

## **Mark O'Brien (ACCA, AAT)**

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### **PROFILE**

I particularly enjoy helping a business identify and correct issues both financial and operational. I believe my past working record proves this as in my previous employments I have successfully been able to identify and correct issues in systems controls and overcharges as well as training staff to identify errors themselves.

I have accumulated a wealth of experience from many different industries including textiles, FMCG (B2C and B2B), computer manufacture and retail, education, international student recruitment, car sales, property management, demolition and skip hire, software development, etc.

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

ACCA, AAT  
GCSE's – 9 A to C

### **Key Achievements -**

- Implementation of 13 week rolling cash flow at Kruger Group which identified the availability to reduce loan facility below maximum for several weeks of each quarter. Est interest saving 75 – 100K annually
- Implementation of R&D analysis and claimwork for 3 years at Behrens Group resulting in 125K per year for 2019 to 2021. Ongoing annual claims set to remain over 100K of tax reclaim.
- Detailed systems analysis at Behrens Group into Profit reporting and reconciliation between management reporting and TB. Resulting in highlighting multiple areas of Import costing omissions and margin manipulation. Implementation of Internal audit procedures to stop future omissions.
- Management and Development of Finance teams of up to 10 staff across payroll, sales, purchasing and finance
- Creation and oversight of Finance team at Same Day Beers (Primo Drinks), NCG/IEC
- Target Costing for both manufacture and service industries
- Design and Implementation of Invoicing function, Purchase Requisition system and Debt Control at NCG/IEC and Same Day Beers (Primo Drinks)
- Secured £1,600,000 of COVID funding to support NCG and IEC through difficult future trading period
- Short and Long Term Cash Flow forecasting for all past organisations
- Monthly, Quarterly and Annual Management Accounts, KPI's and commentary for variety of clients in variety of industries
- Reconciliation and purging of 18 months data from poorly upgraded CRM systems for NCG (3 schools) which resulted in recouping over 350K of debts identified as result of purging bad data for NCG
- Creation of performance related bonus structures for past employers

- Introduction of Annual Budgets and Purchasing requisition systems for past employers
- Key point of contact between MD and Banks, Consultants and Tax authorities

## DETAILED WORK EXPERIENCE

**December 2022 to present**

**Employer: Kruger UK Group**

**Job Title: Financial Controller**

- Lead the 2022 Audit of 3 company group
- Managed 2 Finance Assistants with weekly/monthly tasks
- Assistance with supply chain team operations for the 3 UK entities
- Lead monthly Management Accounts preparation for the Group and submission to FD and German Group
- Introduction of short to mid term Cash Flow forecasting
- Teaching and mentoring Finance Assistants with month end tasks, Management Accounts preparation and presentation, Stock reconciliation for multiple sites
- Carrying out quarterly stock takes at 3 sites and teaching team members how to carry out/investigate stock checks
- Preparation of annual cyclical budgets for all 3 entities

**June 2021 to December 2022**

**Employer: Sir Jacob Behrens & Sons (single company several divisions)**

**Job Title: Financial Controller**

**Key Achievements:**

- Introduction of weekly Debt reconciliation and chasing (reduced 90+ Debtors balance by £200,000 from original balance of £400,000)
- Analysis and correction of data delaying debt collection. Purging several years of inactive accounts and amending credit terms for all customers to allow smoother operation of credit control.
- Introduction of more streamlined PI approval process and payments system (previously entirely manual)
- Introduction of first ever QTRLY Management Accounts and commentary (previously only annual accounts produced several months after year end)
- Identification of 500K overpayment of PAYE due to introduction of balance sheet reconciliations on monthly basis
- Introduction and oversight of first R&D claims for the organisation resulting in claim of approx 375K from 2019 to date and future annual claims of no less than 100K. Education of divisional management team on areas for future consideration for R&D as well as cultivating a more R&D friendly mindset
- Implementation of controls to identify errors in sales management reporting regarding margins, also to identify areas of costing omissions and margin mismanagement
- Research into international trading and VAT regulations post brexit for European customers. Sourcing VAT expert for registration and administration of international VAT accounting for Europe

**August 2018 to May 2021**

**Employer: New College Group/IEC Group**

**Job Title: Group Financial Controller****Key Achievements:**

- Identified and corrected serious invoicing issues with CRM system.
- Initiated the synchronisation and reconciliation of the CRM and Accounting Package for the Group (No system in place previously)
- Introduced Purchase Order Requisition system to approve and control costs for the Group. (No system in place previously)
- Extensive 18 months' worth of reconciliation and purging of information from the CRM system to allow weekly Debtors reports to be produced
- Introduction of in advance debt collection reporting to reduce the potential for bad debts from student's fees. (No previous system in place)
- Direct liaison with foreign government agencies to establish solutions to long lasting issues and chase old legacy debts. Agreeing and documenting all invoicing processed for each government agency to ensure smooth debt collection in future. (No system previously in place)
- As a result of legacy debt analysis and new controls I was able to identify approx. 450K worth of uncollected debts and subsequent collection of 350K of these debts
- Initiated monthly wages reporting and analysis across the Group to facilitate comparisons for staffing costs and rota's to improve efficiency and streamline staffing costs (No previous system in place)
- Creation of bonus structures for all sales team

## Duties Include:

- Management of 7 Finance staff across 2 Groups
- Reporting directly to the owner of both organisations
- Creation and monitoring of all new procedures and documenting SOP's for both organisations
- Effective debt control and cash management across both organisations
- Effective control of costs across both organisations
- Liaison with external Accountants and Tax advisors regarding Group structure, Group taxation planning and the owner's personal tax planning
- Bringing in wide scale changes across both organisations to introduce a more corporate mind set
- Building robust systems to correct serious overtrading issues in both organisations and ensuring that the systems are fit for current purpose and can be adapted for future growth
- Liaison between owner and foreign joint ventures the owner has interests in
- Representing Finance function in all management meetings across both organisations

**December 2014 to August 2018****Employer: Vibox Limited****Job Title: Company Accountant****Key Achievements:**

- During investigative work I have identified and reclaimed over €30,000 per year in overcharged fees from Online E-tailers.
- Establishing the budgeting function in a company that previously had none

Duties Include:

- Monthly Preparation of Management Accounts. Annual Turnover approx. 7.5 million.
- Presentation of the Management Accounts to the Managing Director and discussing business performance and future projections and advising Theron.
- Assisting the Managing Director in the preparation of Sales Forecasting up to 1 year in advance together with cost budgeting.
- Weekly completion of Micro Targeting Report (budgeting report). This report is used to map the month to date sales and costs performance against the budgets for the month.
- Weekly posting of sales from approx. 25+ sales channels including Paypal, Amazon, Ebay. Reconciliation of the sales channel and foreign currency bank accounts. Reconciliation of debtor and creditor balances. Processing daily refunds to customers. Weekly payments to suppliers and VAT authorities
- Dealing with the daily foreign currency receipts and payments for Euro's and US Dollars. Ordering funds in both currencies from our foreign currency intermediary. Posting of all the foreign currency transactions on our accounting system and reconciling the foreign currency Debtors, Creditors and Bank Accounts. Liaising and meeting with foreign currency traders to determine better deals on currency trading.
- Meeting with Managing Director and external Accountants to discuss year end results, Corporation Tax and the Directors personal tax affairs.
- Assisting Sales Director with reviewing contracts and terms for new potential sales channels.
- Assisting and advising the Sales Director with the costing of new products for sale.
- Weekly wages preparation for 20 staff from clock in reporting through to the completion of the payroll summary.
- Weekly updating the Pension provider with the pension contributions for the previous week.
- Monthly completion of VAT returns for 12 countries throughout the EU including UK Intrastat reporting.
- In this role I use the following computer packages: - Sage Line 50, 12Pay payroll, NEST Pensions, Excel, Word, Tradebox, Linnworks Order Management.

**February 2014 to December 2014**

**Employer: Radisson Blu Edwardian Hotel**

**Job Title: Hotel Financial Controller**

**Key Achievements:**

- During my investigative work I discovered major issues in the Crockery and Cutlery stock take function and assisted management in changing the system across 14 Hotel group
- I identified issues with misuse of 'Management Cards' and stopped the misuse amongst 10 department heads.
- Helping 10 department heads to understand how the finance function works regarding their department and assisting them with their cost controls

Duties include:

- Monthly presentation of Hotel Accounts to the CEO of the 14 Hotel Group. Annual turnover approx 15 million.
- Providing analysis and detailed reporting for the several different profit centres of the Hotel.
- Assisting with other Heads of Departments reporting needs.
- Management of an Accounts Assistant and the Food and Beverage Control (Stock Controller) function.
- Carrying out monthly Period End closedown for Central Accounts production.
- Monitoring all Payroll for the 250 staff at the hotel. Checking and approving Rota's and dealing with payroll queries and issues.
- Liaising with existing suppliers and new potential suppliers. Negotiating contracts with suppliers.
- Monitoring all spends in all departments to ensure they are kept within control and adhere to Central Accounts defined budgets.
- Use of Opera (for hotels), Micros, CODA, POP and CODA MIS Reporting. Several of these packages are bespoke software created by the Hotel Group.

**January 2011 to February 2014**

**Employer: Same Day Beers Group (Now Primo Drinks)**

**Job Title: Group Accountant**

**Key achievements:**

- I identified issues with stock manipulation at the Stoke depot which would have saved the business approx. £30,000 of stock.
- I organised the creation of the SAP system and the full transition of all 6 depots onto the system.
- I identified and corrected many issues with the handling of employee benefits long before an investigation that would have cost the group over £20,000 in additional charges and fines.
- I organised bringing the entire accounting function to the head office in Manchester and organised the overall accounting function and credit control for the group.
- Through liaison with several key suppliers and the group bankers I helped the group through several difficult cashflow situations.

Duties include:

- Monthly preparation of Management Accounts for the Group with an overall turnover of approx 22 million pounds.
- Management of the Intercompany Loan Accounts, Intercompany Debtors and Creditors and keeping track of all Intra Company trading for 6 Companies together with the 2 Property Companies. This also involved using the Intercompany Loan accounts in order to move various costs and management charges around the group on a monthly basis.
- Presenting monthly accounts to the shareholder/directors together with KPI's, previous year and month comparisons and strategical analysis of key expenditure such as personnel costs.
- Preparation of Group Consolidated Accounts on a monthly basis.
- Preparation of monthly accounts for 2 Property Management companies.

- Preparation of SIPP pension scheme information for 1 of the Property Management companies.
- Management of all accounting functions for the Group together with oversight of Credit Control department and Purchase Ledger department. Overall oversight of 5 members of staff with additional oversight of 6 depot manager's involvement with day to day accounting functions.
- Preparation of rolling 3 weekly Cash Flow forecasting and 6 monthly forecasting for the Group.
- Liaising with all Group Suppliers to negotiate terms, credit limits and retrospective discounts.
- Keeping track of all retrospective discount calculations from several key suppliers ranging up to £250,000 per quarter.
- Preparation of Quarterly VAT Returns for all Group companies.
- Preparation of all company secretarial documents for all Group companies together with 2 Property Management companies.
- Playing a key role in the implementation of new SAP computing system for the Group. Creating entire nominal ledger from scratch, correcting cross company mis postings, liaising with software providers in order to facilitate all Companies integration onto 1 computer system.
- Regularly meeting with Group bank managers regarding Management Accounts, Cash Flows, company direction, strategic planning.
- Preparation of 20 P11D's annually.
- Dealing with all tax investigations and advising shareholders thereon.
- Generally discussing and advising shareholders with regard to tax planning (personal & business), purchase management, sales forecasting and management, stock control methods, etc.
- Generally advising Payroll Manager with regard to all aspects of payroll and HR functions.

**July 1999 to December 2010**

**Employer: Various Accountancy Firms**

**Job Title: Accounts Assistant through to Management Accountant**

Duties include:

- Extensive accounts preparation for clients with turnovers from £10,000 to £10,000,000 using a large variety of packages including Sage Instant Accounting, Sage Line 50, Viztopia 32, QuickBooks and Cashflow Manager.
- Preparation of quarterly VAT returns, book keeping and Management Accounts for several clients using Viztopia 32 accounts production package, Sage Line 50 and Microsoft Excel. Some in house and some at client's premises.
- Drafting and sending numerous regular letters to clients regarding accounting, VAT and Company Secretarial matters.
- Preparation and submission of all types of Company Secretarial forms on a regular basis including Annual Returns
- Carrying out several Stock Takes and providing training to fellow staff.
- Audit assistance on several clients.

- I have prepared accounts for a wide variety of business ranging from sole trader shops to flat management companies to large limited companies.
- Preparation of final corporation tax computations and CT600's using Alphatax software.
- Assisting and overseeing junior new members of staff and providing accounts training together with reviewing their work.
- Answering queries and liaising with clients over accounts, tax and computerised book keeping assistance.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

The majority of my time is spent with my wife and two young boys Isaac and Oscar. I also enjoy reading and all the fun that comes from having a 10 year old and 7 year old.

## **REFERENCES**

2 MD/FD references available upon request