



**AUDDIS – DELIVERING
COMMERCIAL
BENEFITS TO THE
EXPERT WITNESS
INSTITUTE**

CASE STUDY



AUDDIS - TAKES PAPER AND PAIN OUT OF THE WAY DIRECT DEBIT INSTRUCTIONS ARE EXCHANGED BETWEEN THE BILLER AND THE CUSTOMER'S BANK

WHAT IS AUDDIS?

It's simply how the payments industry refers to the Automated Direct Debit Instruction Service, a system which takes paper and pain out of the way Direct Debit Instructions are exchanged between the biller and the customer's bank; Direct Debit Instructions, of course, are the first step in collecting regular Direct Debit payments.

“USING OUR OLD SYSTEM, THE LACK OF CLARITY AND FLEXIBILITY MEANT THAT CHANGES TO MEMBERS’ PAYMENTS WEREN’T ALWAYS ACTIONED IN TIME AHEAD OF A COLLECTION, WHICH COULD LEAD TO SOME DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS.”



THE CHALLENGE

Launched in 1996, The Expert Witness Institute (EWI) is a not-for-profit membership body which supports the administration of justice and the early resolution of disputes through high-quality expert evidence from specialists.

A lean head-count numbering just 2.6 full time equivalents is responsible for managing a membership base of around 900; the heavily manual, legacy system in place for setting up and managing Direct Debits was increasingly demanding a disproportionate amount of time for a small team keen to focus more on the day-to-day needs of their members.

Not only was there a considerable resource requirement involved in administering the paper-based process, the sheer number of steps involved end-to-end, and the need for the multiple re-keying of information at different stages, meant that the established system was in need of an overhaul.

The EWI’s Finance Manager, Sue James, explains: “The existing system was very manual, involving the filling in of spreadsheets and then even faxing the paperwork across to someone else to re-key the same details. Each month we would then have to manually check all of the new member details against a document to ensure it was all correct.



“Quite simply it was onerous, open to human error, and we felt that we had no clear oversight of what had gone wrong when there was an issue, usually as a result of the manual nature of the system.

“The lack of clarity and flexibility meant that changes to members’ payments weren’t always actioned in time ahead of a collection, which could lead to some difficult conversations. Understandably, if there was a problem with a payment then they wouldn’t be happy, and neither would we.

“To put things into perspective, at annual renewal time I would have to spend four to six weeks ensuring that the process was completed. This involved entering the details of around 450 members line-by-line and, to make things more challenging, the system wouldn’t flag that an error had been made and so reconciliation at that point could be hugely time-consuming.”

“THE BENEFITS HAVE BEEN CONSIDERABLE SINCE THE ORGANISATION WENT LIVE WITH AUDDIS IN DECEMBER 2019.”



THE SOLUTION

Unsurprisingly, Sue and EWI’s CEO, Simon Berney-Edwards, were keen to improve the process and free up time for Sue and the team to focus more on their valued members; when she was introduced to AUDDIS by the Bacs approved bureau, ClearDebit, (formerly Clear Direct Debit), she quickly realised it would provide an effective solution to the challenges they were facing.

While those working at the ‘coal face’ were quickly convinced of the value a migration to AUDDIS would bring, when it came to presenting the potential benefits to the EWI trustees, the figures spoke for themselves - with the move freeing up an estimated 150 hours, that was time (and money) that could be better spent on the overall member experience.



In terms of the migration process, Sue was thankful of the support she received from Coutts, ClearDebit, and Pay.UK, especially as matters were complicated by the way the existing established system had initially been set-up.

Sue said: “There were some quirks with the existing system which posed some challenges, but the support we got in terms of logistics, and a thorough explanation at each stage of the project, was hugely helpful for us. Even with some hurdles to overcome, we could see immediately how the system was going to help us going forward, so it was definitely all worth it.”

Despite the work required in unpicking some of the unique elements of the legacy system delaying the migration - which was completed in around 6 to 7 months - the benefits have been considerable since the organisation went live with AUDDIS in December 2019.

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BENEFITS

The savings in time, effort, and cost were clear to see, but there was also an unintended consequence of migrating to AUDDIS, as Sue explains: “Coincidentally, we completed the migration not long before the emergence of Covid, and all of the challenges that has brought with it. In hindsight, making the move to AUDDIS meant that we could transition to remote working seamlessly, with the team able to carry out their work as if they were still in the office.

“This wouldn’t have been possible in the same way if we were still using the legacy system; in fact, we haven’t needed to travel into the office since the start of the pandemic.”

“Quite honestly, if you look at the savings in both time and money as a result of migrating it has been amazing. Not only did the move vastly reduce the time required to manage the Direct Debit process, we now feel that we are in full control of the process and can deliver an even better, and more flexible, service for our members.

“The difference between the old system and now has been phenomenal, and has also paved the way for us to be able to offer members a paperless Direct Debit sign-up option, which we hope to roll out later in 2022.”



“MOVING TO AUDDIS HAS SAVED US TIME, ENABLED US TO BE FAR MORE EFFICIENT, AND HAS GIVEN US MORE CONTROL.”



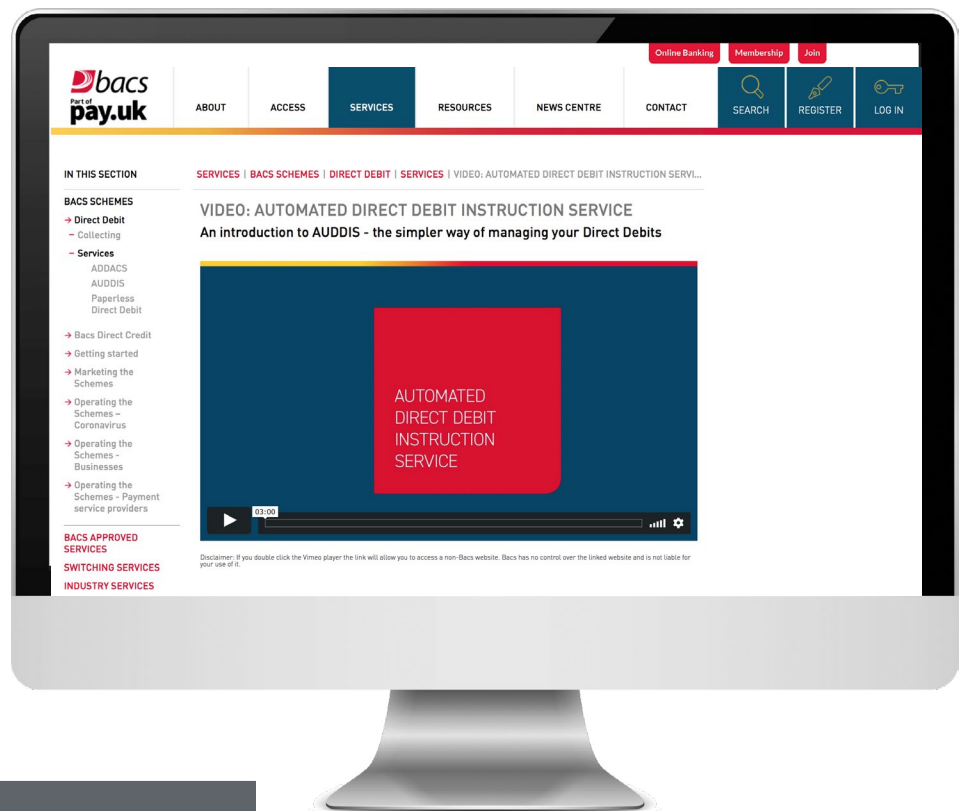
WHY SHOULD YOU SWITCH, TOO?

The EWI is just one of the many organisations that have already taken advantage of the considerable benefits in the payment collection process that are on offer from moving to AUDDIS, including:

- **Faster** – set up and first payment collection is quicker through AUDDIS
- **Smoother** – AUDDIS reduces chances of keying errors which have a detrimental impact on smooth payment collection; it also avoids DD Instructions being lost in the post
- **Cheaper** – AUDDIS reduces the number of payments returned unpaid; and unpaids cost businesses valuable time to resolve and can affect cashflow
- **Better** – a better customer experience, with reduced potential for hiccups in payment collection and the resulting customer dissatisfaction.

In addition, moving to AUDDIS is the first step on the path to Paperless Direct Debit, with all of its environmental, business, and customer benefits.

For more information on AUDDIS and what it can do for you, watch our short video here



CONTACT US

For more information on AUDDIS, please contact Julia Dunne, Business Development Manager at: SchemeSupport@bacsservices.co.uk or visit bacss.co.uk