

## Lee Coutts & Syers

When the pandemic hit New Zealand, Hayden and his business partner Mike quickly recognised that getting clients to sign and return documents would be challenging. After seeking advice from trusted industry partners and talking with other accountants about their experiences, Hayden decided to take a leap of faith and implement **FuseSign** as their digital signing platform. And they've not looked back ever since.



### BUSINESS SNAPSHOT

#### Client

Hayden Syers, Director at Lee Coutts & Syers.

#### Business

Located in Auckland, New Zealand, the firm has been around for 30 years in different stages and partners. Hayden has been running the practice for about six years along with his business partner Mike Coutts.

#### Business size

Two partners, six team members

#### Document Management System

FYI

#### Practice Management System

Xero Practice Manager

#### Technology solution

FuseSign



### FUSESIGN IS BRILLIANT.

I had that sense of nervousness; I remember signing for the free trial period and not picking it up before it expired. I contacted FuseSign, and they extended the free trial period, and we really got into it. **We're not looking back now.**

Hayden Syers, Director  
Lee Coutts & Syers



## Lee Coutts & Syers

### THE CHALLENGE

About five years ago, Hayden and his business partner Mike decided to start modernising the practice in terms of utilising systems and trying to reduce a large amount of paper hanging around the office.

They had engaged with Amy Holdsworth from Clarity Street to fly to New Zealand to help design and implement these changes when COVID hit, and they had to put it on hold.

When the pandemic started, they were still able to manage; being on Xero Practice Manager meant everything was on the cloud, so it had no impact on service delivery: **“We were still able to look after our clients, but when we had to start sending things out from home, we were scanning them, attaching JPG files and all sorts of documents, the emails were starting to get messy.”**

It quickly became evident that the client’s inability to sign the financial statements would be a challenge, with many of them not having a scanner at home or taking a photo of the document with their phones.



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**Hayden Syers, Director**  
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To answer that challenge, once the initial COVID chaos had settled, Hayden and Mike decided that they needed to prioritise implementing a digital signature platform, as giving the clients the ability to sign their document packages online was becoming increasingly more critical to keep the business running smoothly.

### THE SOLUTION

When Hayden was going through ‘The Accountant’ magazine, he saw an article about digital signature and read a summary they did on FuseSign.

**“It was quite a good article, and I felt that FuseSign came across really positive compared to the others. In conversations with Clarity Street, they said, look, you’ve got to make up your own decision; however, we think this would be a good fit for you guys. And we went off with both of those recommendations”**



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### THE OUTCOME

While doing his research, Hayden spoke with accountants from other practices, and a few mentioned they were experiencing some frustrations with their existing digital signing tool. **“I have not seen any frustration with FuseSign at this point. I really like the package. I don’t know how we did without it, to be honest.”**

He remembers the initial hesitation when signing to FuseSign. **“I had that sense of nervousness; I remember signing for the free trial period and not picking it up before it expired. I contacted FuseSign, and they extended the free trial period, and we really got into it. We’re not looking back now. FuseSign is brilliant.”**

Their practice has recently implemented FYI as their document management system, and having the ability to integrate FuseSign with FYI has significantly added efficiency to the process.

**“It’s all about taking that leap of faith initially. I spoke with Clarity Street and Xero to check what their experience has been. They didn’t say to us that we should choose one sort of document management system over the next”**

Instead, his contact at Xero New Zealand suggested Hayden should call a few clients for recommendations. So he rang three of these clients who he knew were using a document management system. **“Two out of three were using FYI, and it was great to talk about a few ideas with other accountants, and two of them was using FuseSign as well. It just felt like a natural kind of connection. And look, it’s worked very, very well.”**

Hayden believes that there’s no better time than now for practices to implement FuseSign.

**“We used to have a self-addressed envelope in the accounts package that had, say, the minutes or the resolutions, or the accounts or the balance sheet to sign back so we could keep it with the company records. But no one’s interested in that anymore. Our clients are time-poor, and since COVID, they’ve become more skilled in sending emails and using their phones. In New Zealand, in particular, cheques are no longer a thing. When someone gets a bit hesitant, I remind them that you can’t write a cheque anymore. You can hardly even go and see anyone at the bank anymore.”**

Hayden mentioned that nine times out of ten, their clients want to forward a copy of the signed documents to their financial institution. Instead of posting account details, the clients can now sign digitally and forward a copy to their bank. **“They no longer need to ask us for a copy. It’s brilliant.”**

Lee Coutts & Syers is currently using FuseSign for all the financial accounts, minutes and resolutions, and they are considering extending it to tax returns in the future.

To anyone who’s been thinking about adopting FuseSign, Hayden has a reassuring message:



Don’t be afraid to roll it out, you won’t regret it. And actually, it’s not that difficult. If you can work a toaster, you can probably work **FuseSign**.

**Hayden Syers, Director**  
Lee Coutts & Syers

