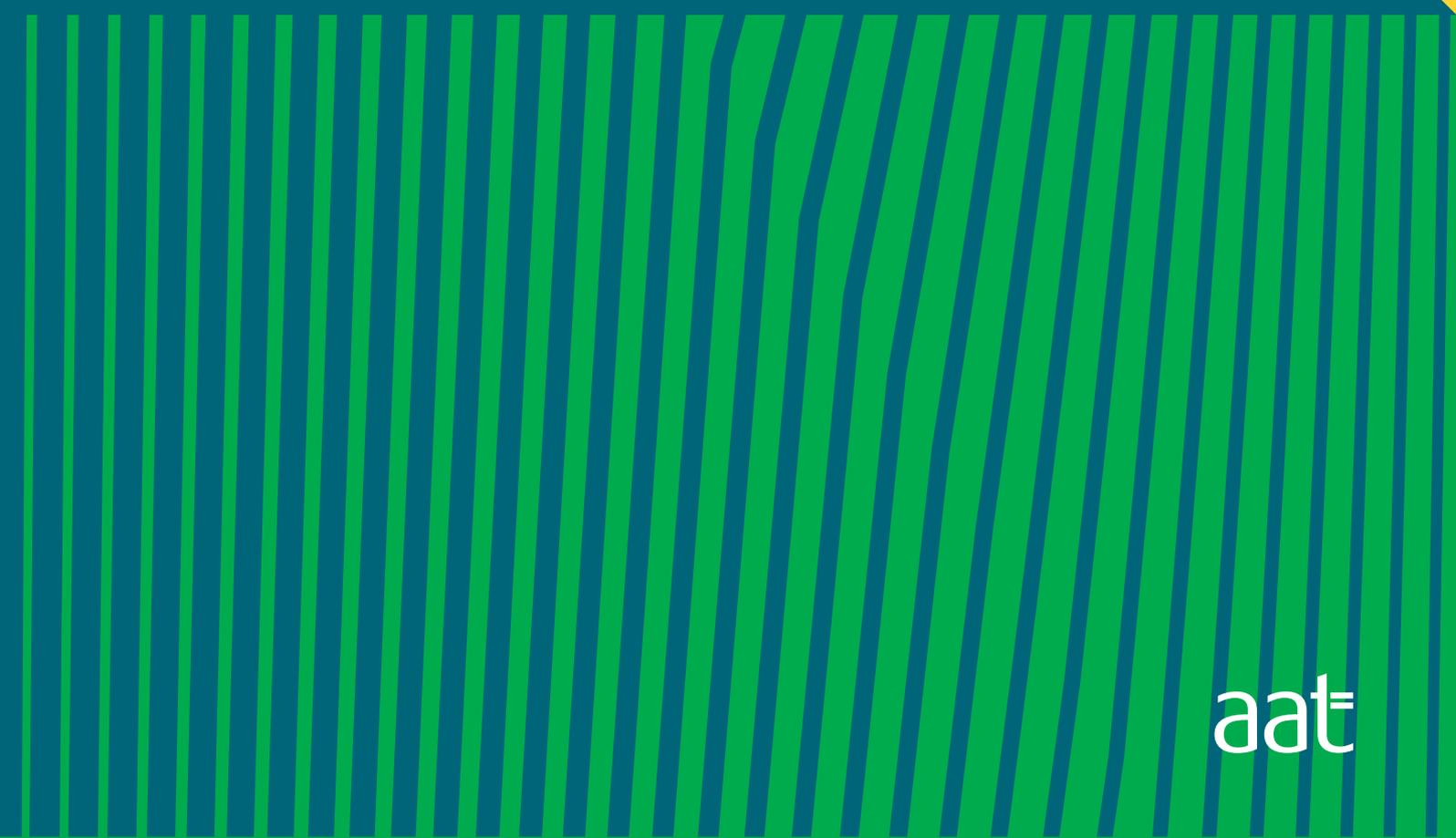




# Making Tax Digital VAT software guide

SPOTLIGHT ON:



aat

# Contents

Introduction Countdown to April 2019	3
What are the requirements?	4
Your five steps to readiness	5
How to manage your clients	6
Sign up for your HMRC agent services account	7
MTD stories	8
Software review	10
Bridging software	11
Accounting software	18
Specialist software	24
Self-service	28
Any questions?	30

## How to use this guide

Use the navigation buttons at the bottom of the page to easily find your way through the full guide.

# Introduction

## Countdown to April 2019

### **Making Tax Digital for VAT (MTDfV) will become a reality in April 2019.**

Many agents and organisations need to take steps to be fully ready for this deadline. This guide aims to help you prepare by providing bite-sized answers to the key questions that are likely to arise.

This guide is for VAT only. While HMRC remains committed to extending Making Tax Digital to income tax and corporation tax, there is no move to mandate the reporting of income and expenditure on a quarterly basis. This will not happen before April 2020, at the very earliest.

#### Key to success

Whether you're in practice as an AAT Licensed Accountant, an AAT Qualified Bookkeeper or in another finance role this easy-to-digest guide will help you to:

- understand what you need to know to make the right choice
- advise your client(s) or employer concerning what they need to do and what their options are
- think about software solutions and the future shape of your services.

The key to success, is for you to get up to date with what MTD is all about, what its impact might be and what is required to ensure that you and whoever you advise, are going to be VAT-MTD-compliant. Ideally, well ahead of next April's deadline.

Once you're up to date, keep those who rely on you informed about what they need to know. If you're in a position of responsibility don't bombard those who rely on you with problems. This is your chance to add value to your relationship.

# What are the requirements?

From 1 April 2019, all VAT registered entities with an annual VAT-able turnover above £85,000 (the current compulsory registration threshold) will be mandated to keep a digital record of their VAT transactions. As well as having to file MTD-compliant VAT returns using API enabled software for all VAT return periods commencing after 31 March.

Therefore, you'll need to ensure that your VAT registered clients or employers are fully aware of this fact and what it might mean to them.

## Voluntarily registrations

The requirement to file VAT returns using MTD-compliant software does not apply to organisations that have voluntarily registered for VAT, but have VAT-able turnover below the registration threshold. For the time being the voluntarily registered can continue to keep manual books and records, if they wish and file HMRC's own version of the VAT 100 from within the HMRC portal.

## What does it mean for you?

HMRC intends finance professionals to use commercial software to submit information to its systems. Quick fix solutions are possible, involving the use of bridging software. But ultimately practices will need to consider using some form of accounting software and make the leap to becoming fully digital. If you already use bookkeeping or accounting software you should contact the provider to confirm that their product will be MTD-compliant in April.

If you're using desktop products, you'll need to ask this question and install and updates to make the system MTDv-compliant. If you're using cloud-based products the question must still be asked, but any upgrades should be handled by your supplier.

## What does it mean for clients?

If your client or employer is currently keeping manual books and records or using a combination of manual and computerised bookkeeping. They will be mandated to join MTDv from next April, they will also need to be advised as soon as possible that they will no longer be able to maintain VAT records in the same fashion.

### HMRC requirements for maintaining digital records:

- details of all VAT transactions must be kept in a digital format
- VAT transactions need to be preserved in a digital form for six years
- the VAT return must be created digitally using the underlying digital VAT records
- the VAT return must be provided to HMRC digitally using API enable software
- VAT data must be digitally transferred at all steps, including when it's submitted to HMRC.

Initially, only summary VAT return data need be submitted to HMRC. Supplementary data might be requested by HMRC at a later date. Although, the nature and scope of what constitutes supplementary data has yet to be defined.

### To be MTD-complaint the software must:

- be capable of keeping records according to legislation
- preserve records for at least six years
- submit MTD-compliant VAT returns
- provide supplementary data to HMRC if requested
- be capable of receiving HMRC information via APIs.

## The goal – end-to-end digital

HMRC wants organisations to keep digital records for all transactions. And it wants this information to be processed and submitted digitally without any re-keying, and that includes manually copying and pasting. Links between programmes are possible, but they have to be digital, not manual.

## A 12-month 'soft-landing'

To ease the introduction of MTDv, HMRC will be relaxing its conditions in the first 12 months. For VAT periods commencing between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020 businesses will not be required to have digital links between software programs (VAT Notice 700/22).vHMRC will also be more lenient with penalties for late filing during the first year. But after the grace period, the full requirements will apply.

# Your five steps to readiness

There are five key things you need to do in the remaining months before the deadline.

## 1 Get up to speed with MTDfV

You cannot design a solution until you understand the problem. So first base is to get fully conversant with MTDfV. Reading this guide is a great place to start.

- [AAT Making Tax Digital centre](#) – for tips and technical advice.
- [AAT Comment](#) – visit AAT's blog for news and updates.
- [HMRC 700/22](#) – Making Tax Digital guide.

## 2 Research software and apps

You need to establish whether the software that you, your clients or employer currently use is going to be MTD-compliant.

If it isn't, you'll need to research the software marketplace to decide what software packages and or Apps that might fit your needs or those you advise.

See the following **Software review** section for ideas.

## 3 Decide how far you want to change your current practices and procedures

Once you have completed your research of the software products that are on the market and identified the ones that work for you/your employer you can combine this knowledge with your understanding of HMRC's MTD compliance requirements. This will determine what changes you might need to recommend to your client(s), employer or that you might wish to adopt yourself.

## 4 Segment your clients and create a plan

Those of you in practice should review and segment your client. You should identify those who are going to be mandated to join MTDfV from April. See the later section, **How to manage your clients**.

## 5 Sign up for an HMRC agent services account

An HMRC agent services account will be essential to submit MTD VAT returns. HMRC suggests you do this now, [here's how](#).

# How to manage your clients

The key to managing clients is going to be effective segmentation and great communication.

## Pioneers

Consider which of your clients are well prepared for MTD. Rate them on a score of 1–3 by asking yourself:

- are their records digital (in spreadsheet or software)?
- are they largely accurate?
- do they file in plenty of time?

Then consider how enthusiastic they will be to make the switch. Rate them from 1–3, asking yourself questions like:

- are they already technically skilled and also co-operative?
- or are they at the learning stage?  
Or worse – adverse to new technology.

You should also apply a rating against the complexity of the client's affairs, again on a score of 1–3.

Combining your scores will give you a rating to help you identify which clients to start the digital journey with you.

## Early adopters

While you're working through your pioneers, you need to be communicating with the next cohort – the early adopters. Plan regular communications and plot some discussions to warn them of the changes and preparing them for the actions they will need to take.

Aim to do this in an upbeat, helpful tone. MTDfV may not be 'good news' for these organisations, but you can soften the blow. This is your chance to present yourself as the expert friend who is looking out for their interests and will ease them through the changes.

## Followers and diehards

Leave those organisations with low skills or complex affairs until last. While you're working through cohorts 1 and 2, you should be drilling down into the challenges of this group to find solutions to problems and answers to their objections.

Even with the best planning and most proactive communication, there will still be some laggards. Some estimates put the figure of resisters at up to 20%. HMRC will allow leeway in the first year, but afterwards is likely to use threat of penalty to bring this group into line.

### Market yourself as MTD-ready

As well as communicating with your current client base you should seize the chance to reach out to new customers.

Once your systems are in place, why not market yourself as MTD-ready?

Produce an MTD-ready logo for your website. You can also begin alerting local business to their need to go digital by advertising on social media or talking to the local newspaper.

# Sign up for your HMRC agent services account

To transact with HMRC in the new 'Making Tax Digital' world, you'll need a new 'agent services account'.

If you haven't done a thing to prepare for MTDiV so far, then make this your first action. It's both easy and essential.

An agent services account will allow agents to access new HMRC online services and use software to communicate directly with HMRC.

A single account will suffice for an organisation, and will be used for all future digital services.

## Mapping clients

To send VAT returns on behalf of your clients, you'll need to link them to your new account.

Within HMRC's portal you should be able to map your existing clients to the new account. You may also need to send an invitation to them.

[Read more here](#)

# MTD stories

## David Hannam

DAH Accountancy Services, Yorkshire

It's all well and good theorising about how easy Making Tax Digital will be. But what is the experience of accountants who have been part of the MTDV trials?

### When did you start planning for MTD?

Planning started in earnest 14 months ago. Our planning process really started around usability – which of the software providers offered us the quickest and most straightforward route to processing transactions. After about a year, it pretty much confirmed what we thought we knew after a month, which was that Clear Books and Xero were the two that would provide us with 95% of our services.

### How have you been migrating customers?

As a small practice, we have no way of converting 140 clients in a month, so we've been moving people at a rate of seven to eight a month. That was our game plan, so that by March next year, everyone has been spoken to and knows what their requirements are.

### What issues arose with clients?

In most instances, the clients hadn't heard of MTD, let alone understand what it was, so we had those conversations with the vast majority.

We have some clients that we were hoping to move over earlier, but the clients have said; 'no thanks, I'll leave it to the very last minute'. So we've still got about 50-odd to do between now and next March, but hopefully we'll get through it.

### What was the motivation to go digital?

I was acutely aware that there would be a tipping point where having accounts on a spreadsheet would no longer work. Usually depending on the size and complexity of the client's business. For those clients, I definitely embraced MTD because it gave us a chance to go back to the client and say 'we have to do this, it makes sense to do it now, so that's what we're proposing'.

"We've been trading as a limited company for 12 years, now. It was just me to start with, but now I have six employees, based in Shiptonthorpe."

### How did clients react?

In just about every instance where we've done that, the clients have embraced the technology. We've hooked them up with ReceiptBank as well, and the two work hand-in-hand with Xero and Clear Books. In most cases, the clients have embraced it, and quite a few have said: 'why didn't you tell me about this years ago?'

We have had to learn a number of systems to ensure we can support clients properly.

We decided there were half a dozen or so software providers that we should look at and be up to date with.

That was a conscious decision for the practice.

### What's your overall experience of MTD from the trial?

Having been involved with the trials and submitted a handful of MTD VAT returns, our experience is that the actual process of submitting an MTD VAT return is unbelievably straightforward.

### What advice would you give accountants?

Don't wait until 1 April. There are a number of steps that are required in order to make the changes. My experiences are that the earlier you start planning, the better prepared you'll be.

I'm sure most accounting practices will have an agent's account with HMRC, but they will need something called an agent services account, which is like a mothership service, and our normal HMRC agent account sits below that agent services account.

**David Cuthbertson**

Shilton Accounting Services, Oxfordshire

**When did you start preparing for MTD?**

We started talking to people about it probably about a year ago, particularly with the smaller ones. I think the first person I spoke to was probably an antiques dealer, who uses the margin scheme, and how we needed to prepare him early because it was going to get complicated

**What is your experience from the trial?**

We've filed three VAT returns now, through the system, and it really is so much like the old system that it really isn't an issue.

**How have clients responded?**

We've got virtually all our clients on some sort of system already. If they're VAT registered, and we're dealing with them, we've got them on a system.

We haven't found anybody, to be honest, who has said no. We give them the option – we have got some clients who do their own bookkeeping throughout the period and then they'll come to us, we'll keep a note of when their VAT is due, we'll have a quick look at it to see if we think it's OK, and then we'll file it for them.

**What advice would you give other accountants?**

Get clients onto a cloud-based system as soon as you can. We're pushing all our clients into the cloud, and that's the way it's going to go. There's no point pretending that it isn't, because it is. I think it's an opportunity to get people off spreadsheets and onto a system, you can charge them more money and you can see what they're doing, you can control it so much better than getting a pile of papers at year-end and trying to sort it from there.

“There's six of us. We specialise in small businesses, where we do bookkeeping all the way through to completion. Our biggest client has £5m turnover, the smallest one is £20,000. We've got something like 35–40 VAT registered traders that we do bookkeeping for, and we tend to do virtually everything for them; we run a virtual accounting office for some of them.”

## Software review

In the following pages, we review products and services being developed by some of the MTD-compliant suppliers listed on HMRC's website.

Broadly there are two types – **bridging software** and **accounting software**. Essentially, consider the bridging software option if you use spreadsheets or have particularly complex arrangements. For most other users, the accounting software options may be where you'll find your supplier.

There are a couple of practice management offerings, aimed squarely at accountants wanting a package for their whole business.

We have used two further options: **Specialist offerings** are for those businesses in farming, agriculture and estates or in the motor trade industry.

Finally there are some **self-service offerings**, useful if clients want to file their VAT returns themselves, and ask you for advice about who to use.

All of the following suppliers are HMRC-recognised and meet current requirements. Being on this list means that the product has:

- been through HMRC's MTDfV test environment
- has successfully demonstrated MTDfV functionality to HMRC.

The following reviews aim to give a flavour of the solutions still being developed in the market.

They are as objective as possible and have been written using a combination of independent research, information supplied by the companies themselves, and material from the companies' websites. There are no paid-for recommendations and the content is not approved by the suppliers. The list is unlikely to be comprehensive, as new companies are still being approved by HMRC.

AAT has compiled this list in good faith, but no responsibility can be taken for loss as a result of acting on the information, or for inaccuracies that may remain.

# Bridging software

Bridging solutions, bridge the ‘gap’ between digital systems that are unable to connect directly to HMRC. The simplest example would be a spreadsheet containing VAT calculations. But others would include taking a CSV or XML file exported from an accounting or bookkeeping system.

Bridging solutions are likely to be favoured by practices and businesses using spreadsheets to keep their records. They can also provide a simple solution for accountants and organisations that have done little to prepare for MTD, and need a quick, simple way to continue filing returns from April 2019.

## What does bridging software look like?

Some bridging solutions will be plugins that can connect Excel to HMRC’s systems. But most are cloud-based offerings, where spreadsheets or CSV files will be imported.

### Bridging software use cases

Bridging software is more than a stop-gap solution, and is likely to be used in many different combinations for years to come:

1. Submitting data kept in spreadsheets. The most familiar application.
2. Supplementing desktop software with low-cost software programs, like VT Accounts, that work in conjunction with Excel are widely used by finance professionals. Manufacturers may choose not to extend the capability of the software to submit MTD VAT returns. In which case, a bridging solution will be needed to fill the gap.
3. Legacy support for desktop software. Some accounting software manufacturers began with desktop products, but are now focused on cloud delivery. Rather than produce updates, the manufacturers may provide a bridging tool for legacy customers still using desktop versions.
4. Complex integrations. Some practices and finance teams use an array of different software systems, particularly when handling complex calculations. Such systems may not be integrated, so bridging software will be required to take their outputs and make VAT submissions.

# Bridging software

## Compliance – what you need to know

HMRC requires data to be transferred digitally from ‘end-to-end’, in order to reduce errors. This means data cannot be rekeyed or manually cut and pasted: “Once data has been entered into software used to keep and maintain digital records, any further transfer, recapture or modification of that data must be done using digital links. Each piece of software must be digitally linked to other pieces of software to create the digital journey,” says VAT Guidance note 700/22.

Cell links between spreadsheets meet the requirements. For example, if you have a formula in one sheet that mirrors the source’s value in another cell, then there is a digital link.

### What is an acceptable digital link?

Re-keying, and even cutting and pasting is **not acceptable**. The following methods **are** compliant:

- cell link in a spreadsheet
- emailing a spreadsheet containing digital records to a tax agent to import the data into their software to carry out a calculation (for instance, a Partial Exemption calculation)
- transferring a set of digital records onto a portable device (for example, a USB stick) and physically giving this to an agent to import that data into their software
- import and export of XML, CSV files
- download and upload of XML, CSV files
- automated data transfer
- API transfer.

## What is the ‘soft-landing’ period?

HMRC is relaxing the rules regarding digital linking to transaction records for the first year of MTDfV. This is to help clients get up to speed.

During this period – known as the soft-landing – bridging software will be able to use processes that are only compliant in the short term. For example, screen scraping – digitally collecting screen display data and translating it so it can be stored – will be acceptable for the first year only.

After the soft-landing phase, there must be full digital linking from end-to-end.

Check with your bridging software provider whether their product will be compliant in 2020.

## Who provides bridging software?

A variety of companies will be setting themselves up with HMRC to provide bridging solutions. Some may see it as a short-term commercial opportunity, and be producing a product for short-term compliance. Most will see it as a long-term service and an opportunity to introduce their wider products.

In our software review we have described what the companies featured are currently known for.

## Costs

The costs of bridging software varies. Cost per submission is common. There are also ‘loss-leader’ models for certain levels of free access in order to draw in new customers to manufacturers’ other services.

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## AbraTax

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** Xelix, the maker of AbraTax, is a financial technology company known for providing specialist digital accounting tools, such as invoice discounting solutions, to corporate clients.

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**MTD offering** AbraTax is a standalone, 2020-compliant product, available in two versions – one for agents, the other for corporates who want to submit VAT returns themselves.

The agent product has additional functionality and offers additional analytics and management tools – such as reminders for when client submissions are due, segmentation of clients by office and preparation and/or filing permissions; amongst other CRM-style features. The products are designed to be simple to use and intended to minimise change to current processes.

Agents can also purchase a licence on behalf of clients who wish to submit their returns themselves. The agent would distribute an AbraTax code to clients and bill the client directly for use of the licence. Available to buy directly from the website by December 2018.

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**Price** Pricing is a volume-based, and starts from £3 per month, per client. The agent product has more features and will cost more.

[www.xelix.com/abratatx-making-tax-digital-mtd-vat](http://www.xelix.com/abratatx-making-tax-digital-mtd-vat)

2

## BTC Software

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** Tax, accounts and practice management software. Feature-rich, cost-effective software solutions.

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**MTD offering** BTCHub is a standalone product that is 2020-compliant. There are four versions – for accountants, for businesses with multiple companies, for single companies with one VAT number, and for sole traders with one VAT number.

The software provides a view of the client’s MTD VAT payments and refund history so agents can gather historic MTD VAT return data from HMRC and view it. BTCHub can be used with VT Accounts desktop software and will in future integrate via APIs with Xero, Quickbooks, FreeAgent and Reckon One.

BTC also has a wide range of other products with advanced features in its practice management suite.

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**Price** £250 plus VAT per year for package allowing up to 250 returns. For individuals, £50 for a single VAT number for quarterly returns, £99 for monthly returns.

[www.btcsoftware.co.uk](http://www.btcsoftware.co.uk)

3

### Cirrostratus

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** Focuses on virtual office services linked to various Government plug-ins (APIs), plus wider services. Aimed particularly at SMEs but can also be used by larger businesses.

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**MTD offering** Exedra is a 2020-compliant standalone bridging software product that can be used to supplement conventional accounting software.

The software is for agents and also for individual clients, and specialises in helping those working with spreadsheets. Aims to be both simple and easy to understand.

Limited number of free pilot scheme accounts available for those VAT registered businesses who wish to take part in the pilot scheme (and qualify to so do). Apply direct if you would like to be considered for the scheme.

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**Price** Free pilot scheme available; see 'Availability'. After this, one-off no commitment accounts: £10 per return (plus VAT). Accounts do not need to be registered before the end of the VAT period.

[www.vat.direct](http://www.vat.direct)

4

### DataTracks

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** DataTracks specialises in systems to prepare financial statements in XBRL and iXBRL for filing with regulators around the world. In the UK, DataTracks has worked with for HMRC over the past 13 years.

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**MTD offering** DataTracks will be offering a standalone MTD product, aimed at both businesses and agents. The system will accept input from spreadsheets, although the company may support CSV and XML files in future, if there is demand for this. Once the data is uploaded, it's verified inside the DataTracks platform and submitted to HMRC. Future developments are likely to developing customised solutions to automate processes for companies that have especially complex affairs, such as groups comprising multiple entities.

Training available to those participating in the pilot.

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**Price** From £20 per filing; volume discounts available.

[www.datatracks.co.uk](http://www.datatracks.co.uk)

5

### Deloitte

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** One of the Big Four accounting firms in the UK.

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**MTD offering** VAT Filer is an online, standalone product that allows clients to submit their VAT filings from their existing spreadsheet environment. The software is hosted on myInsight, Deloitte's tax compliance and management platform.

Filing is quick and easy. Once a customer signs up, they receive log-in details to myInsight and are provided with one standard worksheet to 'drop' into their existing spreadsheet and link to the nine calculation boxes. There are no additional IT requirements and no macros. Returns can then be made every month or quarter. Existing HMRC VAT return filings can be viewed and managed, including access to submission responses and trend analyses based on the customer's submissions.

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**Price** Cost-effective 'per filing' and subscription pricing available.

[www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/tax/articles/making-tax-digital-in-the-uk.html](http://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/tax/articles/making-tax-digital-in-the-uk.html)

**6 EFile ready**

Cloud-based

**What the company does** Specialists in e-filing documents with HMRC and Companies House. E-returns for RTI payroll, iXBRL accounts, CIS, VAT or pension.

**MTD offering** Bridging solution aimed at both accountants and end-users. 2020-compliant, and compatible with any accounting system, it enables VAT returns to be made from a basic Excel or OpenOffice spreadsheet after the VAT data has been extracted from an ERP/Accounting/VAT system. Compatible with other systems. If using accounting systems from Sage, Iris, Pegasus, Quickbooks or others, user can upload VAT file directly into the system and e-file it to HMRC.

Accepts VAT file in CSV or XML format. Validates VAT data ensuring it's fully in compliance. Provides a direct link to view VAT returns data at the MTDfV system. Fully functional and proven: live MTD VAT returns have been e-filed to HMRC. Accounts can have additional users with different levels of controls and permissions, set by the administrator.

**Price** £10 per return. For agents, price depends on volume.

[www.efileready.com](http://www.efileready.com)

**7 KPMG**

Cloud-based

**What the company does** One of the Big Four accounting firms in the UK.

**MTD offering** KPMG Tax Bridge helps organisations meet the new reporting requirements. Tax Bridge can integrate with any Excel spreadsheet using specified input cells that allow the application to import the values associated with each box on the return.

The application will allow users to retrieve filed returns, view VAT liability, and payment information. Other features will include notifications for upcoming filings and storage of previous submissions. Minimal implementation time or IT overhead. This also allows for increased flexibility and seamless updates as requirements change.

KPMG also offers three services to help organisations assess their position regarding MTD: Diagnostic Assessment; Systems Readiness; and Future Proof Tax Reporting.

**Price** On application.

<https://home.kpmg.com/uk/en/home/insights/2018/07/making-tax-digital-for-vat.html>

8

## Neilson James Technology

Desktop-based

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**What the company does** Software applications and IT support services in private and public sectors.

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**MTD offering** This bridging software works from within an Excel workbook to file a 9-box VAT return to HMRC. Aimed at both agents and companies, it's intended to be a companion to existing software and is 2020-compliant.

Prepared VAT Returns can be imported directly from VT Transaction+, VT Cashbook, Money Manager V6 (via report file), an Excel workbook or a CSV text file.

The product will be available from late 2018, including a 14-day trial. Installation instructions, system requirements and sample screenshots will be available on the website. A free compatibility checker will also be made available.

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**Price** Single business – from £36 per year. Multiple Client Licence version – starts at £40 per year (up to 10 clients).

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[www.neilsonjamestech.co.uk](http://www.neilsonjamestech.co.uk)

9

## PwC

Desktop-based

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**What the company does** One of the Big Four accounting firms in the UK.

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**MTD offering** E-file is an Excel-based tool that enables you to submit your return in spreadsheet format direct to the HMRC API. It's aimed at accountants who work with complex clients, such as large charities and financial services companies. The software is available to both agents and businesses. There is also compliance software to manage complex partial exemption needs.

For an annual fee, users are given a PwC Excel e-file. They then link their own spreadsheet to the e-file, and click submit from within Excel to submit. All operations are managed from within Excel, so there is no need to upload files or expose VAT data to any other interface.

Discounts are available for longer term contracts, for those filing large numbers of returns and where these have been agreed with your industry or professional body. The e-file is available to registered charities at no cost.

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**Price** Prices start from £90 + VAT per annum, which will allow agents to file up to 10 VAT returns.

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[www.pwc.co.uk](http://www.pwc.co.uk)

## 10 Tax Optimiser

Cloud-based

<b>What the company does</b>	Produces specialist tax tools to help organisations and individuals calculate the most tax efficient scenarios.
<b>MTD offering</b>	Bridging tools, including Excel and CSV files in the cloud. 2020 compliant. Integrates with with practice management software and integrates with principal cloud accountancy software. Can be used by bookkeepers, accountants or end-users. A suite of tools that links into cloud accounting solutions such as Xero, Quickbooks, Freeagent and Sage. Accountants can set up for multiple clients, and this version provides a different view to the client version.
<b>Price</b>	Service is free to accountants and bookkeepers filing up to 20 returns, or to end users filing single returns. Up to 100 organisations – £10 per month, over 100 organisations – £40 per month.

[www.taxoptimiser.co.uk](http://www.taxoptimiser.co.uk)

## 11 Tax Systems Plc

Cloud-based

<b>What the company does</b>	Specialist in regulatory compliance technology and services for corporates in the UK and Ireland. The solutions automate the end-to-end compliance process and reduce operational risks.
<b>MTD offering</b>	<p><b>AlphaBridge</b> is a cost-effective bridging solution in which information held in source systems or spreadsheets is linked to an Excel template, which acts as an interface for uploading to the cloud before submission. It enables both present and historic data views of obligations, liabilities and payments.</p> <p><b>AlphaVAT</b> is an advanced VAT compliance solution that removes the need for spreadsheets and can handle the most complex VAT calculations, AlphaVAT includes robust tax logic, secure access control, comprehensive audit trail and legislative help.</p> <p><b>AlphaLink</b> helps the above products connect to underlying data in order to be 2020-compliant. It digitally links data from accounting systems to create a data pool, from which VAT data can be seamlessly imported into an AlphaBridge Excel template, or the AlphaVAT system.</p> <p>These products are aimed at both in-house compliance teams and professional firms, and available to new customers to buy separately.</p>
<b>Price</b>	AlphaBridge is £750 per annum base with additional cost dependent on number of VRN entities for which the firm is doing the compliance. Price for AlphaVAT is not yet available.

[www.taxsystems.com/solutions-mtd-alphavat](http://www.taxsystems.com/solutions-mtd-alphavat)

Further entries including bridging software:

- **IRIS**, see page 20
- **Liquid Accounts**, see page 20
- **Accu-Man**, see page 24
- **My Digital Accounts**, see page 26
- **Bx**, see page 28

# Accounting software

It's perfectly possible to run an accountancy business using spreadsheets or low-cost desktop software.

However, the march towards digitisation is clear. Technology – in particular, cloud computing – is changing the way accounting processes are handled, from accounts payable and receivables, to expenses, VAT and taxes.

## Do I need to consider a new accounting system?

Switching to new accounting software is a major change to business processes, and it's not essential to meet the requirements of MTDfV in April 2019. But the upheaval of 'going digital' may be a price worth paying to prepare your business, organisation or department for the future.

There is a huge range and variety of accounting software. Our review here is intended to give a snapshot of the preparations being made for MTDfV.

## Cloud or desktop?

Desktop programmes are still an option in use by thousands upon thousands of users. However, the trend is for cloud solutions, for several reasons:

- subscriptions for cloud solutions are generally less expensive than desktop solutions. In addition, the headache of maintenance and updates, along with the need for staff who can manage this
- information is available to agent and client in real time, and it's easier to generate automated reports and insights
- businesses and practices using cloud systems tend to enjoy lower overheads and higher revenue contribution per employee ([survey](#))
- cloud computing may also be seen as more modern, and more attractive to potential employees and customers.

## Choosing software

- When choosing accounting software, consider your long term goals and the future shape of your business or organisation.
- Do a 'gap analysis' comparing where you now and where you want to be.
- Ask what skills, resources and structural changes you might need in order to reach future destination.

Apart from the capabilities of the software, a critical consideration will be the amount of support given by the vendor. Consider not only onboarding, but whether there is appropriate advice and support to help you grow.

Large providers tend to focus more on support and development, but that doesn't automatically mean they will be the best fit. Others may provide tailored services or a more bespoke approach. Take time to consider what is right for your organisation.

## Practice management

In addition to accounting software, you're likely to encounter practice management solutions.

Practice management products tend not to be a single piece of software, but solutions that bring together workflows, CRM, billing, as well as financial records and data. Often they aim to collate all the information about clients and the work being performed for them in a single place.

As such practice management solutions are often like hubs, joining together the outputs of several different programmes, including those from other vendors.

## Easy does it

A key lesson from those who have successfully implemented accounting solutions is to keep it simple – look for solutions that will be easy for the business or organisation to understand, and easy to implement.

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## Capium

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** Accounting software designed for bookkeepers, payroll experts and accountants, especially accountants in practice buying bulk services for their clients.

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**MTD offering** The bookkeeping module is MTD-ready. Shortly to be released is ‘Connected Accountant’; proposal enabling the accountant to provide access to customers to capture data. The end customer will also have a personalised dashboard to communicate better with their accountant.

Capium helps the accountant in practice to automate their firm by providing a single platform with a choice of the latest cloud technologies.

Whilst designed as a practice management solution, Capium offers accounting software/taxation products as well. Choose what suits you best. Modules include bookkeeping, payroll, corporation tax, accounts production and personal tax. Also an integrated suite to simplify the running of a small to medium practice.

Free personalised support with Capium’s all-in-one solutions for accountants and their clients.

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**Price** Practice management for firms with 1–100 clients starts at £25.

[www.capium.com](http://www.capium.com)

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## CCH

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** Leading provider of accounting software and practice management solutions, focused on automation, integration and collaboration tools.

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**MTD offering** CCH OneClick can provide an end-to-end MTD solution for accountants in practice and business. Key features include allowing accountants to understand easily which of their clients are ready for transition.

CCH OneClick can work in conjunction with the practice management suite CCH Central, offering a set of cloud tools with advisor and client workspaces.

CCH OneClick offers open integration between different digital systems. This enables the efficient transfer of financial data between clients’ online bookkeeping solutions and CCH Central’s tax and accounting modules. It also offers two-way synchronisation between third party bookkeeping software including Xero, Exact, Sage Business Cloud Accounting and Twinfield.

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**Price** From £20 a month: contact for further information.

[www.cchoneclick.co.uk](http://www.cchoneclick.co.uk)

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## Clear Books

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** A full suite of accounting software solutions.

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**MTD offering** MTD VAT returns can be made from the VAT section of Clear Books Practice Edition in three easy steps. Firstly, start a new return (invoices for the quarter are then preselected). Secondly, review the data as necessary and finalise the return. Finally, submit the return with a single click to HMRC. Once submitted, a receipt number is supplied from HMRC as proof the submission has gone through.

Clear Books offers a collaboration tool to help clients to manage their data online. Clear Books Micro is a spreadsheet-style cloud platform for clients to input their bookkeeping data online. It links to Clear Books Practice Edition, where the accounting professional can review the data, produce reports and make submissions.

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**Price** Practice Edition starts at £5 per month. 20% discount for AAT members. Price for full client access to the system is from £21.50 per month, with 50% discount available to AAT members. Discounts offered until 21 December.

[www.clearbooks.co.uk/making-tax-digital-software](http://www.clearbooks.co.uk/making-tax-digital-software)

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## EY

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does**

One of the Big Four accounting firms in the UK. Offering services to clients, and collaboration tools.

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**MTD offering**

Offers a range of products and services to clients, including:

- **MTD readiness assessment.** This usually involves an on-site visit where the VAT return process and controls are reviewed and compared against the MTD obligations.
- **MTD solution review.** Appraisal of the current MTD solutions in the market (both EY and third parties) and their suitability to the client's needs.
- **Excel-based Reporting Solution.** EY works with the client's existing Excel VAT return or creates a new one in order to make it MTD-compliant.
- **Global VAT Reporting Tool (GVRT).** This tool manages the entire VAT return process starting with data from ERP systems and finishing with a populated VAT return. GVRT can be used for managing VAT/GST returns in a significant number of countries around the globe. All GVRT offerings are MTD-compliant and now integrated with EY's own e-filer so that VAT returns can be submitted directly to the HMRC portal.

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**Price**

On application.

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[www.ey.com/uk/en/services/tax/ey-making-tax-digital](http://www.ey.com/uk/en/services/tax/ey-making-tax-digital)

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## Liquid Accounts

**Cloud-based**
**Desktop-based**

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**What the company does**

Provides bespoke accounting software for those with a particular need for tailor-made solutions.

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**MTD offering**

Liquid VAT Filer is a VAT bridging solution that can submit VAT returns from a spreadsheet. Its available free with Liquid Online Accountant, or as a standalone.

Liquid Online Accountant caters for accounting practices that wish to move to the cloud but that require full systems integration and/or require bespoke accounting software built around their precise business needs. Liquid also provides for larger organisations that need all their business systems integrating with their accounting software; multinationals who require tailor-made accounting solutions for multiple locations. Liquid also works with practice who want to offer their own branded software, under its Liquid White Label programme.

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**Price**

Liquid VAT filer is free of charge to existing customers. When purchased as a standalone, the cost is £70 per year for 10 companies (other packages available).

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[www.liquidaccounts.com](http://www.liquidaccounts.com)

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## IRIS Accountancy Solutions

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does**

Accountancy services provider. A suite of integrated compliance, productivity and collaboration solutions for accountants.

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**MTD offering**

MTD VAT Filer is available as part of the software suite or as a standalone. Comprehensive MTD solution including pre-population of client data in personal tax from HMRC; quarterly filing of trading and land and property; annual filing of trading and land and property; quarterly VAT filing to new HMRC VAT portal.

Three steps to MTD compliance: capture client records; IRIS has a range of solutions to simplify the process of digitising the whole record keeping process including IRIS Snap & KashFlow. Finalise the details; import the records directly into IRIS using IRIS Connector. Client records stored in KashFlow, Xero, QuickBooks, FreeAgent and Excel can be imported seamlessly. Submit to HMRC; once finalised, client approves the final accounts and tax returns using IRIS OpenSpace, ready for the accountant to submit to HMRC.

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**Price**

No additional charge for MTD solutions in the IRIS Accountancy Suite. Price on application for new customers.

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[www.iris.co.uk/insight/making-tax-digital](http://www.iris.co.uk/insight/making-tax-digital)

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## PwC

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** One of the Big Four accounting firms.

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**MTD offering** Ranges from a simple Excel-enabled API to the most sophisticated end-to-end compliance applications.

As well as the accounting software outlined here and the bridging software elsewhere, PwC provides comprehensive consulting, managed and outsourced services on request. There is also compliance software to manage complex partial exemption needs – (i.e. specialist offerings), not widely available in the market.

PwC has initiatives running with several professional bodies to pilot its solution with select members to ensure it proves and refines its service to make it as simple to adopt as possible.

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**Price** Prices for consulting services and other compliance technologies can be provided on request.

[www.pwc.co.uk](http://www.pwc.co.uk)

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## QuickFile

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** Accounting platform for accountants and small business owners. Offers the tools necessary to simplify the bookkeeping process and gain valuable insights into cash flow and profitability.

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**MTD offering** QuickFile extends the Affinity system to provide accountants and bookkeepers with scalable MTD-ready solution for clients. Affinity is a single dashboard for managing multiple companies with white labelling capabilities, Companies House synchronisation and a collaborative workspace for interacting with end-user clients on key tasks such as year-end accounts preparation.

QuickFile Affinity provides a set of practice management tools that can help accountants and bookkeepers with particular tasks:

Synchronisation with Companies House and tracking of key filing dates, e.g. annual accounts, confirmation statements and VAT. All managed accounts can be ordered by any of these key dates so that the workflow can be prioritised; a workspace module for creating file and information based requests to end-user clients enabling convenient communication with clients on year-end formalities; detailed audit and segmented profit and loss reports; exporting of data from accounts for migration into accounts production and tax filing software.

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**Price** Prices are pay-as-you go, and range from £1.27-£2.97 per company, per month, invoiced monthly and collected via Direct Debit.

[www.quickfile.co.uk](http://www.quickfile.co.uk)

## 9 QuickBooks

Cloud-based

**What the company does** Digital accounting solutions for accountant and businesses.

**MTD offering** The MTD solution is an integral part of QuickBooks' cloud software. Accounts can be produced up to trial balance and the VAT return filed directly from within the service.

QuickBooks claims to be the world's number one cloud accounting provider, with 1.5 million business customers. QuickBooks Online Accountant is designed to increase efficiency and allow greater value to be delivered to clients. It removes paper trails and lapsed deadlines by securely streamlining the communication accountants and bookkeepers have with their clients. Features include keeping track of all work, adding projects as well as specific tasks, actions and requests at a glance, with real-time visibility into deadlines, and sharing documents and keep organised notifications with password-protected security.

The ProAdvisor Programme is designed to enable practices to transition to the cloud by supporting them in becoming trusted advisors and market your practice.

**Price** Monthly subscription from £10 per month. Accountants and bookkeepers can sign up to QuickBooks Online Accountant is free to accountants and bookkeepers, who can then get discounted subscriptions for their clients.

<https://quickbooks.intuit.com/uk>

## 10 Sage

Cloud-based Desktop-based

**What the company does** One of the largest accounting services providers, with three million customers worldwide.

Time-saving tools for micro-businesses up to complex solutions for corporates. Sage also offers a suite of services for 20,000 accountants and bookkeepers in the UK including payroll, payments, client and practice management and compliance.

**MTD offering** Sage offers different solutions, for both agents and businesses. All Sage software is MTD-compliant.

Sage has a very wide range of services, here are just a few of them:

- Sage Business Cloud Accounting allows business and their accountants to work together. There is a mobile app for invoices, expenses and receipts
- Sage 50cloud Accounts is desktop-based software, now cloud-connected via Sage Drive and Microsoft Office 365. Aims to combine the productivity of desktop software with the flexibility of the cloud. Latest version includes new features including payment integration GoCardless, Stripe and Paypal, and an accurate, real-time view of accounting data for cash flow management
- Sage 50 enables accountants and their clients to work simultaneously without the need for downtime to share data and backups
- the Accounting and Bookkeeper Hub offers marketing materials to help accountants communicate to clients ahead of MTD changes. On-demand webinar will help both you and clients understand oncoming changes.

**Price** On request; varies dependent on size of business.

[www.sage.com](http://www.sage.com)

11

## Xero

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** Xero has an extensive accounting software and an ecosystem of app integrations.

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**MTD offering** MTDfV-compatible will be offered to customers as part of Xero's existing accounting and bookkeeping software and will not be available on a standalone basis. Additional functionality will be available to customers at no extra cost, and with no need to install any updates. Xero is participating in HMRC's beta testing with customers who meet specific criteria to test the new technology.

Xero's products are geared to helping bookkeepers and accountants run their businesses digitally, and collaborate with clients. The Partner Programme helps accountants and bookkeepers to transform their practice; the Partner programme enables firms to attract new clients, boost revenue, receive free products and dedicated support and education. Xero's app marketplace offers 700+ apps that integrate seamlessly with Xero to help improve the way you run your business, covering inventory, time tracking and eCommerce. For accountants, apps on Xero include Workflow Max, where accountants can manage jobs remotely, edit job costs, enter, record and allocate time to clients and instant access to client information.

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**Price** Accountants and bookkeepers on the Xero partner programme are rewarded for attracting clients. Pricing for business plans start from £9 a month for VAT Cashbook.

[www.xero.com/uk/resources/making-tax-digital](http://www.xero.com/uk/resources/making-tax-digital)

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## Zoho Books

**Cloud-based**

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**What the company does** Zoho makes many different software products for business, including a bookkeeping app.

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**MTD offering** Zoho Books capture all the details required to ensure VAT compliance, from VAT registration number to VAT rate.

VAT in items – associate a VAT rate with an item and the product automatically populates the rate when you create a transaction. VAT in contacts – lets you choose the VAT treatment for your customers and vendors depending on their business location and VAT registration status. VAT in reports – the product helps you file VAT returns for your business and generate reports to match the boxes in the HMRC VAT return filing form.

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**Price** Professional product from £18 a month per organisation. Free 14-day trial.

[www.zoho.eu/uk/books/pricing](http://www.zoho.eu/uk/books/pricing)

# Specialist software

Here we feature suppliers who offer specialist software for industries and niche markets – such as farming (and associated industries), land estates, and the motor trade.

<b>1</b>	<b>Accu-Man</b>	Desktop-based
	<b>What the company does</b>	Business management software predominantly for farms, agricultural estates and agents who keep client books for those farms and/or estates.
	<b>MTD offering</b>	Stand-alone MTD bridging solution, Accu-Man MTD Bridge. Designed for those who keep their books on a system other than Accu-Man Accounts and require a straightforward method to collect the VAT Return and submit it via the MTD API to HMRC.  Aimed at both the end-user and bureau services. For users who keep manual books; or on Excel; or on an account package that has no MTD facilities; or keep books on an MTD-compliant accounts package that can only submit its own VAT figures and not adjust them for partial exemption or for the figures combined from many sources. 2020 compliant. Accu-Man MTD Bridge operates on the PC, LAN and WAN (including private cloud) but not on public cloud.  As well as supplying the software, Accu-Man offers training and support. It includes fully integrated accounts, payroll, rentroll, timesheets, client accounts under RICS regulations, daily harvest worker records for PAYE, and bespoke solutions based on the above.
	<b>Price</b>	Including telephone and email support, £100 (plus VAT) per annum for one VAT entity. Further copies are charged at £25 each (plus VAT) for the next nine licences, then £10 each (plus VAT).

[www.accu-man.co.uk](http://www.accu-man.co.uk)

## 2 Farmplan

Desktop-based

**What the company does** Accounting specialists for agriculture and farming.

**MTD offering** Aimed at the client rather than the accountant; 99% of business is directly to the client. Automatically calculate VAT, batch management of invoices, statements and remittances, simple but advanced cashflow management. Electronic payment and quick pay features. Templates and auto-entry for repeating transactions. Full software for farm management and the MTD component is part of this, not a standalone product as such; however there are different purchase levels depending on the needs of different customers. 2020 compliant.

Will help streamline communications with the client; for farming and agriculture clients, a bespoke product can iron out a lot of the particular issues surrounding VAT for agribusiness. You can produce a range of management reports instantly, including actual versus budgeted cashflow, cashflow projections, stock valuations, margin per tonne, number of animals sold and net and gross margin.

**Price** Entry level under £400 per year. Pricing is modular; a number of different increments depending on the needs of the business.

<https://farmplan.co.uk>

## 3 Landmark Systems Ltd

Desktop-based

**What the company does** Computerised accounting solutions for farms, private estates, property management, letting companies and land agents.

**MTD offering** Product is KEYPrime, a flexible accounting tool that produces comprehensive management accounting information for the farmer, estate manager and landowner in addition to standard accounting functions. Part of a full accounting software suite rather than a standalone product.

Software has been developed by the company's in-house team incorporating feedback from clients and professionals across the spectrum of rural business. 2020 compliant: working with HMRC to ensure continued compliance. Aimed at both the accountant and the business end-user. Desktop, plus a hosted version, but not full cloud.

There is an accountants' version, which is read-only to view client data. There is also a bureau service so an accountant can use the programme for multiple clients which enables making changes to client data.

**Price** Annual subscription for approx. £350 allows accountants to add multiple data sets to the system, and this price includes all updates and full phone support.

[www.landmarksystems.co.uk](http://www.landmarksystems.co.uk)

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## Motor Trade Technologies Ltd

Desktop-based

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**What the company does** Specially designed accounts systems for the motor trade. Main product is All In One Accounts along with AutoInTouch and Autologic.

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**MTD offering** If client is already using All In One Accounts software, they will need to upgrade to the latest version of the software to be able to submit their returns to HMRC. If client is using another accounting package (e.g. Sage, Xero) with MTT's AutoInTouch software, they can continue to use AutoInTouch, but must contact the third party accounts software provider to ensure compliance by April 2019. All in One Accounts is currently only open to existing customers due to demand. This will change after January. Not available as standalone solution again due to demand.

Designed to fit the needs of the modern commercial garage. The garage management software is easy to use but with uncompromised functionality. It's able to be a complete control centre with detailed performance reports and accounting.

The software can be tested without charge; or it can be demonstrated online; or MTT will arrange a visit to your own business.

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**Price** £395 + VAT. The customer then owns the software outright, not as a licence.

[www.mttltd.com](http://www.mttltd.com)

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## My Digital Accounts

Cloud-based

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**What the company does** Principally aimed at the contractor and temporary labour market, servicing personal service companies; but not restricted to this market and a number of accounting firms are using the software for SMEs. Suppliers to accountants and bookkeepers rather than the end user.

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**MTD offering** **Accounting software:** Existing service, fully MTDfV-compliant. Comprised of a CRM/practice management module, a bookkeeping/accounting module, and a payroll/umbrella module. Full reporting functionality and can submit self-assessment tax returns, VAT returns, Payroll RTI returns, CIS returns and personal tax returns. Utilises bank feeds for efficient transaction posting and management accounts are produced automatically.

**Bridging solution:** My Digital Bridge is fully MTDfV compliant. This is aimed at end users as well as accountants and operates across all industries. Aimed at companies and accountants who currently submit their VAT returns directly with HMRC on the Government Gateway portal.

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**Price** Bespoke depending on the number of clients the accounting practice has. £10 per client per month is the standard price. For My Digital Bridge, prices are £20 per VAT return submitted for end users. Accountants and bookkeepers have a minimum fee of £200 per month, payable on invoicing.

[www.mydigitalaccounts.com](http://www.mydigitalaccounts.com)

## 6 Tax Automation Ltd

Cloud-based

**What the company does** For in-house tax departments, FTSE and specialist companies. Improves tax advisory requirements through the best use of technology. Compliance platform is called VAT Controller. The company also specialises in efficient corporate tax compliance, tax reporting and planning through our Capital Assets Database (CAD) suite of products, along with bespoke tax reporting projects.

**MTD offering** Existing VAT Controller platform is being extended and is already available as an MTD-ready solution. It's aimed at medium and large corporates with in-house tax departments, or practices providing VAT filing services to their clients. It's currently a standalone platform, but does have some practice management functionality from a VAT-compliance perspective. VAT Controller offers bridging software combined with a comprehensive VAT compliance management system.

Responsive, client driven service, personalised to each organisation's needs and built around service excellence and in-depth understanding and expertise of tax systems and processes. The company has proven experience with the VAT Controller platform being used by FTSE corporate tax teams with existing e-filing process for many years. Supports accountancy practices of all sizes in on-boarding the VAT controller platform and creating a bespoke, fully branded service for their clients. The implementations include comprehensive training and ongoing expert support.

**Price** A one-off implementation cost of around £2,500, with an ongoing annual licence cost starting at around £1,500.

[www.vatcontroller.co.uk](http://www.vatcontroller.co.uk)

## 7 Tax Optimiser

Cloud-based

**What the company does** Is producing specialist tax and R&D calculation tools that work in tandem with accounting software.

**MTD offering** The MTD tool is one module in a series of tools being offered by the company. It's available as a standalone product to both accountants and businesses. It's also being free to accountants as an opportunity to raise awareness of other products. The solution will be 2020 compliant.

The system is easy to use and demonstrated in a video on the company web site. The company's other tools include Tax Optimiser itself, which analyses organisations and their employees and suggests efficient ways to structure tax. There is also an R&D module that takes data on projects from accounting packages and performs specialist calculations on it.

**Price** For accountants/bookkeepers: 20 organisations free, under 100 organisations is £10 per month, over 100 organisations is £40 per month.

[www.taxoptimiser.co.uk](http://www.taxoptimiser.co.uk)

# Self-service

Many finance products are aimed wholly or largely at end users, enabling them to be self-sufficient. So we have collected them here under the banner of self-service. These products cater for micro-companies, contractors, freelancers and the self-employed.

## Suppliers

<b>1</b>	<b>Bx</b>	<b>Cloud-based</b>
	<b>What the company does</b>	Simple invoicing, projects and expenses for growing businesses. Jargon-free business management tool that comes with dashboards, invoicing, expenses, banking, project management and e-commerce.
	<b>MTD offering</b>	Bridging solution. Excel tools that allow submission of VAT returns without leaving Excel. Two products: software which offers a full VAT calculation module that will calculate VAT from your invoices, purchases and credit notes. This enables full, granular record-keeping on Bx. User uploads existing data as a simple CSV file. Second product is the Excel add-in, which can be used to generate a VAT form, fill in your details manually (or with Excel formulas), and submit with one click. Suitable for organisations that work primarily in Excel and want to avoid uploading all their invoices and expenses into Bx.  Pitched at end users, and businesses managing their own books – but can also be used by accountants. Generates attractive-looking reports via cloud-based software, on desktop, mobile and tablet.
	<b>Price</b>	There is a free plan for single users, with annual quotas applying. For accountants, the multi-user plan is £7 per user/month. Excel add-in is £50 per year. There is also an enterprise option which is £500 a year.

<https://usebx.com>

## 2 Free Agent

Cloud-based

**What the company does** Accounting software for freelancers, small businesses including logging expenses, creating and sending invoices, and accounts.

**MTD offering** Aims to offer best-possible experience for small businesses and accountants submitting VAT returns under MTD. In order to gain a place on HMRC's suppliers list the company has tested its MTD capabilities in an official test environment and also demonstrated a prototype to HMRC. Customers have been able to submit VAT returns directly to HMRC via FreeAgent for many years so from April 2019 MTD for VAT will simply be the new mechanism for providing VAT updates through our software.

Designed for freelancers and small businesses, but also a number of UK accountancy practices use FreeAgent to work more efficiently with their contractor and small business clients. The company anticipates a relatively frictionless experience for its customers. Specifics for accountants include: run bulk payroll and submit RTI directly to HMRC; manage your clients at a glance from the practice dashboard; set individual user access levels for each client; run IR35 reports with real time calculations.

**Price** Prices from £9.50 per month for a sole trader. Accountancy practices contact directly to discuss pricing arrangements for partnerships. FreeAgent is also free for small business customers of RBS and NatWest.

[www.freeagent.com/accountants](http://www.freeagent.com/accountants)

## 3 Go Simple

Cloud-based

**What the company does** Bookkeeping software that manages income, outgoings, cash flow and VAT and updates accounts in real time.

**MTD offering** Aimed at sole users, landlords and ex-pats. Accessible, intuitive and easy to use. Manage SimpleBooks dashboard on PC, and store data securely in the cloud to put an end to paperwork. There's also plenty of scope for automation, saving you time and reducing the risk of errors.

Small business software aimed at contractors, freelancers, sole traders, partners and limited companies.

Also, Go Simple Tax is available as an inexpensive platform helped small businesses, landlords and directors and the self-employed submit self-assessment tax returns digitally.

**Price** Starts at £72 per year. No limits or restrictions on number of invoices. Free 14-day trial.

[www.gosimplesoftware.co.uk](http://www.gosimplesoftware.co.uk)

## 4 Simplifi

Cloud-based

**What the company does** Accounting software for freelancers and small businesses. Under the No Worries Company Services brand, supplies software, tax, and accounting services.

**MTD offering** Currently the offering is for accountants to file VAT returns on behalf on their clients. This service will be extended to sole traders and limited companies who complete their own bookkeeping and want to file their own VAT returns. Straightforward, compliant and fully scalable.

Anywhere access on any device, at any time. As well as bookkeeping transactions for freelancers and small business (invoicing, expenses, drawings/salary/dividends, and taxes estimations), it offers a full suite of practice management tools such as tracking annual accounts (synchronised with Companies House every day) and company tax deadlines, VAT filing, confirmation statements, and the Register of Persons with Significant Control. In addition, it handles automatic billing for accountants to bill their clients, texting clients, customer messaging via Intercom, and electronic signing of personal tax return, annual accounts, and company tax returns.

**Price** Expect to offer licences for around £10-£15 per month. Free access (plus three free licences) to the practice management area for practising accountants – if interested, email [greg@simplifi-hq.com](mailto:greg@simplifi-hq.com)

[www.simplifi-hq.com](http://www.simplifi-hq.com)

## Any questions?

If you'd like to know more please get in touch with us.

Call us on **+44 (0)20 3735 2400**. Lines are open 09.00 to 17.00 (UK time), Monday to Friday.

Email us at **contentteam@aat.org.uk** or visit **aat.org.uk/contact-us**

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