

Revolutionising Tax Collection:

The Digital Transformation of the ITSA Sign-Up Service

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Introduction:

A Leap into the Future of Taxation

A large government agency had a unique opportunity to modernise tax reporting and enhance compliance. By transforming the traditional Income Tax Self Assessment (ITSA) system into a digital-first, user-centric experience - they could improve accuracy, reduce costs, and streamline the process for millions of taxpayers.

We partnered with our client to redefine tax reporting - introducing automation, efficiency, and real-time insights under the Making Tax Digital (MTD) initiative. We created a future-ready service that simplifies compliance and supports a more connected tax ecosystem.

The impact has been immediate and measurable:

Significant increase in completion rates, ensuring more taxpayers successfully file on time.

A drop in abandonment rates, thanks to a **streamlined, user-first design**.

A marked reduction in failed attempts, with automation decreasing submission errors.

Extremely high user satisfaction, proving the power of intuitive digital services.

Our client's platform now serves as an excellent example of government transformation, demonstrating how technology and user-centred design can simplify compliance and enhance taxpayer confidence.



The Opportunity:

Breaking Free from Legacy Systems

The evolution of the Self-Assessment system provided a unique opportunity to enhance efficiency, compliance, and user experience through digital transformation:

- **Optimised efficiency:** A modern, digital platform reduced costs and improved resource management.
- **Smarter compliance:** More frequent submissions enabled earlier issue detection and faster resolution.
- **Seamless user experience:** An intuitive, accessible system made tax filing easier for everyone.
- **Future-ready security & compliance:** Designed to meet GDPR, WCAG 2.2, and GDS standards, ensuring trust and resilience.

Through strategic transformation, we've created a seamless, secure tax submission process that has reshaped how millions of UK taxpayers manage their finances - enhancing accuracy and improving the overall user experience.

Our Approach

Working in collaboration with our client and their partners, we reimagined the system from the ground up - ensuring simplicity, security, and scalability.

User Insights & Data-Driven Design

- We engaged over 200 taxpayers, including sole traders, landlords, agents, and digitally excluded groups.
- Our team conducted hands-on usability testing, accessibility reviews, and workshops with real users.
- We designed for all demographics - including neurodiverse users and those with low digital confidence.

Result: A system built for users, with intuitive navigation and accessibility-first design.

Radical Digital Transformation

- Quarterly digital tax submissions replaced outdated annual filings.
- API-driven integration with third-party accounting software enabled seamless automation.
- Built on open-source technologies (Scala, Play Framework, MongoDB) for agility and scalability.
- Adopted agile and DevOps principles for continuous delivery and real-time optimisations.

Result: Faster reporting, fewer errors, and a streamlined compliance process.

Robust Security & Compliance

- We embedded GDPR-compliant data protection and encryption.
- Ensuring full accessibility (WCAG 2.2) and inclusive design principles.
- Our team conducted annual penetration testing and real-time threat monitoring.

Result: A secure, compliant platform that protects user data, meets regulatory standards, and is accessible to all users.

What This Means for the Future

- Scalable for new digital tax initiatives, setting the foundation for further automation.
- An industry-leading case study in government digital transformation.
- Proof that user-first design, data-driven decision-making, and cutting-edge technology drive real results.



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