

How Northern Business Consultants Championed Clients with Nitro



About the Company

Formed in 1976 and headquartered in Brisbane, Australia, Northern Business Consultants (NBC) provides real-time solutions and practical advice to SMEs to support their vision in the planning, growing or exiting phase. It is one of the first companies in the state of Queensland to have done a self-managed superfund borrowing and offers business advice, systems review, self-managed super and tax preparation.

NBC operates with a philosophy of understanding through involvement, real-time data and informed decision-making. It has a growing team of 30 across Australia - both in-office and remote, serving a client portfolio with a combined annual turnover of AU\$400m.

“It’s all about the **decisions you make** and the **actions you take** that lead you to your goals.”

Northern Business Consultants

The Challenge

As a consulting firm for entrepreneurs, business owners and managers, NBC handles an incredible amount of documents on behalf of its clients, many of which require client signatures. For such a document-heavy business, the firm was overly reliant on manual resources. Jennifer Perrin, a Client Service Advocate at NBC, explains the challenge, “We develop a lot of documents for individuals and businesses such as tax returns and statements which need signatures for approval. Previously, we would mail these out to clients, which would cost us money in postage and waste paper and printing resources.”

“Our clients are **busy working** on their business. They don’t want to be looking at documents, printing it out, scanning it, signing it and sending it back to us—**it’s time consuming.**”

Jennifer Perrin,
Client Service Advocate at Northern Business Consultants

PROVEN Results

Improved ROI



AU\$3750 ROI increase per employee yearly

Immediate Savings



AU\$1500+ instant savings in print and postage costs

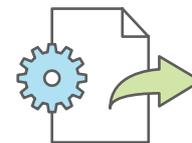
Two Weeks Saved



14 days saved with eSignatures

Another problem the firm faced was a lack of standardization in sending client documents, which would lead to delays and tangible losses. *“Sometimes we would send documents to be signed via email. However with both email and postage, we were waiting a long time for clients to get back to us—resulting in our staff having to follow up constantly,”* says Perrin. *“In our line of work, when lodging returns with ASIC or the ATO, if a client doesn’t get back to us, the repercussions range from late fees to not being able to lodge altogether.”*

The firm realized it needed to review its internal systems and revamp its IT strategy to streamline the number of applications used. Nathan Morris, a Business Systems Advisor at NBC, shares the experience, *“As a company we decided to go through a transformation from traditional pen and paper to almost completely digital processes—basically implementing an entire technology upgrade.”* During this transformation, it was important for the firm to stay true to its key values of being goal-focused and customer-centric. By streamlining its document processes, NBC recognized it would be adding value to their clients’ experiences.



Convert & Export

Revise content using your favorite programs. Convert PDF files into Word, Excel, and PowerPoint files, or create PDFs directly from Office.

The Nitro Solution

Before discovering Nitro at the accounting technology tradeshow ATSA 2014, Morris considered DocuSign because it went along with an existing PDF conversion tool that the company already used. Morris decided against it however after seeing an on-site demonstration of Nitro and realising that it combined two applications—eSignatures and PDF conversion—in one. This functionality aligned with the goal of the firm’s internal systems review while, at the same time, being more affordable.

“Nitro was incredibly more **cost-effective**, and has the integration between the two: eSignatures and PDF conversion—**it was two things in one.**”

Nathan Morris,

Business Systems Advisor at Northern Business Consultants

NBC took a staggered approach in implementing Nitro. The firm started with Nitro Pro to gauge how the team would adapt and to ensure a smooth transition with minimal disruptions. According to Morris, it was an immediate hit. *“Nitro Pro was an instant success as soon as we started implementing it. It had many more functions compared to the old software we had.”*

Upon the success of Nitro Pro, NBC developed processes to adopt eSigning. The firm began with a quote process and using the cc option to help set up instant alerts when a client responded. This system allowed employees to act quickly and to serve clients more efficiently, creating less friction between documentation and execution. *“We now use Nitro to send invoices and tax returns to clients, such as quotes for transferring clients from MYOB to Xero. The moment we send these out, we never have to worry about it or chase up the client—we receive an instant notification the moment they receive and sign the quote,”* explains Perrin.

Overcoming Hurdles

NBC tackled two main hurdles while implementing Nitro. First, it conducted due diligence to ensure the **legality of eSignature use in Australia**. Second, the firm needed to educate clients who ranged in their exposure to productivity tools on the key benefits of transitioning to Nitro for their documentation needs.

Morris describes the first hurdle, *“At first we had some concerns about whether the electronic signatures tool was legal. However once our partners did their homework we were satisfied that it was 100% secure. Our success with Nitro snowballed from there.”* With the legality confirmed, Morris received buy-in from the team and was able to implement Nitro with the majority of the company’s clients, having secured the confidence from all parties involved.

“Educating clients on how to use Nitro was important for us to get the ball rolling and enable us to implement the software efficiently.”

Jennifer Perrin,

Client Service Advocate at Northern Business Consultants

For the second hurdle, Perrin provided clients with an informational video about Nitro, including a *“What Is Nitro?”* description and information on eSignatures. *“At the start, we sent clients some background information and a YouTube link showing how to use the software. It was essential to put their minds at ease that the software was legal and to prevent any further concerns,”* says Perrin. This process minimized the *“white noise”* (such as multiple phone calls and questions) of implementation and freed up the team to focus on their work.

Key Benefits

One of the clearest benefits of deploying Nitro is the amount of time saved. Morris says Nitro’s solutions have revolutionised NBC’s workflow turnarounds. *“Our consultants are able to turnaround documents for signing or quotes sometimes within minutes or hours with Nitro, compared to an average of 7-14 days that it took previously. On average, we are finding documents are signed with Nitro within the same business day, essentially when the client reads their email.”*

“With Nitro, our customers know all they need to do is click a button and it’s done...it’s really improving our workflow.”

Jennifer Perrin,

Client Service Advocate at Northern Business Consultants



Collaborate & Review

Nitro Pro offers a range of easy-to-use collaboration tools that ensure accurate version control.

An additional advantage is that Nitro allowed NBC to better delegate work internally. *"It has also sped up our own workflow, taking a lot of pressure off our internal admin staff who no longer have to follow up with clients on the phone. Nitro sends an automatic reminder when documents aren't returned on time,"* adds Perrin. No longer reliant on the internal admin staff, NBC empowered its remote team members with following up by going into Nitro to see pending documents.

The firm also found that implementing Nitro saved money in three key ways: less print and postage costs, improved ROI per employee and minimized penalty fees. Morris says, *"We are on track to save \$1,500+ annually from not having to print, scan and mail documents—and potentially more as we continue replacing print and postage with Nitro."*

"The ability to track documents live and manage eSignatures conveniently has increased the ROI of each employee by \$3,750 annually."

Finally, the cost savings from minimising penalty fees for late payment, review or lodgement has ranged from \$75-\$312 per client statement. Since the cost of penalty fees could be incurred on either the client's or the firm's end, preventing late fees has been in the best interest for both parties and ultimately has resulted in less friction in the documentation process.

Results

"I have clients that ring me up and say, that 'Nitro thing' is amazing, I can't believe it was that easy."

Nathan Morris,

Business Systems Advisor at Northern Business Consultants

Client Confidence

Not only has Nitro made NBC more time efficient and cost effective, but it has also created confidence in the firm for clients. The company's clients have been delighted by how quick and convenient Nitro is to use. *"Since implementing Nitro, we have had numerous clients thank us for introducing it to them. At the end of the day, our clients are busy people too. They don't want to waste time printing documents, signing, scanning and emailing. Nitro saves everybody time,"* says Perrin.



Sign & Secure

Nitro Pro makes it easy to sign and certify your documents while keeping your work secure, so confidential information remains private.

By saving its clients' time, NBC has positioned itself as an expert in the field. Morris describes this hidden benefit, *"We've also improved our business relationships as Nitro has helped position us as technology and business experts—people who can offer real counsel on how to better manage a business. It's become part of our service offering."* Morris adds that the firm now endorses Nitro for its clients' companies. *"Going forward, we always recommend to our clients several technologies which we have handpicked, including Xero, OneLogin and Nitro."*

Nitro came out as our employees' favourite technology."

Nathan Morris,

Business Systems Advisor at Northern Business Consultants

Employee Satisfaction

From a smooth implementation to relieving pain points, Nitro has also proven rewarding for NBC's employees. Perrin conducted the Nitro training and created a stress-free transition for the remote teams. *"In order to get everyone on board, we conducted a training session on how to use Nitro. We also did an example of a client receiving Nitro for the first time and taught our staff how to walk clients through it. The training only went for one hour—it was all very intuitive,"* explains Morris.

The same ease of use went for the Nitro Pro implementation, which was a positive experience from both an IT and end-user's standpoint. Morris continues, *"Implementing Pro was a success. Little training needed, staff simply just picked it up, very intuitive, and definitely more functionalities than our previous PDF tool."*

All these benefits have added up to high employee satisfaction. Being the type of company that cares about its employees' experience, NBC conducted an internal survey and Nitro ended up on top. According to Morris, *"We recently changed many IT systems and processes across the business, so six months after the change we conducted a survey with our staff. Nitro came out as our employees' favourite technology."*

In conclusion, Nitro has given NBC the freedom to focus on helping clients while increasing general productivity and output from each employee. *"Nitro has been warmly received in our office because it has improved efficiencies and eased our number one pain point, which is requesting signatures from clients to get items lodged. The software has freed up our staff, allowing them to do less admin and focus on helping our clients, which is far more important for our business growth,"* Perrin concludes.

Background Info

Team

Jennifer (Jen) Perrin Client Service Advocate

Jen is passionate about customer service and developing strong relationships with clients. As a Client Service Advocate, Jen assists the consulting team with many of the administration and support duties involved in working with our valued clients. Jen is also responsible for managing NBC's admin teams, and works with our in-office and remote staff on training, process development and support.

Nathan Morris Business Systems Advisor

Nathan is passionate about small business, emergent technologies and cloud computing. As a Business Systems Advisor, Nathan works with NBC's clients to help improve their business systems and processes with the aim of automating where possible, gaining efficiencies, real-time data and in turn allowing more time for the business stakeholders to spend on the business, rather than in the business.



For more information, call your sales person or visit

www.GoNitro.com