

Sam Turner & Sons Ltd.

Family business Sam Turner and Sons Ltd. was established in 1931 in a small warehouse in Middlesbrough, specialising in agriculture and horticultural products.

Today, the leading farm and country equipment supplier has expanded to a much larger premises in Northallerton with three additional stores as well as growing into an established online retailer.

Challenge

- Being heavily reliant on time-consuming manual and paper-based processes.
- Lacking visibility and understanding on KPIs due to annual reporting only.
- The archaic DOS-based till systems caused slower transactions and no storage.
- Growing their online retail operations while ecommerce demand rocketed.

Approach

- Implementing a “mind-blowing” fully integrated ERP system to unite all operations into one platform.
- Managing growing online retail operations with integrated ecommerce and third-party platform integration.
- Touch screen EPOS systems that link to customer data including order history and account details.
- On-demand financial and stock reporting.

Results

- Achieving next day delivery down from 5 days.
- Turnover increase of 20%.
- Net profit increase of 16%.
- Monthly order processing increase of 18%.
- Active customer-base increase of 100,000.

Sam Turner & Sons

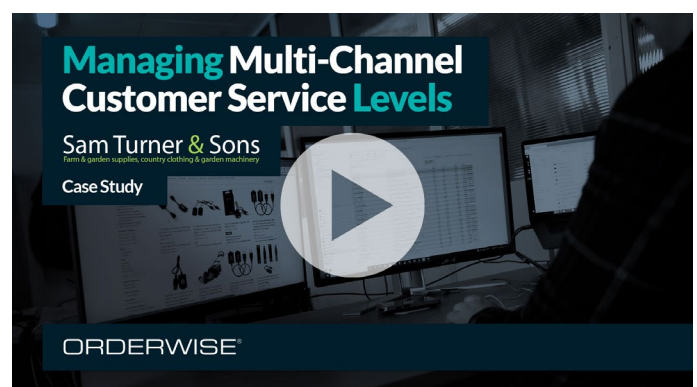
Farm & garden supplies, country clothing & garden machinery

Watch Sam Turner & Son's video case studies

We visited the Sam Turner team at their site in Northallerton to discuss how the business has evolved since implementing OrderWise in 2018.



[Watch the video here](#)



[Watch the video here](#)

"Sam Turner supplies 50,000 different lines of stock. Seeds, potatoes, Christmas trees, garden sheds, clothing to one of the best ranges of Lego in the North East. You name it, we probably sell it. Or, as our local customers say, 'If Sam Turners don't sell it, then we probably don't need it.'"

Charlie Turner, Director

The Requirement

Upon their launch in the Interwar Period, originally Sam Turner only supplied farmers. As the business grew throughout the 20th century, so did their client base to include B2C.

With this evolution came new technology, transitioning from solely paper-based processes to eventually utilising a computer system. Following this, came their first-ever ERP system, to manage their stock control.

In 2007, the business began exploring its online retail avenues, known from within the company as **"The Internet Challenge"**. However, their historic ERP system, still required lengthy, manual processes.



"There was still a lot of paperwork, every account was written out on paper and then we had to manually enter it onto the computer. Over the years, all stock control went digital, but the accounts department still had a manual, handwritten cashbook."

Ian Place, Company Accountant

With Sam Turner's early success within the online marketplace, the business was keen to continue developing this. As **daily website orders grew to around 70-80 a day**, the business knew it would no longer be able to facilitate and sustain this growth with their legacy system.

"It became clear our historic ERP, which still involved a lot of paperwork, wouldn't support us as we continued to expand our ecommerce operations."

Charlie Turner, Director



Implementing OrderWise

Sam Turner needed an ERP solution that could automate their core processes and integrate this data across the business. By streamlining and optimising this, they would be provided with the visibility and traceability needed.

"It was a stroke of luck really that we implemented OrderWise at that time, October 2018. Following the next year and a half, sales did grow with an emphasis on online."

Charlie Turner, Director

OrderWise also provided Sam Turner with the power to streamline their operations through automation and integration within their warehouses, offices, stores and transportation operations.

The Solution

Ecommerce

With OrderWise Ecommerce, Sam Turner was no longer reliant on multiple tools to manage their multiple marketplaces.

"Going from multiple tools and having to go through different platforms to OrderWise was a game-changer for us. It meant we could do everything in one place. People in the business who didn't usually get involved in ecommerce could actually see what was going on."

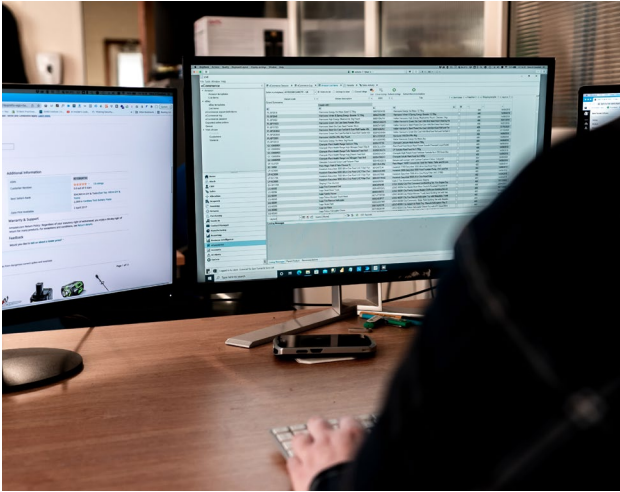
Dene Goodwin, Ecommerce Manager

In addition to integrating with the Sam Turner website and Shopify, OrderWise also enabled integration with their third-party platforms, Amazon and eBay.

Due to their ecommerce investments and dedication to growth, with OrderWise, Sam Turner has **increased monthly online orders on average by 2,240 to 15,000.**

While Sam Turner continued to enhance and grow their ecommerce operations, their legacy brick and mortar stores continued to be a valuable and profitable marketplace. However, due to the periods of forced shop closure throughout 2020 and 2021, ecommerce became a vital lifeline for the business.





"Suddenly, loads of shops were shut. Anyone that had a decent website, which we did, became very popular and got hammered with orders. But if we'd still been on our old system, we couldn't have coped, we'd have just collapsed."

Charlie Turner, Director

OrderWise was not just essential to continue operating. As Sam Turner's online orders began to rocket, OrderWise was able to efficiently facilitate this growth and increase in warehouse and back-end operations.

"It would have been catastrophic for us if we'd not had an online presence when the pandemic hit. The increase in online sales outweighed the decrease in-store when we were forced to close."

Ian Place, Company Accountant

Transitioning into a multi-channel retailer has been monumental for Sam Turner. But critical to facilitating this "game-changing" growth is OrderWise's scalability as a continually developed solution.

"The good thing about OrderWise, it grows as you do. So, if anything new comes online you can guarantee that OrderWise is already looking at it. While you're looking at a new marketplace, OrderWise already has integration for it."

Dene Goodwin – Ecommerce Manager



EPOS

Although Sam Turner's ecommerce developments were revolutionary for the retailer, their in-store operations have remained the utmost priority.

As a family business that has been operating in the North East for over 80-years, Sam Turner has gained a loyal following. While growing their customer base is crucial as a competitive retailer, it's important to the business that they protect their legacy while providing the best customer experience.

To enhance their in-store customers' experience, Sam Turner invested in the OrderWise EPOS solution. This was a transition from their 20-year-old DOS-based system to a touch screen interface.

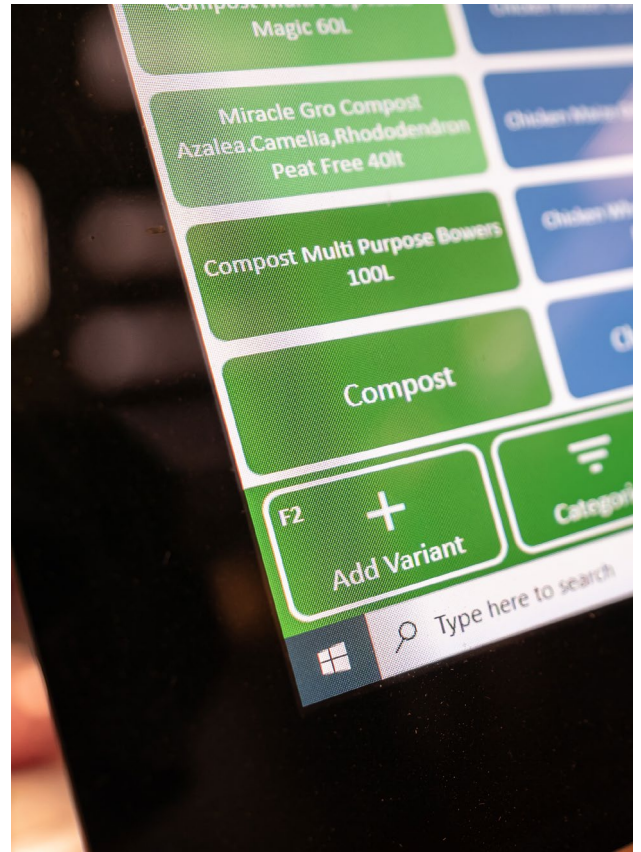
"It's been revolutionary. It's so much quicker, so much easier and more information on the screen, we've got stock levels there, we've got everything we need to tell the customer. We love it."

Caroline Turner, Buyer and Garden Centre Manager

Due to the new EPOS system's integration with OrderWise, till operators have now gained instant access to data on customer information, stock levels and sales transactions.

"The information is shared in real-time, so everyone who is looking at the screen is seeing the same information. It's a lot quicker to serve the customer and the interface with the card machines is just a lot easier."

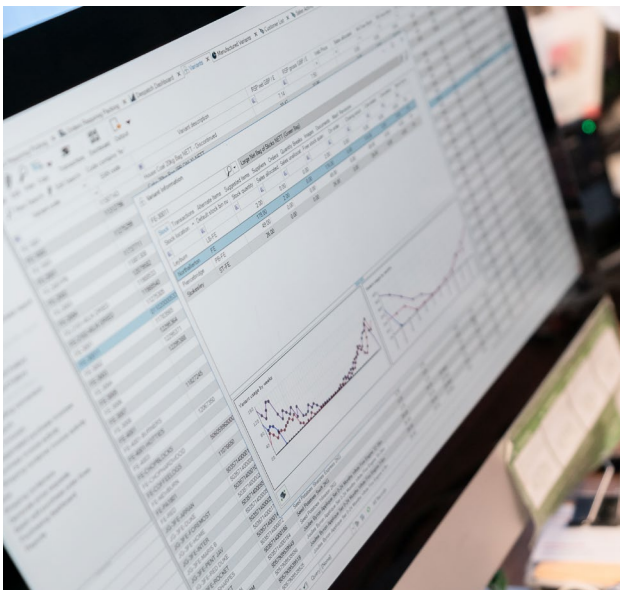
Caroline Turner, Buyer and Garden Centre Manager



Since going live with the new OrderWise EPOS solution, Sam Turner processes **50,000 monthly orders through in-store EPOS**. Remarkably, facilitating this dramatic increase has not incurred any additional costs or labour.

"Even though our turnover and number of transactions have increased, the number of staff needed to support these sales has fallen. This is especially on our tills, where EPOS has dramatically reduced the time needed to process an order."

Dene Goodwin, Ecommerce Manager



Reporting

Prior to implementing OrderWise, Sam Turner experienced insufficient reporting capabilities. Their finances, stock control, forecasting and sales order processing data was complicated and time-consuming to access. In addition, new regulations were also increasing pressure on the business.

"One of the main factors in looking for a new software was Making Tax Digital – where we were required to submit figures quarterly. With our old system, it would not have been possible."

Ian Place, Company Accountant

Previously, Sam Turner had to wait for an annual account report. Not only was this not compliant with MTD regulations, but the lack of visibility and reporting was also detrimental to their growth.

“External accountants would come in once a year for a four-week audit and then produce yearly accounts, that would go to Inland Revenue. So our directors would only get an exact account of what’s going on once a year.”

Ian Place, Company Accountant

Day-to-day, Sam Turner was relying on outdated paper-based systems and manual processes to reconcile data. This meant financial losses were untraceable and real-time performance was inaccessible.



“We could only find out how well we were doing at the end of the financial year. With the pace of change in business, it was just too late. With OrderWise, we can get sales, revenue and profit performance on a daily, weekly, monthly, annual basis, quickly. It’s so much better than it was before, and we know how we’re doing and we can make changes in a timely manner which is really critical.”

Charlie Turner, Director

With OrderWise, Sam Turner gained total control of their accounts and had on-demand reporting.

“OrderWise can produce a VAT return in 20 minutes. At the click of a button, it’s off to HMRC and it’s done. Reconciling the online sales would have been impossible, now everything is balancing day-to-day. Our directors are in a much better position to make financial decisions.”

Ian Place, Company Accountant



Purchasing & Forecasting

As a multi-channel retailer, ensuring accurate stock levels is a never-ending task for Sam Turner. Over or understocking would create severe supply chain issues across the business.

OrderWise's reporting functionality has been crucial to ensuring Sam Turner's stock control accuracy. It has also enabled their Purchasing and Buying teams to confidently forecast for goods in-store, online and in the warehouse.

"I use OrderWise to check my stock levels, how many have sold online, how many have sold in store, I can check if stock has gone missing and why. I can tally up what I've sold month-on-month, and I compare that to the year before. Seasonal activity has become very obvious."

Caroline Turner, Buyer and Garden Centre Manager

With such a diverse product range with large variants between in-store and online sales, being able to accurately report and analyse sales and orders between different platforms and locations is essential.

This is especially pertinent due to the seasonal sales peaks a business within the gardening, farming and horticultural industry experiences.

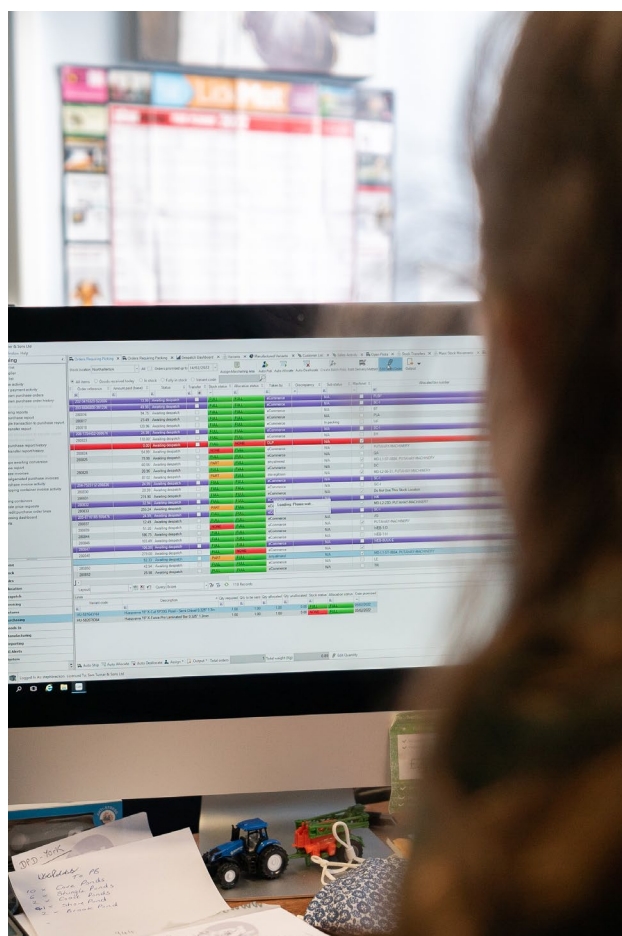
"Some products we buy in for the full year. With OrderWise reports and forecasting features, I can manage this so easily. Before, I'd have to go through line by line to see how much we've sold from the previous year. Data access is really easy. I can see where each individual product has sold online or in-store."

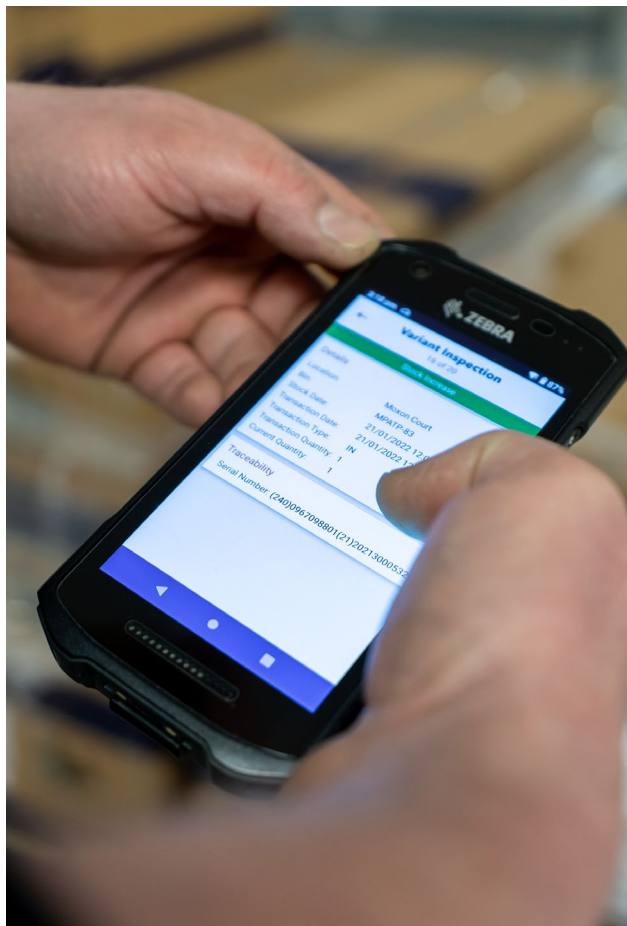
Stephanie Breckon, Buyer

Having the ability to review real-time data on profits and purchases is crucial for the business. But also required to generate revenue, lower costs and protect stock, was access to data on historic performance.

"OrderWise has removed the need for manual costing as it automatically calculates what things should cost just by simply scanning. Everything is onscreen, so we can compare our orders and sales to the last year. It's brilliant to be able to look back over the last 4 years and see how things have changed."

Stephanie Breckon, Buyer





Warehousing & Logistics

With Sam Turner increasing investment into their ecommerce operations, this had an inevitable impact on their warehousing and logistics processes.

"It's a peculiar warehouse because we stock such a variety of things."

Joanna Brown, Picker

Due to the business' rapidly increasing sales and profits generated by online retail, Sam Turner opened a new warehouse, purpose-built to handle online orders and despatches.

"The new warehouse is better planned, better laid out to accommodate OrderWise and how it works. There was a lot less room for error, but with OrderWise, we've got the confidence everything is in the right place to be picked."

Michael Elsdon, Depot Manager

As well as improving the accuracy of warehousing operations, the team has also gained optimal visibility through OrderWise's HHTs (handheld devices).

"It's faster, provides greater visibility, they are easier to use. Hands down, loads better. I use them for everything in the warehouse; goods in, picking, moving stock. With them, I can literally do everything I can do on the main screen."

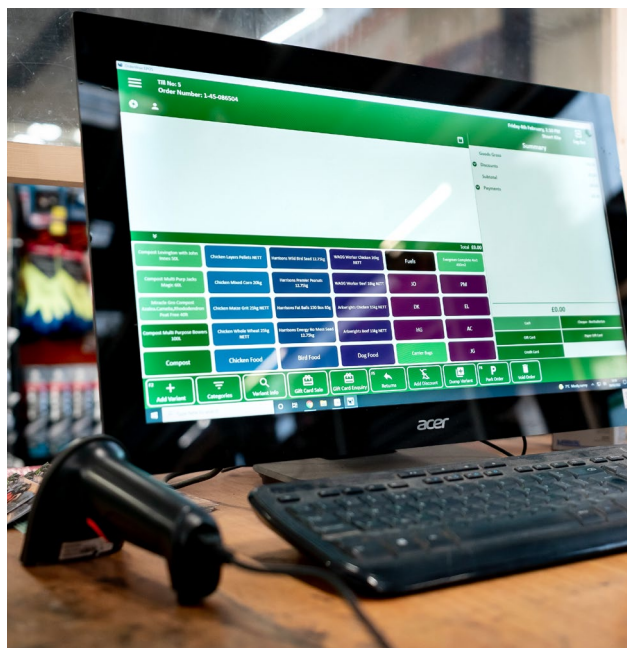
Michael Elsdon, Depot Manager

As well as improving operational efficiencies to ensure deliveries and order fulfilment, Sam Turner also needed to ensure their warehouse processes omitted the risk of error and unnecessary costs.

"It's very important to manage this efficiently with the costs of oil, fuel and gas increasing."

Dave Nelson, Transport Manager





Customer Service

The biggest incentive for Sam Turner to transition into multi-channel retailing and enhance their productivity was for their customers. Historic and prospective.

And while the business was able to grow their customer base and attract new consumers in different marketplaces, the challenge was then to manage these different customers' expectations.

"When it comes to maintaining excellent customer service across multiple sales channels, it's down to a passion for customer service. We treat all customers the same. Local or online, all customers are important."

Charlie Turner, Director

A significant challenge Sam Turner has had to overcome to meet modern expectations is offering next day delivery. However, with OrderWise increasing accuracy and efficiency across all departments, this can be easily maintained.

"Customer expectations have completely peaked due to Amazon. People used to be happy to wait 4 or 5 days for an order, now, 2 days is too long. Everything is shifting to next day delivery. Customers expect a response within minutes, whereas before it would be days. OrderWise has helped with that because we can respond to customers and get orders out the door a lot quicker."

Dene Goodwin, Ecommerce Manager



**Sam Turner & Sons Ltd. hold a
4.2/5 TrustPilot rating as of 2022**

Previously, Sam Turner & Sons Ltd.'s customer enquiries would take longer to be answered due to the various unintegrated platforms.

"Because I've got that interface where I can see all the sales, all of the purchasing, all of what has been received in for goods. Now we're giving our customers a much better service, it's a lot slicker because it's so integrated."

Caroline Turner, Buyer and Garden Centre Manager





Support

For Sam Turner, OrderWise is more than an ERP solution. It's a team of business management and software specialists that understand their industry. And more importantly, has taken the time to get to know Sam Turner as an individual and ascertain their goals.

"OrderWise's first-line support can answer 95% of our enquiries – it's very rare we go to second-line support. I've worked with previous software companies where the response is "no, it just doesn't do that", with OrderWise that is never the case, it's never a flat no."

Ian Place, Company Accountant

Support from OrderWise began pre-implementation and was provided throughout the entire project and go-live period. It was OrderWise's responsibility to ensure that the Sam Turner team could use the system with confidence and to its full potential.

"Through training and project management, their goal was to create OrderWise experts within the Sam Turner team. The OrderWise team was really impressive during the go-live week. The implementation team worked quickly to make adjustments as we needed them. It was not going to fail with them."

Charlie Turner, Director

After witnessing the benefit and improvements of OrderWise as a solution and support specialist, Sam Turner extended their support relationship by becoming a Wise Success customer. As well as day-to-day support, Wise Success includes a personalised and strategic customer success plan.

"We signed up for Wise Success to help us make the most of the new warehouse and because we've changed a lot since OrderWise was first implemented here. Wise Success really helps us increase the efficiency of our processes and help us make the most of the system."

Charlie Turner, Director



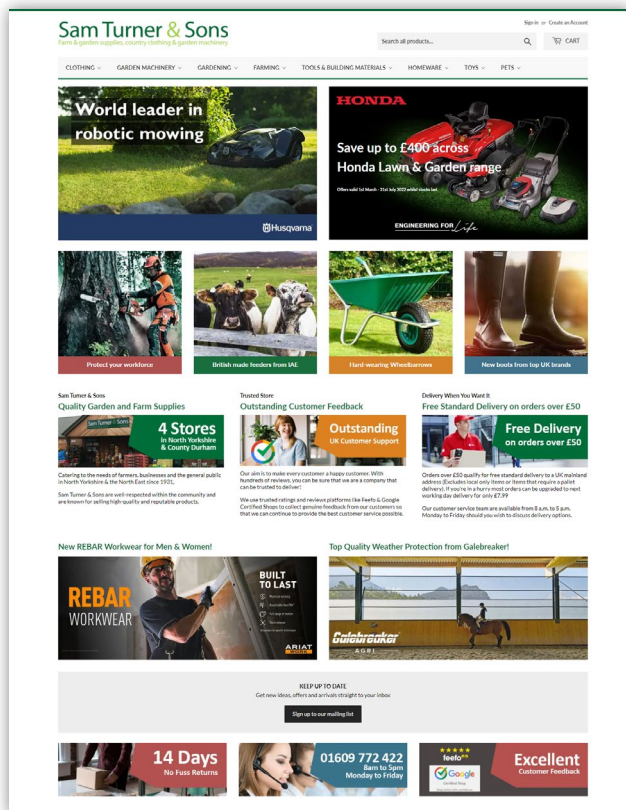
The Future

With OrderWise, Sam Turner hasn't just been able to manage growth and explore new marketplaces, they've transformed as a business and thrived.

Since implementation, Sam Turner has seen an increase in turnover of 20%, a net profit increase of 16% and a monthly order increase of 18%.

"We're more efficient and more automated, but that hasn't meant we need to get rid of staff, we've been able to repurpose them. Using staff more efficiently has increased profit margins."

Ian Place, Company Accountant



VISIT THE SAM TURNER & SONS WEBSITE



By lowering costs and increasing productivity across the business, Sam Turner can grow into even more marketplaces.

"We've got planning permission to expand, we plan to expand bricks and mortar stores, we want to give our customers the option to shop with us how they want."

Charlie Turner, Director

The key to achieving this?

"A loyal customer base. A good following online. And behind all that is an ERP system that makes us efficient."

Charlie Turner, Director

ORDERWISE®

With over 30 years' experience helping businesses across many industries, OrderWise is proud to be a trusted, award-winning software provider for UK businesses. Offering a wide range of scalable, end-to-end solutions, we ensure our software shapes to your needs. For more information about the best software fit for your business, [you can get in touch with our friendly team today.](#)