



## Accounts Assist



**Anita Brook**

She's braved the rigours of City life, but can she brave the Smarta countdown? Accounts Assist's Anita Brook makes her 60 second pitch.

### **0-5 seconds: Sum your business up in a sentence**

Accounts Assist is a growing firm of Chartered Certified Accountants specialising in accountancy and taxation services for small businesses, freelancers, contractors and consultants.

### **5-10 seconds: What's the business model?**

When I decided to found a chartered accountancy practice, my core motivation was to create something that followed my own ethos rather than being a traditional, 'run of the mill' practice.

So Accounts Assist is built on a philosophy of clarity, transparency and personalised service, which I believe is never more vital than in the current economic climate, where trust in financial services has been shaken.

"I spent too much on pay-per-click. Word of mouth and an intelligent web presence seems to be the way forward"

### **10-15 seconds: Who are your competitors?**

Accountancy practices everywhere! But we believe we bring something different to the marketplace, something that small businesses really need: a simple, straightforward service with lots of support and no hidden fees.

### **15-20 seconds: What's your USP?**

We offer fixed-fees, but that doesn't mean you get an 'off the shelf' service. We meet with each client individually, and offer unlimited tax advice.

**20-25 seconds: How have you funded it so far?**

It's completely self-funded.

**25-30 seconds: What were you doing before?**

I was working in accountancy in the City.

**30-35 seconds: Where did the idea come from?**

While I was working in the City, I observed that the majority of people in my profession were out to make money above all else, so I set out on my own because I believe that accountancy can be honest, transparent and client-centred and still be very successful as a result.

**35-40 seconds: What's the smartest thing you've done so far?**

Franchising the business. We have a clear, straightforward business model that was just crying out to be franchised. By having each office taking day-to-day responsibility for maintaining the quality of service, we can keep the core ethos of a personal service intact.

**40-45 seconds: What's the stupidest?**

Spent money on fruitless pay-per-click endeavours in the beginning. Word of mouth and an intelligent web presence seems to be the way forward.

**45-50 seconds: If your business was a biscuit, what would it be?**

A chocolate digestive. A digestive because we offer comfort in the form of fixed fees and consistent service, and the chocolate on top is because we're a treat to deal with.

**50-55 seconds: Which idea are you a bit jealous of?**

Twitter. I wish I'd thought of that. Simplicity is so important in this age where everyone is pressed for time and Twitter brings that to social media.

**55-60 seconds: Where are you going to be in 12 months' time?**

Right here, doing what we're doing, but with lots more clients, and lots more franchises spreading the Accounts Assist philosophy and quality of service.