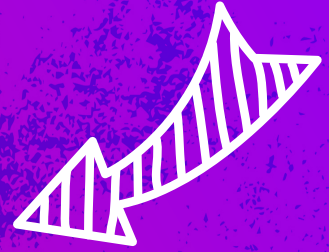
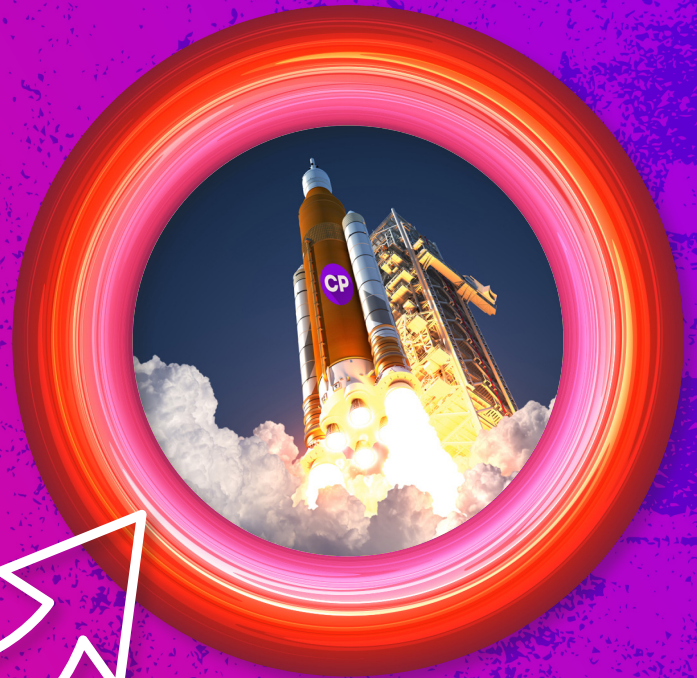


QUEEN VIC

TO #1



A REBEL'S TALE



COOPER PARRY

1850.

Derby.

Queen Vic is on the throne. M&S is still years away from opening. Women will have to wait another 68 years for the vote. And there isn't even a football league club kicking around.

So yes, we have tradition, heritage and experience on our side. Over 170 years of it.

But that matters diddly squat unless you evolve.

Fast forward a century and a half; through a couple of World Wars, opening a second office in Nottingham and our 'grey years'.

It's millennium time. And we're seriously traditional, dull and uninspiring. We looked and behaved like, well, like a bunch of accountants.

We were hierarchical. There was an upstairs/downstairs mentality. A tea lady served the partners. The Chairman had an oak-panelled office. With a leather topped desk. And genteel landscapes on the wall-papered walls.

It wasn't all sepia-toned but it might as well have been.

TBH, we were male, pale and a little stale.

Very alpha male, the guy (they were only guys then) with the biggest fees had the biggest say. Everyone was a sole practitioner doing their own thing.

There was fun outside work. But it rarely made it into the office. Culture wasn't even a thing.

Imagine a stereotypical group of accountants. We were that.

And then.

And then came the revolution.

Leading the charge was a group of ambitious, driven and competitive 30-somethings.

They'd left Big 4 and national firms to get away from politics, red tape, greyness and corporate boll**ks. Frankly, the last thing they wanted to be was accountants.

This group was entrepreneurial. Rebellious. Maverick. Business-savvy and unconventional.

A generational change was sweeping through the corridors. The older partners started to retire. A new buzz was taking hold.

Here was a group quite happy to stick two fingers up to convention. Whilst the profession was stuffier than a turkey, we determined to radically changed our route to market.

Screaming the mantra of 'we don't do grey', we sure as hell didn't. Bringing eye-popping colour, stripped back pop art and a more relaxed conversational tone to everything was our zig to the rest of the sector's zag.

In a hugely competitive market, the firm not only started to look very different, but we walked a different walk too. Tongues started wagging. More clients (fast moving, fast growing, entrepreneurial ones like us) felt of a like mind. And, bit by bit, we started to climb up the food chain.

Leicester and London offices followed. New consulting lines boomed.

From outside the Top 35 in 2004, we scaled to 28 by 2007. Our crosshairs were fixed on the top 20.

Sure, we weren't perfect. We got a lot wrong. But we had a pirate's swagger and a massive belief.

Then we had our first OH F**K! moment.

Halfway through 2008 we lost £3/4m to the credit crunch. We were staring down the barrel. Looking back, we'd overstretched, lost our focus and become too arrogant.

Just to survive, we had to make drastic and difficult decisions. In less than a year, our team had shrunk from nearly 300 to just over 160 – we'd had to let 44% of our people go.

It was horrible, shitty and gut wrenching.

But what this meant was that we came out the other side really quickly. We bounced back with our best financial performance ever (at the time) the very next year.

Realistically, this left a cloud hanging over us for a couple of years. Not only had we lost some awesome people, we'd lost a ton of goodwill too. And a bit of our mojo.

Our comeback had given us time to reflect, soul search and think long and hard. We learned loads – about ourselves and what we really wanted. Why was the top 20 so important? Why did we want to dabble in everything? We'd been a jackdaw to the shiny stuff.

So we flipped it.

We were super clear that we only wanted to do something if we could truly be the best at it. Be the #1. Numero uno. King of the hill.

We needed to play to our strengths in high growth and high margin markets where we could compete and win. Our strategy was uncomplicated. It was Fix, Close or Sell. Simple as.

This way and a ballsy 'Hunter/Farmer' approach reaped rewards. Swiftly.

But we didn't just undertake a seismic business strategy change. We undertook a cultural one too.

Our communication to our people had been poor. As a result, we'd bred resentment and anger. The only way to pull this all back was to put people first. Our culture became a glorious obsession.

We were still high performing, fun and entrepreneurial. But now, we were playing to our strengths. With transparency and openness. We were living our values not just sticking them up as a wall poster. We were also way ahead of the game on remote working and audits (way before it became such a 'thing').

By 2015, we were part of the PKF network. And we had three city centre offices. But each had its own personality and way of working. We were too silo.

Anyone that says three into one won't go is plain wrong. We spectacularly consolidated into one 'Google-esque', award-winning space: Sky View at East Midlands Airport. Corridors and individual rooms made way for open, collaborative spaces. The building became our canvas and we made it ours. Alive and pulsing with the energy of a 6 generational workforce, the whole vibe changed forever. Our iconic brand reflects this with a cool, human and edgy exuberance.

The East conquered, our sights shifted to the whole Midlands.

Acquiring Clement Keys (a £7m t/o, 100 people, strong reputation, successful, Birmingham city centre firm), we began to CP it – in every which way. The cultural/commercial integration was a genuine learning curve for everyone. No question. Moving to stunning out of town premises (Park View was listed in The Times as one of the UK's top 10 coolest workplaces) also gave us a timely – and highly visible - way to showcase the CP personality to the region.

By now, we are the region's undisputed #1. It's no coincidence that we've been named as Europe's best company to work for.

The virtual trophy cabinet is bulging too – our experts having scooped over 100 awards in the last decade. Best of all, our NPS score is not just best in class, it's globally off the chart.

Comfortable in our own skin – and restless about not being able to expand into exciting new geographies – we leave the PKF network. Politely, we PKF-off'd.

Shackles off, this move frees us up to open in Shoreditch and spearhead our Tech & High Growth 'rebellion'. It also liberates us to develop stronger international allies: creating a global community of high quality, entrepreneurial, collaborative, like-minded firms.

Then, from nowhere, we (and the rest of the world) experienced our second monumental moment. OH F**K 2, The Sequel.

Caught in the glaring headlights of the global pandemic, we acted superfast. Super decisively. We tightened what we needed to. We applied laser-focused thinking. Our oven ready remote working plans and investment in digital ways of working kicked in. Big time.

With no playbook to follow, we created our own. One with the health of our people and the health of our business slap bang in the middle. Together, we navigated the chaos, uncertainty and fear.

Our talented teams worked tirelessly to support every client. And, ahead of the curve, we opened up again. Faster. Stronger. More confidently.

The result? Our best year. Like ever. Like since Queen Victoria.

And like aligning stars, our clients continue to choose us, because we're just like them - they 'get' us and like us - and we 'get' them and like them - 'by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs'.

London's calling has never been louder as our capital presence grows ever stronger. We also fling open the doors to stunning new offices at the heart of Birmingham's city centre. We call it Parrydise.

Then, in July 2022, we turned the page on another monumental chapter in our Rebel's Tale.

To a fanfare of publicity, we partner Waterland Private Equity to turbocharge our disruption of the UK accountancy market and lay the foundation for international expansion.

Our crystal-clear vision is to grow fivefold in five years. This deal will help turn the vision into awesome reality.

Without compromising anything.

Or changing what our clients and people love most.

Within months our growth acceleration is full on pedal to the metal.

Over a 10-month purple patch, we acquire six firms, double our headcount and smash through the £125m turnover mark.

These deals are truly transformative.

At the same time, our organic growth is consistently hitting new heights.

Along the way, we become the largest B Corp certified accountancy firm in the UK.

Oh, and celebrate being the #1 Accountancy Firm to Work For in the UK.

As we write, we now have around 1200 talented souls working at CP, with over 500 in the capital alone.

Our hubs across the UK reflect what we're all about.

Our specialisms get stronger than ever.

Our culture thrives.

And we launch our alumni, CP Forever, to bring together a unique community. Once a CPer, always a CPer. Too true. Too true.

So, it's award-winning business as usual. And we'll continue to Disrupt. Lead. Make Life Count.

Just cranked up a whole load of notches.

And then some.

Curious for more? Take a read of our 3 Year Vision.

It's refreshingly open, searingly honest and nothing you'd expect from a bunch of accountants.

