted to give.**
- ▶ **Growth was creating more stress, not more freedom.**

"I was getting dragged in to work more than I wanted to be because I was having to either redo stuff, check everything with a fine-tooth comb, throw it back, talk to the clients, apologise to clients."

Jane Capel

At the same time, Jane had already been through several attempts to recruit the right people. The two problematic hires were not the first attempt; they were part of a wider pattern of recruitment frustration.

"I was like, what do I do? Do I go out and rehire? Bearing in mind that these two people were my third attempt at getting good people in."

By late November, the pressure had become urgent. Think Smart Accounts still had around 100 tax returns to complete before the end of January.

Jane did not need theory. She needed delivery capacity, quickly, without adding another recruitment gamble to the business.

"I'd got to November and I still had 100 tax returns to do. I just need help getting these tax returns done by the end of January, otherwise I'm going to have a nervous breakdown."

THE BEGINNING

Jane had already seen R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T around the market, including at Accountex and through the wider accountancy community. The deciding factor was trust.

Brad Burton, someone Jane trusted, suggested she speak with R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T. She also saw strong proof across LinkedIn from accountants she knew, followed, and respected.

That gave Jane enough confidence to move quickly.

"When I'm in my panic scenario with 100 tax returns to go before the end of January, I didn't even question it. I looked at what you've got on LinkedIn, and there's a lot of good accountants I know and follow and trust who've said you're great."

R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T initially stepped in on an ad hoc basis to help Think Smart Accounts get through the self-assessment deadline.

WHAT WAS INSTALLED:

- ▶ **The right delivery team and management support to handle urgent compliance.**
- ▶ **A working rhythm that allowed both teams to learn each other's ways of operating.**
- ▶ **A feedback loop to improve quality and fit as work progressed.**
- ▶ **Monthly review conversations with Antoaneta and senior managers.**
- ▶ **Working packs and query packs that gave Jane visibility required.**
- ▶ **Client notes and learning points to improve repeat delivery year on year.**

This was not "outsourcing and hope." It became a structured delivery partnership.

THE BREAKTHROUGH: EVERY RETURN FILED, AND THE MODEL PROVED ITSELF

R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T helped Think Smart Accounts get through the tax return deadline. Every return was filed.

Along the way, the relationship did more than clear a backlog. It helped Jane and the team identify the process that already existed inside the firm, even where that process had not yet been written down.

"We worked together over those three months on identifying what our process steps were and how we were going to work together. And we got through that unscathed."

Jane Capel

"I think you guys have helped me realise what my processes are. Because I do have them, even though I think I'm winging it, I'm actually not."

That process discovery was a major part of the value.

Like many growing firms, Think Smart Accounts had reached the stage where Jane felt as though she was "winging it", but in reality, the business already had a preferred way of working. R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T helped make that clearer, more repeatable, and easier to delegate.

"I've got 20% of my costs right now, so 80% of my costs have just gone. I haven't got the heartache of me losing my mind in the process."

The results also changed the commercial equation.

Instead of carrying the cost, stress, and management load of two salaries, Jane saw the work being delivered at a far stronger margin, with significantly less personal strain.

COMMERCIAL OUTCOMES

1 HIGH-MARGIN PERSONAL TAX AND COMPLIANCE DELIVERY

The commercial return was immediate and obvious.

For personal tax work, Jane described the margin against R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T's delivery cost as reaching 90% gross profit.

Across the wider supported compliance work, Think Smart Accounts is achieving strong margin performance:

- ▶ **Up to 90% gross profit on personal tax.**
- ▶ **Average 65%+ net profit margins across compliance services.**
- ▶ **Worst-case 50% net profit on compliance services involving R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T delivery.**

"At the worst, it's a 50% net profit.
Which is incredible."

The reason this matters is not just profit. It changes the entire risk profile of growth.

Instead of hiring ahead of demand, carrying fixed salaries, and hoping the person is the right fit, Think Smart Accounts can access delivery capacity with a clearer commercial model and much stronger control over profitability.

2 A SCALABLE COMPLIANCE MODEL

R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T is now becoming a major part of Think Smart Accounts' ongoing compliance delivery model.

Jane expects to run around:

- ▶ **80% of self-assessments through R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T.**
- ▶ **75% of year-end accounts through R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T.**

The work that stays in-house is intentional. The smallest, simplest jobs remain useful for apprentice and trainee development, particularly where the client fee is low and the job has training value.

That gives Think Smart Accounts the best of both models:

- ▶ **High-value, scalable delivery through R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T.**
- ▶ **Foundational training work retained in-house for the next generation of accountants.**
- ▶ **A leaner UK delivery structure without losing internal development.**

"The smaller, easier ones that actually don't make us a huge amount of money, we're giving to the apprentice to do."

3 BETTER CONTROL, LESS REWORK, AND MORE USEFUL QUESTIONS

Before R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T, Jane was finding errors herself and worrying whether the people doing the work properly understood what they were doing.

Now, the work comes back with structured query packs, working papers, and sensible questions.

That changes Jane's role. She is not being dragged back into doing or rescuing the work. She is reviewing, answering useful queries, and improving the repeat process.

"I know there are questions. Before, I wasn't getting questions; I was just checking something and finding errors."

Jane Capel

The query process has also helped Think Smart Accounts build better client notes for future years.

When R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T raises a question, Jane can answer it once, have it recorded, and expect a smoother process the following year.

"These aren't silly questions. They are just learning points. Can you make a note for this client for next year? Boom."

4 FOUNDER TIME, PEACE OF MIND, AND A REAL ROUTE TO EXIT

The biggest impact has not only been commercial. It has been personal.

Jane is clear that working with R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T has given her time back, peace of mind, and a stronger feeling of control.

"Me as an individual, it's given me time back and peace of mind. I'm not worrying."

That has allowed Jane to return to a 4-day working week after being pulled back into five days by delivery pressure.

"I got into that lovely rhythm of working four days a week, and then it was going to go to three days a week, but then I had to go back to five days a week. I'm now back to four. By the end of this year, I want to be back to three."

It also gave Jane something far more meaningful: the ability to take proper time away from the business.

In February, Jane celebrated her 40th wedding anniversary. She had a party, went on a two-week cruise, and, for the first time in 10 years, did not take her laptop.

"I did take my phones just to keep an eye on emails, but literally I'd sit there once a day and go, 'Oh, there's no fires,' and I put it down."

For Jane, this was not just a holiday. It was proof that the business no longer needed her to be constantly on the tools.



WHY THIS WORKED

1 R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T CREATED A FEEDBACK LOOP, NOT A DETACHED OUTSOURCING RELATIONSHIP

Jane had outsourced before. She had offshored before. Neither had worked for her. The difference this time was the feedback loop.

"I've outsourced before. I've offshored before. Neither of them have worked for me, because there's not been that feedback loop that you guys have in place for continual improvement."

That meant the model could improve quickly. If something was not quite right, Jane could raise it, the team could adjust, and the issue did not repeat.

"Having that monthly chat with Anto and the senior managers is so important because I can say, 'This didn't quite go right this month. Is there anything we can do to make sure that doesn't happen again?' And lo and behold, it doesn't happen again."

Jane Capel

2 THE DELIVERY MODEL HELPED JANE SYSTEMISE WHAT WAS ALREADY IN HER HEAD

Think Smart Accounts had grown quickly. Like many firms, the business had processes, but not all of them were documented clearly.

R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T helped surface and refine those process points.

Jane did not need a rigid, robotic delivery model. She wanted people to have enough freedom to work intelligently, while still getting to the same client outcome.

"I like my team to have the freedom of choice in how they get to that outcome. There are certain steps that are important and we need to do a certain way, but other than that, we are flexible."

3 IT REMOVED THE NEED FOR MICROMANAGEMENT

For Jane, a key goal was to stop being on the tools every day.

That only works when the people delivering the work can operate autonomously, ask good questions, and follow the right process without needing constant oversight.

"You need to trust that they can get on without you micromanaging them. That's the whole key for a business owner like me who wants to not be on the tools every day."

4 IT CHANGED THE RECRUITMENT EQUATION

Jane's advice to other firms was clear: R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T allows accountancy firm owners to stop seeing staffing as the limiting factor in growth.

That matters even more as UK employment complexity increases, including higher hiring risk, probation management, and the cost of getting recruitment wrong.

"By using R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T, you have none of that headache, and yet you have the hands to help you expand."

THE COMPOUNDING IMPACT

The immediate win was getting 100 tax returns filed.

The bigger win is what that created afterwards.

Think Smart Accounts now has a delivery model that supports growth, protects profitability, and gives Jane the option to lead the firm rather than sit permanently inside the work.

That is the real definition of exit in this context: not necessarily selling the firm, but gradually replacing Jane's time, stress, and delivery dependency with a business that can operate without her being dragged into everything.

Jane has moved back to a 4-day week. She is working towards 3 days. She has taken the majority of February off. She has gone on holiday without her laptop. She has a delivery model that produces strong margins and gives her peace of mind.

That is not just outsourcing.

That is founder freedom backed by commercial proof.

WHO THIS IS FOR

This is a fit if you're an accountancy firm owner where:

- ▶ You are still being dragged back into delivery, review, rework, or client firefighting.
- ▶ Recruitment has become expensive, slow, risky, or repeatedly unsuccessful.
- ▶ You want to grow compliance work without building a large inhouse delivery team.
- ▶ You want better margins across personal tax, accounts, and compliance services.
- ▶ You need capacity, but you also need process, feedback, and control.
- ▶ You want to move from being the person doing the work to the person leading the firm.

Jane's advice to firms considering R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T:

"R.E.P.R.E.S.E.N.T gives you permission to think bigger. You're no longer restricted by your own capacity, your team size, or the headache of hiring. You can take on more clients, grow the firm, and know the work can actually be delivered. But more than that, it gives you your life back. You get the headspace, the peace of mind, and the time to step away from the business without everything falling over."

Jane Capel

Founding Director,
Think Smart Accounts



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