

Jono Bonifant

Lentune Software Solutions

Jono Bonifant, CEO of Lentune Software Solutions, leads an agile Christchurch team of problem solvers who are passionate about maximising business efficiency to enable strategic transformations. They have developed a sophisticated software tool which can harvest key supplier information from PDF invoices, unblocking clerical bottlenecks.

We sat down with Jono to discuss how Lentune is embracing technology to help businesses optimise processes and consequently improve profits.



STORY

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What problem does your business solve?

We help New Zealand businesses transition from inefficient paper-based workflows to a paperless, cloud-based work environment with shorter invoice processing times, enabling greater visibility and control of their business.

What is your background, and how did you find yourself at Lentune?

I have been on a bit of a journey, I suppose. I have studied Finance and Economics at Otago University, and then I spent seven years working in the financial markets. In 2013, my wife and I moved to London, and

I joined the sales team of the UK's leading wine and spirits merchant. Following the birth of our first daughter, we moved home, and I started looking for a new opportunity and joined Lentune. In short, I am not a coder, but I have a strong business background, and that's the way I tackle it.

How long was Lentune in existence before you joined?

Lentune was founded by Matthew Reid over 20 years ago. We have a longstanding and solid customer service reputation. In the last four years, we have grown our automation solutions presence, focusing particularly on invoices.



What are some of the biggest challenges you have faced during your time with Lentune?

When I first joined Lentune, we were examining our development strategy, and we have found that the key to our growth was finding the right people to invest in us and put their trust in us. Nowadays, with being more established in the market, we have a strong reputation and credibility behind us, which keeps propelling us forward.

Who is your ideal customer?

Medium to enterprise-level businesses that are distributing and manually approving paper invoices. We have been targeting

construction or trade-based businesses, which typically have a lot of manual approval processes required; however, our software can be used in any industry. We have, to date, made a big impact on the businesses we have worked with by providing them with immeasurable value.

Where are your customers located?

While we are a Christchurch based software company, most of our customers are throughout New Zealand and overseas. We would like to increase the number of international customers, especially in Australia, but for the next 12 months we are placing our focus on New Zealand businesses.

Can you describe one of the proudest moments in your business's success so far?

I believe the entire journey with Lentune to date has left me feeling quite proud, especially seeing how far we've come. I know I feel especially proud when I hear our new customers' glowing reviews a short time after we've onboarded them. I make sure to feed that back to the team as it's always invigorating for us to know that we're making a difference and that we've got a cool product that people love.

How does the team contribute to the success of Lentune?

My business partner, Matthew Reid, has 40 plus years of experience in coding and is a very intelligent individual who has been pivotal in terms of the architecture of our product. We also have an expert team of developers and seasoned customer support as well. I firmly believe that if you want to succeed, you must surround yourself with a trustworthy and fantastic team because you can't make all the decisions as well as bring in new ideas all yourself. Everyone on the team knows our vision and what we are trying to achieve and are behind us one hundred per cent.

How has your sales experience helped Lentune grow?

I think that the time in the UK and my experience in the sales team were super helpful. However, I believe that the key skill that I have learned over time is to actually listen to people. When you really listen to people, you can then understand their business and frustrations. We can then create solutions which tackle those problems head-on. I think listening has most likely been my key skill. I have seen too many salespeople just concerned with selling their product. They

forget to listen to what the customer actually wants. Listening to our customers has helped us with product development as well.

With day to day accounting tasks becoming more automated, what should the role of the accountant be?

There is technological disruption everywhere, and I think we are definitely seeing that in the accounting space, where accountants nowadays are moving into a consultant-based role. I think we'd probably need to look at accountants more as business advisors. Accountants are the one point of contact who have your business as their primary interest. There is a lot of noise in terms of people offering solutions, however, actually having an advisor who is looking out for your interests and works with numerous other businesses that are similar to yours is a really valuable asset.

What does the future hold for Lentune?

For the next 12 months, we're really just going to focus on New Zealand as there is a lot of opportunity for us and it is quite an accessible market for us with no challenges of conducting our operations offshore. Currently, we are assessing industries where our software is applicable, and then from there, we look to add to the suite of products to further assist our existing product customers. I believe we have a bright future ahead of us in terms of growth. For us, the current strategy is to manage our growth and take a balanced view as to the steps we are taking forward.

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If you would like to transition your organisation from labour-intensive workflows to smarter, automated processes visit www.lentune.co.nz.