

CASE STUDY

JAG Timber

A TIMBER BUSINESS TRANSFORMED:

ENABLING GROWTH THROUGH STREAMLINING OPERATIONS AND SYSTEMS AND WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT FOR OXFORDSHIRE BASED, WOOD FUEL AND ARBORICULTURE BUSINESS, JAG TIMBER.

Context

JAG Timber is a firewood and timber delivery business based in Oxfordshire, founded in 2004. Over two decades, the team have built a loyal and sizeable customer base spanning domestic households, local pubs, commercial premises and a separate wholesale operation. The business is highly seasonal, operating at full capacity between September and April, with a lighter delivery service running through the summer months.

For years, the business ran entirely on manual processes — paper diaries, handwritten delivery notes, phone orders and cash or cheque payments. Jill managed all administration, invoicing, accounts and customer communications, while co-founder James led deliveries and yard operations, alongside a small team of drivers.

The team were introduced to Alun at Pentangle Technology through a family connection who had previously shared office space with the technology team, recommending him as someone who truly listens and understands what a business needs.

Business Challenge

By the time JAG Timber approached Pentangle, the business had grown substantially but the infrastructure supporting it had not kept pace. The combination of high order volumes, a diverse product range and a customer base spread across domestic,

commercial and wholesale segments had created an administration burden that was becoming unsustainable.

Key pain points included:

- Invoicing and payment procession were at (and sometimes over) capacity; occasionally customers exploited the lack of a systematic follow-up process to avoid paying.
- Orders were taken by phone and manually transferred to paper delivery sheets, creating risk of errors and duplication.
- Drivers received paper-based instructions with no real-time visibility into routes, loads or delivery confirmation.
- There was no mechanism for customers to book online, check availability or pay securely in advance.
- The existing website was informational only, with no shop or booking functionality.
- Jill had no way to easily scale down her admin load, even when she needed time away from the business.

Jill recognised that without intervention, growth would come at the cost of her health, family life and the sustainability of the business itself.

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We started up in 2004 and ran everything from a paper diary. Good old-fashioned ‘answer the telephone’ — write everything down, then write it out again to give it to the drivers.

JILL, ADMINISTRATOR,
JAG TIMBER



JAG Timber

Approach

Alun and his colleague Tom at Pentangle Technology began with a thorough discovery process. The team took the time to understand the complete operational picture — how orders were received, how stock was organised, how loads were allocated, how deliveries were routed, and how customers of all ages and digital confidence levels interacted with the business.

DISCOVERY & LISTENING

The JAG Timber team comprising Jill and James, met with the Pentangle team at their offices, working through the business end-to-end on a whiteboard. Pentangle took the time to map the entire journey from customer order to delivery, ensuring the solution would fit the realities of a yard-based operation with physical stock, seasonal peaks and a broad customer demographic.

“James and I went in and had a really long conversation — literally used a whiteboard. They just listened, really. They worked out what we would be arguing about, and they appreciated the whole process from when timber arrives with us all the way to when our drivers are dropping it off.”

WEBSITE & ONLINE SHOP

Pentangle built a new website for JAG Timber with an integrated e-commerce shop. Particular attention was paid to ease of navigation, recognising that



“We poured our hearts out to Alun. We’ve really got quite a big business, a massive customer base, but we just could not keep up. I couldn’t put another invoice in or take another payment to save my life.”

JILL, ADMINISTRATOR,
JAG TIMBER

customers range widely in age and digital confidence. The shop clearly presented the full product range — different sizes, hardwood, softwood, kindling and other products — to help customers who might know they want firewood but need guidance on what to buy.

An announcement feature was also included, allowing JAG Timber to post live availability updates, for example, to flag limited pre-Christmas slots, reducing inbound enquiry calls and setting customer expectations proactively.

BOOKING CALENDAR & DELIVERY SCHEDULING

One of the most impactful additions was a customer-facing booking calendar, allowing customers to choose a preferred delivery date at the point of purchase. This single feature eliminated a significant volume of inbound ‘when will my order arrive?’ calls and reduced the need for follow-up email exchanges when customers had specific

availability requirements. On the back end, Pentangle configured the calendar to cap delivery slots per day, ensuring order volume never exceeded operational capacity.

“Alun and Tom basically listened to everything we wanted, and then gave us more than we wanted. They added bits we hadn’t even thought of and extended our tech thinking.”

JAG Timber



“Right from when a customer orders to when the driver presses the button to confirm delivery — it’s brilliant. It’s absolutely brilliant. It has changed our lives from a whole-family, whole-business point of view.”

JILL, ADMINISTRATOR,
JAG TIMBER

BESPOKE OPERATIONS APP (‘THE DASHBOARD’)

The centrepiece of the project was a custom-built operations application, designed specifically for JAG Timber and used daily by Jill, James and the driver team. The app — referred to internally as ‘the dashboard’ — provides:

- Real-time order management, visible to Jill from any device including her mobile phone.
- Driver-specific views showing their individual routes, loads and delivery details, with permissions that prevent accidental changes to other drivers’ schedules.
- Delivery confirmation at the point of drop-off: drivers press a button when a delivery is complete, giving Jill instant visibility.
- Built-in analytics charts showing order volume comparisons across weeks, months and seasons.
- A ‘book on behalf of’ facility, enabling Jill to place orders for older or less digitally confident customers who prefer to call in, while still processing the transaction through the system.

ACCOUNTS INTEGRATION

Pentangle also supported JAG Timber in migrating from Sage to Xero, linking the accounts platform directly to the new app. This substantially reduced manual data entry and gave Jill a single, integrated view of orders, invoicing and cash flow.

PAYMENT PROCESSING

Secure online payment was integrated into the shop, requiring upfront payment and eliminating the historic problem of customers not settling invoices. While the initial payment configuration required scaling up to match the actual transaction volumes JAG Timber generated, Pentangle worked through this with the client until the system was appropriately sized.

Outcome

The impact of the Pentangle solution has been transformational for JAG Timber in several ways.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

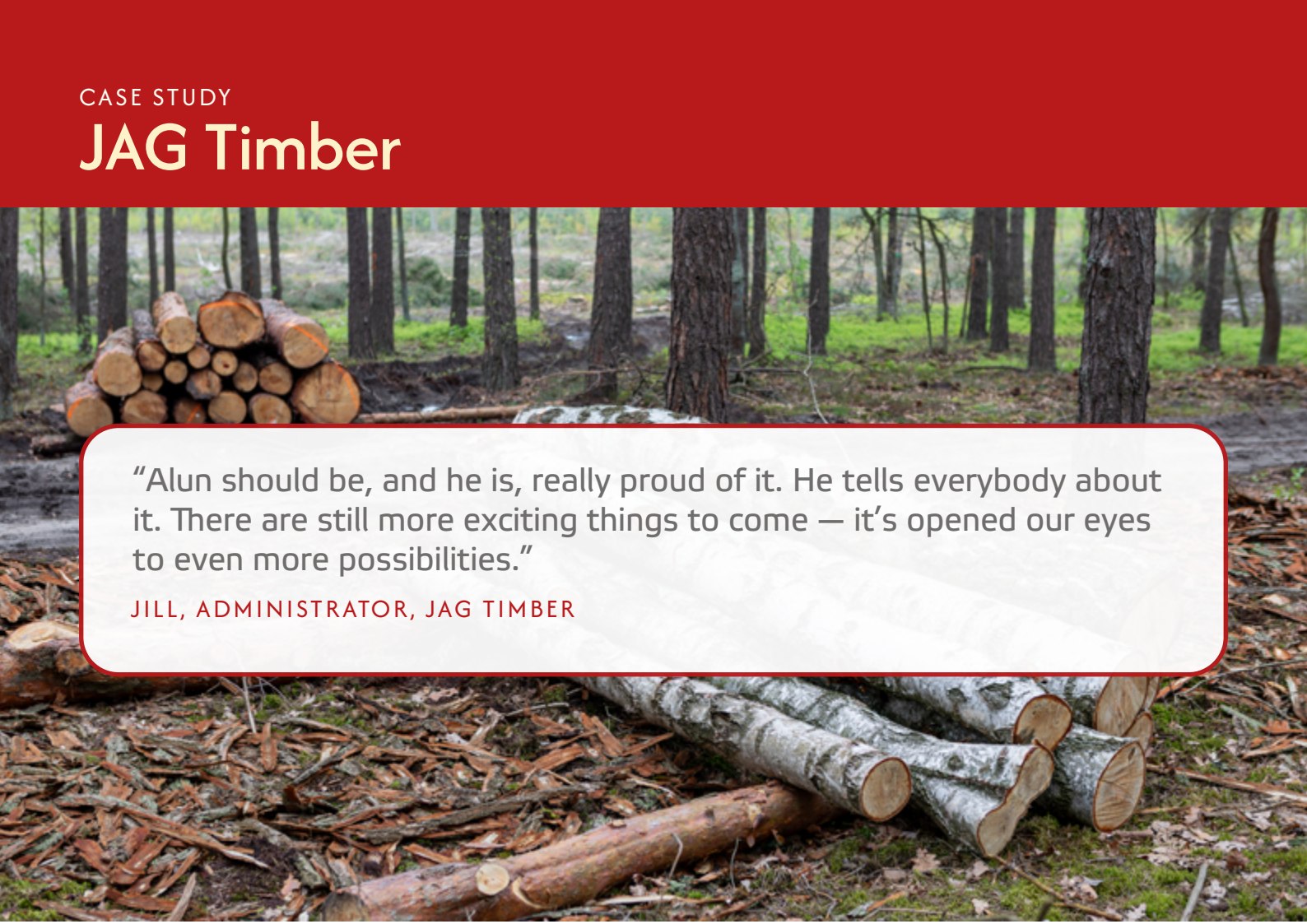
Order processing, delivery management and payment collection now run through a single, automated workflow. Drivers arrive at the yard, load according to their app, complete deliveries and confirm completion — all without paper and with minimal verbal communication required between team members. Jill can monitor everything in real time, whether she is at her desk or on her phone.

BUSINESS GROWTH

With the operational friction removed, JAG Timber has been able to serve more customers without increasing stress or headcount proportionally. James noticed during their second winter with the system that order volumes were nearly more than half again compared to the previous year. The business has also attracted a new customer segment — Londoners with Oxfordshire second homes — who discovered JAG Timber through the website and online shop.

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"Alun should be, and he is, really proud of it. He tells everybody about it. There are still more exciting things to come — it's opened our eyes to even more possibilities."

JILL, ADMINISTRATOR, JAG TIMBER

CUSTOMER RETENTION

Pentangle's solution was designed with JAG Timber's full customer spectrum in mind. The 'book on behalf of' feature ensured that older, loyal customers who prefer to call rather than use the internet were not lost in the transition to digital ordering. This thoughtful design approach meant that the shift to a digital-first model did not cost the business its most longstanding relationships.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Perhaps most meaningfully for Jill and James, the system has given them back control of their time. They can now take holidays knowing that orders continue to be processed and delivered. The anxiety of constantly being 'on call' to manage phone orders, chase payments and manually brief drivers has been replaced by a system that runs reliably without their constant direct involvement.

"We can now go on holiday and know that orders are coming in and being processed through the workflow.

Without this, I think we would have taken ourselves into the ground. It has genuinely protected our sanity, our family — and the future of the business."

PARTNERSHIP & FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Alun and Tom continue to develop the JAG Timber platform, with further features and improvements in the pipeline. Pentangle has also recently begun work on improving JAG Timber's Google presence and search visibility, an area where the business had historically been very difficult to find online.