John German

Company
John German Estate Agents

Founded
1840

Checkboard services
ID verification
AML screening
Payments

Result
80% checks digital
Improved cashflow

John German Estate Agents has been selling, letting, and valuing homes since the nineteenth century. Still independently owned, it has become one of the most trusted estate agents in the Midlands.

How John German Estate Agents turned slow, costly checks into revenue-driving compliance

The challenge

John German's onboarding process was slow and manual. It was performing all its compliance checks in-person, requiring clients to come to the office with passports, bank statements, and household bills, which it would then scan or manually record.

This created several challenges:

- Clients often had to go back and forth trying to find the right proof of address or identity document, considerably slowing the verification process.
- Physically handling sensitive documents was also creating potential security issues.
- Because John German couldn't take up-front payments, it faced a growing list of compliance fees ahead of each transaction, including HMRC registration fees, access charges for HMLR records, and material information rules that mean HMLR documentation is required for each new property.

The solution

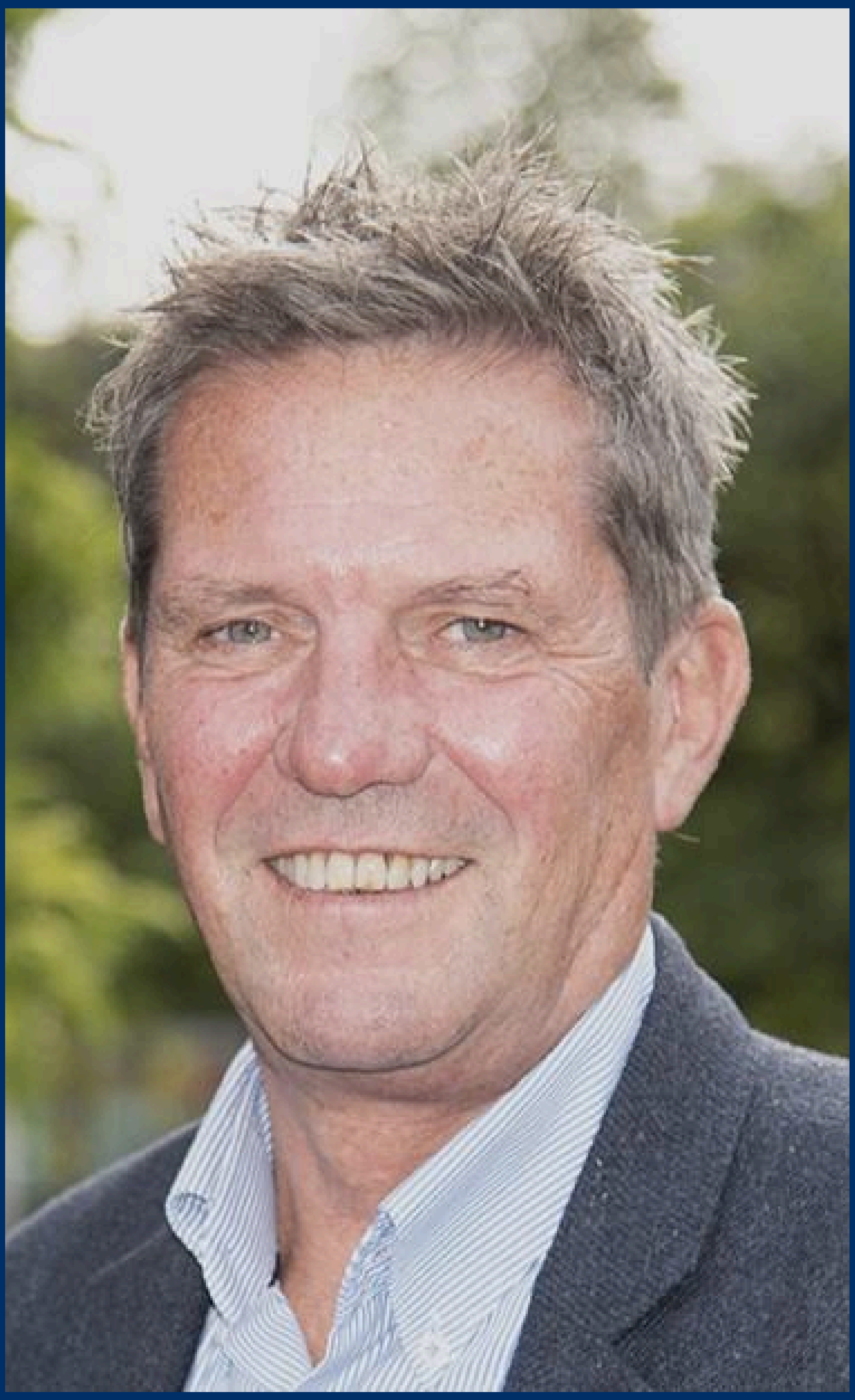
John German's existing compliance solution could raise red flags or identify politically exposed persons (PEPs), but because it relied on in-person verification it was slow and unreliable.

The firm identified digitalisation as the solution. It wanted a platform that could help it become faster and more efficient, and in particular something that enabled secure biometric ID checks.

For John German, Checkboard was a comprehensive one-stop solution to AML. It covers ID checks, PEPs screening, sanctions monitoring, and proof of funds checks. This would save the firm time and reduce admin.

It also enabled fast, secure, up-front payments, fulfilling John German's aim to be digital and paperless across the whole transaction lifecycle.

> Checkboard appeared to be a fairly comprehensive one-stop solution to AML. You could do the ID check, the PEP check, the sanctions check, and then all the proof of funds as well, which we find is invaluable for us in saving time.
>
> – Phill Sandbach, Director and MLRO



The results

Checkboard's digital onboarding has significantly reduced the time it takes John German to complete its compliance checks and get transactions off the ground. Clients can now upload utility bills and ID documents in moments rather than days.

Although it still retains a manual option for clients who can't use the digital platform, John German now performs more than 80% of checks quickly and efficiently on Checkboard.

In addition, John German can now request upfront payments through the Checkboard app ahead of every check. This has helped improve its cashflow and reduce the burden of the compliance fees levied by HMRC and HMLR, making life easier for its accounts team.

Want to learn more? Get in touch with Checkboard ⟶