



## **Chief Operating Officer**



## Contents

The Firm .....	3
Background to the Current Opportunity .....	5
The Role .....	6
Preferred Candidate Background .....	7
Remuneration .....	9
The Recruitment Process.....	9

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## The Firm

Thorntons' roots can be traced back to 1857. Over generations, Thorntons has grown significantly and is now one of Scotland's most respected full service legal and property firms. The strength of these foundations combines with a pioneering and people-centred approach, differentiating Thorntons from many other law firms. As well as providing high quality advice and exceptional client care, we play an active role in supporting the communities we serve, providing rewarding careers for our people and giving back to communities by supporting social causes and charities.

Thorntons' recent growth has resulted from several strategic mergers and investments, with the firm now including over 500 people in 13 offices across Scotland. Our business has grown by over 50% in the last five years and we continue to have ambitious growth and expansion plans. Throughout this successful expansion, our mission remains the same: to help our clients, colleagues and communities succeed.

We are progressive and ambitious. While we expect high standards from our people, we recognise and value the contribution they make to our business and our success. We see the whole person and truly believe that our diversity of thought is a huge part of our strength. Our advanced technology which already allowed many of our people to benefit from agile working has enabled us to continue to flourish despite Covid restrictions.

At Thorntons we pride ourselves on doing what is right, and as two-time winners of the Scottish Business Insider Employer of the Year Awards you can see why people choose and enjoy a career with Thorntons.





## We do...

- ▶ Enjoy leading the way
- ▶ Adapt and try new things
- ▶ Help others succeed
- ▶ Take the initiative
- ▶ Influence others
- ▶ Generate ideas
- ▶ Love learning
- ▶ Seek improvement
- ▶ Aim high
- ▶ Go the extra mile

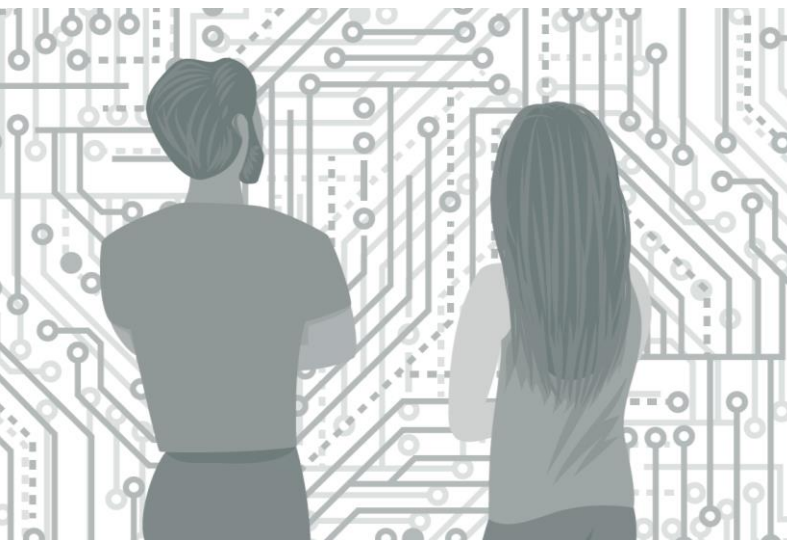
Inspiring



## We do...

- ▶ Have enduring relationships built on trust
- ▶ Care about others
- ▶ Have a positive impact in the wider community
- ▶ Demonstrate team spirit
- ▶ Recognise everyone's contribution
- ▶ Listen to other views
- ▶ Think of others before we act
- ▶ Share knowledge and information

Community



## We do...

- ▶ Treat everyone with respect
- ▶ Value individuality and diversity
- ▶ Focus on the human element whilst maximising use of technology
- ▶ Support others in times of need
- ▶ Listen and show empathy
- ▶ Seek to understand, then to be understood
- ▶ Recognise that mistakes happen, and learn from them
- ▶ Have fun
- ▶ Act with integrity, humanity and humility

Human

## Background to the Current Opportunity

Thorntons is currently a £30m plus turnover business, with bold aspirations in turnover growth over the next five years which will include a smart merger and acquisitions strategy.

The Chief Operations Officer (COO) role has been key to the recent growth and the Partnership are keen to strengthen the Board with the appointment of a highly motivated and strategic replacement COO to drive and implement ongoing transformation and growth.

The desired impact this professional will have on the business will include:

- Successful delivery of operational excellence against business objectives
- Successful integration of any acquired businesses via merger or acquisition into the existing business, to achieve strategic aims
- Acting as an advocate for positive change and transformation, constantly embracing new technologies and new ways of working
- Embracing Thorntons' collaborative way of operating and empowering others to operate in the same way
- Successful structuring/organisation of the firm through periods of growth
- Inspirational Leadership, successfully influencing the partnership and being a trusted and respected business leader



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## The Role

**Title:** Chief Operating Officer (COO)

**Reports to:** Managing Partner

**Location:** Flexible. Expectation of spending a significant amount of time at our headquarters in Dundee and also spending time in, and having a detailed understanding of operations at all of our offices

### Main Purpose:

1. To bring professional business and organisational leadership
2. To influence and implement strategy and culture at an operational level
3. To lead and run the operations of the business

### Principal Responsibilities:

Working alongside the Managing Partner and the Chief Finance Officer, the Chief Operating Officer is a senior leader and Board member in our organisation of 500+ people which operates across 13 offices in Scotland.

- Lead and develop the Directorate team which includes five Directors who head up marketing, business development, client experience, people operations, organisational development, IT, innovation, estates, office services and risk management (Thorntons is regulated by the Law Society of Scotland)
- Lead Operations Board (made up of Legal and Estate Agency Divisional Heads and the Directorate)
- Organisational design – design and implementation of the operating model
- Merger and acquisition project delivery and integration
- Drive sustained increased organisational performance through firmwide process optimisation, technology and people development
- Lead operational implementation of strategic plan
- Lead implementation of quality standards across the firm (e.g., ISO 270001, ISO 9001)
- Assume responsibility as the Chief Information Security Officer for Thorntons
- Project leadership
- Oversee policy setting
- Development and delivery of cross firm projects such as opening new offices and establishing business process hubs
- Business Continuity Leadership

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## Preferred Candidate Background

### Experience:

- Candidates should demonstrate senior leadership experience in a business comparable in size and style
- Able to demonstrate a sound understanding of professional practice businesses
- Strong experience of leading/implementing operations and operational efficiency in a large multi-site business
- Experienced project manager/leader
- Able to demonstrate evidence of acting as a catalyst for change/evolving operations
- A strong understanding of data analysis and performance metrics and the ability to use these to make operational decisions
- Evidence of driving excellent client service and a strong people and culture agenda

### Person Specification

- Successful track record of driving operational efficiencies within a highly complex, multi-site business
- The ability to look at the bigger picture in terms of strategy and implementing actions in the interest of ensuring prosperity for the business and all its people
- A track record of decisively managing business issues against challenging timescales and successfully delivering against business objectives and financial plans.
- The ability to challenge conventional thinking, have demonstrable experience of either step-changing mature propositions or introduction of new concepts and working practices
- Previous responsibility within a high growth business through the integration of multiple acquisitions, transforming business operations through technology advancements, whilst maintaining firm culture would be desirable
- Enjoys working in a fast paced, rapidly changing environment with high levels of autonomy
- A strong leader who excels at building high performing, motivated teams, building a high-performance culture and maintaining positive and productive working relationships

### Attributes and Behaviours

- Strong leadership qualities, someone who can bring order and focus to complex situations
- Results oriented and highly organised, someone with a strong drive, and a sense of ownership to deliver against firm objectives
- Collaborative leadership style and strong aptitude for teamwork across the partnership
- Have executive presence, with the gravitas and ability to influence with credibility, facts, and judgment. Inspires confidence internally, externally and at board level
- Skilled in ability to influence and effect change by achieving buy-in both internally and externally
- Facility to challenge others to think differently and the courage to test the status quo and, as appropriate, try unconventional things if they will deliver exceptional results

- Must be adept at handling ambiguity and be able to shift gears when necessary to address opportunities and issues as they arise
- Target driven and results focused individual, with a strong analytical approach
- Innovative and creative in supporting Thorntons' growth ambition
- First class relationship management skills, with a clear ability to forge strong partnerships and trust across a wide range of internal and external stakeholders
- High emotional intelligence, someone who will balance results orientation with empathy and people skills
- Able to demonstrate a high level of personal and professional integrity with a non-egotistical approach and not a political individual
- Exceptional oral and written presentation skills; effective negotiating ability
- Commitment to the businesses in terms of time investment and travel required





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## Remuneration

Attractive package commensurate with background and experience required for the role.

For further information on remuneration please contact our retained advisors, Livingston James for a confidential discussion. Contact details are below.



Sophie Randles, Director  
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E: [kirstysim@livingstonjames.com](mailto:kirstysim@livingstonjames.com)

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## The Recruitment Process

First stage interviews will be conducted by retained consultant, Sophie Randles of Livingston James. Full CV and cover letter will be required through this stage of assessment.

Shortlisted professionals will be invited to interview with Colin Graham, Chair and Lesley Larg, Managing Partner.

Moving through the process professionals will be advised on interview requirements and detail. Psychometric assessment may be utilised in the form of Saville Wave, for which additional guidance will be provided when appropriate.

All third-party applications, enquiries and direct approaches to Thorntons will be referred to Livingston James.