



In their own words:
Moving from a high street
accountant

Moving from a high street accountant to PayStream

A PayStream Q&A with Tristan Pretty - Computer Programmer

There are several different ways you can approach contracting. Some choose to work through an umbrella company, while others (if their circumstances allow it) prefer the increased control and higher take home pay that can be achieved by running their own limited company.

For those who choose the limited company route they then need to decide whether they want to manage the limited company admin all themselves with the help of online software, use a high street accountant or enlist the help of an accountancy service provider that specialises in the way that contractors work, such as PayStream.

To learn more about this, we talked to Tristan Pretty, a computer programmer with 15 years experience contracting. Tris has gone from permanent employment, to owning a limited company, umbrella contracting and is now limited once again. He talked to us about the benefits - and challenges - that come with each option.

Starting out

In his 20-year programming career, Tris has spent about 15 years as a contractor. "In that time," he explained, "I've owned a couple of businesses, gave them up to go permanent, realised permanent wasn't for me and then went back to contracting, and I've repeated that cycle two or three times."

Even though Tris has tried his hand at both permanent and contract work, he definitely prefers contract work to a permanent job. He summed up the benefits of contracting succinctly:

"Less politics, more money, more freedom, more ability to learn, more diversity in project types."

High street accountant proved problematic

Working through a limited company was difficult for Tris at one point, largely because of his high street accountant.

“He wouldn’t answer questions. I had to explain myself in different ways so he’d understand what I meant.”

Although his financial needs seemed to be taken care of, Tris was constantly in the dark about what was going on. It got to the point where he was getting letters from HMRC that he didn’t understand, and his accountant wasn’t helping. “I’d ask him: ‘So what does this mean?’ And he wouldn’t reply,” Tris explained.

Umbrella was the easy option

Things got to the point where Tris decided to stop running a company altogether because he was so frustrated with his high street accountant. “I picked a random company,” he said. “I literally Googled umbrella companies and picked one of the top ones.” This worked fine, and Tris was happy with the result.

However, one of his colleagues asked if he’d switch to PayStream. “I thought, well, a company’s a company from my perspective. So I moved to PayStream’s umbrella company, My Max.” However he was proved wrong. The customer service he experienced made him realise that working through his own limited company didn’t have to be difficult if he received help and guidance from a company that specialised in the way that contractors work. So Tris decided once again to become a limited company contractor and made the move to our PSC service.

Becoming limited again

“It can be financially better to go limited,” explained Tris, “but I was just annoyed with the paperwork before.” Under PayStream, this stopped being an issue.

“PayStream were just so communicative. They answered questions within two or three hours and if not always within 24 hours. They’ve been great so far. They answer emails promptly. If something will take two minutes to explain on the phone rather than emailing back and forth for two days they’ll do that. At the end of the day, I want someone to tell me what to pay, who to pay and how, and PayStream do that. So I’m very happy.”

If your current accountant isn’t able to give you the service and expertise that you deserve then now is the perfect time to switch.

Speak to a member of our team today about our range of services.

Call us on **0161 929 6000** or email **info@paystream.co.uk**



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