

Virtual PA services:
The complete solution
to manage your
business effectively



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Introduction

The rise of remote skills and talent has been transformative, and more businesses are choosing to outsource than ever. In fact, some [70% of British businesses](#) choose to outsource at least some key functions.

Virtual personal assistants (PAs), or VAs, are a key component of the outsourcing landscape, enabling businesses to tap into specialised talent to address skills gaps or fuel productivity.

VAs are catalysts for growth and efficiency. By providing critical skills on-demand, you bypass the cumbersome processes of traditional recruitment and onboarding.

All in all, VAs help businesses and their owners support existing teams and take up the slack of tasks that lie outside their skill sets.

Here, we'll explore VAs in detail, including what they can do and how they can benefit your business.

Defining virtual PAs

Virtual (PAs) are skilled professionals who offer a wide range of administrative, technical, accounting and creative support. They work both independently and in collaboration with founders/owners/directors and a business's internal team.

Hiring virtual PAs is essentially a form of outsourcing, enabling businesses to rapidly scale their talent and productivity without internal hiring. Outsourcing remote workers has rocketed in popularity in recent years, and virtual PAs fit right into this ecosystem.

Here are some stats that demonstrate the trend of outsourcing remote workers, including virtual PAs:

- As of 2023, around [48% of UK companies](#) are outsourcing work, marking a 41% increase since the pandemic. This change indicates a growing reliance on outsourcing across various sectors.
- A substantial [71% of companies](#) planned to outsource primarily to reduce costs in 2021. This trend was less pronounced in the public sector, where only 38% cited cost reduction as their main objective for outsourcing.



- Around [40% of companies](#) outsourced to save time on recruitment, and 28% did so to achieve more efficient project management.
- Smaller firms are more likely to outsource finance functions, with [37% of small businesses](#) choosing this compared to 12% of large businesses. This trend is attributed to the surge in startups needing business process support like IT and bookkeeping.

So, what tasks can a VA practically handle for you and your business?

What can a virtual PA do for you?

VAs today can handle a vast range of tasks spanning virtually anything from accounting to creative work.

The key here is versatility – VAs are capable of handling both routine administrative work and higher-level strategic projects. With abundant talent across the UK and further afield, businesses can find virtual PAs with specialised expertise in nearly any domain.

Here are some of the many tasks VAs can step in to support and handle:

Schedule and diary management

Properly organising schedules and diaries is often the first thing to slip through the net for time-starved entrepreneurs.

Virtual PAs can effectively manage schedules across an entire company, booking travel, coordinating calendars and preventing embarrassing double-bookings. This includes scheduling meetings, calls and appointments and managing day-to-day diary tasks.

Virtual PAs can also handle attendee coordination, event set-up, call/video conferencing logistics and post-meeting follow-ups.

Email management

Inbox overload can be the scourge of productivity for business owners inundated with communications. Sometimes, it's the simple day-to-day tasks that require support.



Virtual PAs can manage the entire email workflow – from screening incoming messages, highlighting priority emails, drafting responses, coordinating attachments and sending off reply communications.

Call answering and management

Delivering excellent customer service and lead/sales call handling is vital for companies trying to stand out in competitive markets. VAs can handle your calls professionally, assessing caller needs and recording key information.

Virtual PAs can also route calls appropriately within an organisation or schedule callbacks when necessary. They can prioritise different leads and call queries, e.g., from important customers.

Social media management

Virtual PAs can also assist in managing complex social media profiles across every major platform – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and more.

Many would attest that social media management is time-consuming. VAs can assist with social media as part of their responsibilities.

This includes collaborating on posting schedules, crafting engaging social copy, posting updates, images and videos, and then monitoring engagement levels. VAs can also boost social engagement by responding to comments, messages and event RSVPs.

Writing and editing

Many virtual PAs possess exceptional writing talent from journalism, publishing and marketing communications careers.

These PAs can handle diverse writing/editing tasks like drafting blog articles, social media copy, website content, press releases, newsletters, product descriptions, tag lines, white papers, case studies and more.

Travel and event management

Business travel can be mentally taxing. Dedicated travel management PAs alleviate organisational woes by planning routes, booking tickets, and so on.



This ranges from managing calendars, booking airfare/ accommodation, scheduling transport, submitting expenses, gathering receipts, and more. This also extends to clients or customers if you're organising a corporate or work event, for example.

Creative services

VAs with creative skills are ideal partners to business leaders seeking dedicated graphic design, multimedia and web development assistance.

Skilled across tools like the Adobe Creative Suite, Canva, etc – these technical PAs can create impactful data visualisations, graphics, videos, animations, websites and other assets.

Accounting and finance services

Accounting and finance are some of the most regularly outsourced activities. In fact, some [24% of all British businesses](#) outsource accounting functions to external experts.

By partnering with a [finance-focused virtual assistant](#), companies of all sizes can efficiently delegate a wide range of accounting and finance responsibilities. This alleviates the burden on internal company teams to focus on growth.

Some key services covered here include:

- Full-service bookkeeping spanning accounts payable/ receivable, general ledger upkeep, payroll, bank reconciliations, statement reconciliations and fixed asset tracking
- Expense management, from drafting weekly expense reports to gathering receipts and coordinating approvals and reimbursements
- Payroll management encompassing setup, time tracking, compliance support, processing reliable payments, and report creation
- Annual, quarterly or monthly budget creation and ongoing tracking to analyse expense trends and optimise cash flow
- Performance of audits, reviews, and general financial due diligence to ensure compliance with institution and regulatory reporting like GAAP/IFRS standards

Additionally, virtual assistants equipped with high-level accounting experience can be leveraged for higher-level strategic projects and support around:

- Raising funds and investments
- M&A deal preparation and diligence
- Developing internal accounting policies
- Management accounting
- Tax management, including accounting for R&D tax credits and other government schemes

The benefits and advantages of choosing a virtual PA

There are many compelling reasons why businesses of all shapes and sizes should consider using a [virtual PA](#).

The headline benefit of VAs is flexibility – VAs can fill skills gaps and assist in vital value-adding tasks outside your team's immediate skills remit.

They provide tremendous value at an affordable price, helping businesses tap into new levels of productivity or fill skills gaps either on a temporary or longer-term basis.

Here are some of the top benefits of working with a skilled virtual PA:

Reduced costs

Virtual PAs represent a significant cost saving compared to hiring a full-time employee. With a virtual PA, you only pay for actual hours worked rather than providing a full-time salary and benefits. There's also no need to provide office space or equipment.

These savings can add up, especially for small businesses managing budgets tightly. In fact, companies can reduce operating costs by up to [78% by hiring virtual assistants](#).

Overall, virtual PAs give you access to skilled support at a fraction of the price of an in-house employee.

Increased productivity

Business owners and managers can better focus their time on critical revenue-driving activities by assigning administrative, clerical, and coordination tasks to a virtual PA.



Virtual PAs can handle a wide range of duties, including scheduling meetings, managing email inboxes, coordinating travel, transcribing dictation and much more.

Studies show that remote workers, including virtual assistants, are [13% more productive](#) than in-office workers. Additionally, a [study showed](#) that businesses hiring VAs have more fully productive work hours as VAs are paid hourly and only for the time they spend on work-related tasks.

This saves you time spent on those important yet time-consuming tasks, boosting productivity and allowing team members to better focus on high-level strategic planning, business development and serving customers.

Access to talent

Virtual PAs tend to be highly skilled – about [60% of virtual assistants have degrees](#), with 30.9% graduating with business-related degrees, making them well-suited for various industries.

Businesses can find virtual PAs specialising in areas like social media management, accounting, market research, graphic design, etc.

For example, you might need a virtual assistant to help you temporarily with accounting responsibilities or bring someone in to assist with a creative task.

Scalability and growth support

As businesses grow and take on new projects, administrative and coordination support demand increases. Hiring in-house doesn't always suit the need to address fast-changing demands and short-term projects.

With a virtual PA team, support can scale up or down more to suit changing business needs. It's a scalable, adaptive way to hire.

Improved work-life balance

Business owners often struggle to achieve a healthy work-life balance because they shoulder the full gamut of operational responsibilities. Many will testify that this can become problematic for oneself and one's social and family life.



Offloading tasks to skilled virtual PAs means fewer late work nights trying to keep up with overburdened workloads.

Business owners can shift responsibilities like inbox management, calendar coordination, and travel planning over to their virtual PAs, freeing up time to focus on personal health, family, and leisure.

Improved customer experience

By designating customer service and communication tasks to reliable virtual PAs, businesses can offer superior responsiveness and improved customer experience.

Virtual PAs can field customer calls, respond to inquiries promptly and coordinate follow-ups to show customers they matter. This enables core team members to focus more attention on complex customer issues.

How to choose a virtual PA

Selecting the right VA might seem like a complex ordeal. Follow these best practices to find a VA that fits your requirements and delivers the services you need:

Define specific needs

Begin by carefully detailing the roles, required skills and responsibilities expected for your virtual PA daily, weekly, etc.

Discuss this with team members – what are they struggling with? And what tasks are they most keen to manage in-house? Using a VA is about addressing frictions and pain points.

Detail factors like hour requirements per week, availability expectations and specialist skills. You might have something very specific in mind, such as getting your accounts in order for an audit ahead of a funding round or planning a marketing strategy.

Research the options extensively

With a clear picture of your requirements, it's time to begin research. This is the complicated bit, as VAs span the entire world. Gauge whether you think you'll be best off working with someone located here in the UK or further afield.



Evaluate experience and skills

Narrow down your virtual PA candidates and evaluate their skill sets. Review the credibility of the business offering the VA service – what is their area of expertise?

For example, if you need financial or accounting assistance, opt for a VA that belongs to a company that offers that specific expertise.

Coordinate onboarding and governance

Upon selecting your ideal virtual PA, you'll need to brief them on the tasks and onboard them into any internal communication channels or systems you use, whether Slack or productivity software like Monday, Trello, or anything else.

Clarify tasks and share access to essential company systems like email, calendars and cloud storage, along with daily/hourly availability expectations and boundaries.

Communication is paramount here – once you and the VA are in sync, working with them will become easy!

Summing up

Virtual PA services have emerged as an invaluable asset for businesses of all sizes and at all levels of progress and growth.

Integrating a virtual PA into your team can boost your business's efficiency, productivity, and communication. As a founder or business owner, PAs will also save you time to address that ever-important work-life balance.

At Accounts Direct, we offer bespoke virtual PA services designed to streamline your administrative and secretarial tasks, giving you the freedom to focus on what truly matters to you and your business.



We offer:

- **Administrative support:** From email management to scheduling and document preparation, our PAs are equipped to enhance your workflow and boost productivity.
- **Project management:** Effortlessly plan, delegate, and track your projects with our expert support, whether it's for a one-off project or ongoing assistance.
- **Travel planning:** Let us handle your business travel arrangements, from flights to accommodations, ensuring a budget-friendly and stress-free experience.
- **Event coordination:** We take care of every detail of your corporate events or staff parties, allowing you to fully engage in these important moments.

Why choose Accounts Direct?

- **Virtual PA services:** Access our virtual PA services from anywhere globally, thanks to our state-of-the-art technology and secure communication tools.
- **Customised services:** We recognise every business's unique needs and offer customisable service plans, whether you require part-time or full-time support.
- **Affordable pricing:** Our commitment is to provide high-quality assistance at competitive prices, with flexible payment options to fit within your budget.

Don't let administrative tasks keep you rowing in circles. [Contact Accounts Direct today](#) to learn how our VAs can boost your operations and cut you and your team some slack.



Ready to find
out more?

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