

Beginners Guide to Direct Debit Bureau

Direct
Debit
Bureau





GETTING STARTED WITH A BUREAU

Every year, thousands of businesses sign up to Direct Debit, as it offers them the most cost effective and efficient approach to collecting payments from customers. One option of handling Direct Debits for your business is through a third party known as a Direct Debit Bureau.

More than half of the businesses and organisations in the United Kingdom using BACS services, make their Direct Debit payments through a BACS approved bureau rather than submitting files themselves, directly to BACS.

WHAT IS A DIRECT DEBIT BUREAU?

A Direct Debit Bureau is a third party that takes charge of handling Direct Debit payments on your behalf. They do this either using your own Service User Number (SUN) or the Bureau's own. Service User Numbers are explained in more detail below, or you can read our guide on Service User Numbers [here](#).

There are a number of reasons that a business might choose to use a Direct Debit Bureau, including:

- **The business only makes a small number of Direct Debit or BACS direct credit transactions each month**
- **The business is unable to fulfill all of the required criteria to be able to make direct submissions themselves to BACS**
- **The business has only recently been established, and their payment collection process is not currently sufficient or reliable**
- **The business is an SME with a relatively low turnover**

For whatever reason a business chooses to use a Direct Debit Bureau, it ensures that the process for collecting payments is smooth and limits the concern on the business owner.

Bureaus are an extremely secure method of payment collection. Every single BACS approved bureau is subject to regular inspection and review by BACS to ensure that they meet the standards set by the scheme.

USING YOUR OWN SUN VS A BUREAU'S SUN

One important aspect of using a Direct Debit Bureau is the Service User Number.

Bureau's such as London & Zurich can set up a Service User Number for your payments, naming this "facilities management". For businesses wanting their business name to show on their customer's bank statements, this is an optimum option.



"Our intuitive online system makes it easy to set up any type of collection and manage a wide range of collection profiles."

Businesses may also choose to use a Bureau's SUN. This option allows Bureaus to submit and manage payments on your behalf. For those looking for a swifter option with less concern over the appearance of a bureau's name appearing on your customers' bank statements, this may be the ideal solution, also providing businesses with less aspects to manage, and essentially a more workable solution.

HOW TO SIGN UP CUSTOMERS

When taking payments through a Direct Debit Bureau signing up new customers is an easy process that can be completed with paper or online forms, or over the phone, if customers prefer. Generally, most bureaus will use paper forms, but London & Zurich offer an online platform to do so, as well as phone service.

WHAT SERVICES DO BUREAUS PROVIDE?

Merchants who choose to use a Direct Debit Bureau collect paper and paperless Direct Debit Mandates themselves, but it differs in terms of the next stages, based on the services provided by the bureau.

- Firstly, rather than submitting payment details directly to BACS, this is done by the bureau
- Submissions are the handled on your behalf by the bureau, who will provide details of any failures
- Merchants receive payments collected through a Direct Debit bureau directly into their bank account

Direct Debit Bureau's such as London & Zurich provide an excellent solution in ensuring that your Direct Debit services are smoothly run and your payments are completed with minimal fuss.

SET UP ANY KIND OF COLLECTION

Our intuitive online system makes it easy to set up any type of collection and manage a wide range of collection profiles. We have experience and expertise in a wide range of industry sectors. We work with companies of all sizes to meet the specific needs of your business, whether you're a utilities company collecting variable amounts from your customers, or a fixed fee subscription service.

GET IN TOUCH

If you are interested in variable or fixed recurring collections, or would like to set up a Direct Debit for one-off payments, speak to London & Zurich today. We will talk you through your options and help you understand every aspect of this cost-effective payment option.



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