

## Internet application to help with tax submission

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**Organisation:** Ministry of Finance, Minister Office

**Country:** Poland

**Level of government:** Central government

**Sector:** General public services

**Type:** Communication, Digital, Public Service

**Launched in:** 2013

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# Description

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The objective of the practice is to assist tax payers in the settlement of their personal income tax through expert advice from employees of the Office of National Tax Information acting on behalf of the Ministry of Finance in response to questions on annual tax returns. Primarily it consists in technical (content-related) assistance in completing and accounting for tax returns as well as in increasing tax awareness of the public.

Internet application is used during tax assessment periods (from January to April). The users have the opportunity to ask a question and employees of the Office of National Tax Information answer the questions. In addition, tax payers are able to view answers already given. There is also a possibility to search for the issues by keywords. The Internet application has also been integrated with Facebook.

The application was developed in a way that allows the experts from the ministry of Finance (MoF) exclusively to put the answer directly below the question. The answer is marked by an appropriate stamp (MoF expert).

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## Why the innovation was developed

This innovation was developed to: (1) increase tax awareness; (2) technical (content-related) assistance in completing and accounting for tax returns; (3) relieving pressure on phone lines (helpline) of the Office of National Tax Information and other tax offices; (4) significant social demand for this type of service and; (5) introduction of new tools to communicate with the clients through a launch of a new communication channel.

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## Objectives

Improve effectiveness, Improve efficiency, Improve service quality, Improve user satisfaction

- Better communication with tax payers.
  - Faster answer to questions.
  - Providing services to excluded groups.
  - Providing citizens with information free of charge.
  - Improve user satisfaction.
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## Main beneficiaries

Civil Society, General population, Government staff

All tax payers with internet access.

# Results

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## Service quality

### Accessibility:

- Introduction of new tools to communicate with tax payers (a new communication channel).
- Shortening of the response (waiting) time.

### Other:

- The success of the innovation can be measured by the huge interest in the service and the great number of answers given.
  - Over 1 600 questions asked during the annual tax settlements in 2013.
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## User satisfaction

- An opportunity to receive information easily and in an accessible way.
- Information is provided clearly and transparently, concurrently in a reliable and trustworthy manner.
- Shortening the time needed to receive information; information provided in real time; question/answer.
- Provision of services to clients who cannot use services in person.

# Development

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## Design

The decision to start working on the application has been taken in the Minister Office (Ministry of Finance) in cooperation with representatives of the Department of Tax Administration and National Tax Information on the basis of consultations between these departments.

Research carried out by the Ministry of Finance in 2010 showed that 25% of the public had sought information on tax-related issues in the internet.

The concept has been developed by the employees of the Minister Office (Unit for Electronic Communication and the Unit for Promotion and Education) in cooperation with the Department of Tax Administration.

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## Testing

Internal trailing.

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## Implementation

### Tools used:

- Before the implementation the project was approved by the Minister Office.
- Development and launch of the application has been outsourced to an external company.
- A team of experts to answer questions has been gathered.
- The application was developed on servers of the Ministry of Finance to avoid costs of hosting. The application will be fully operated by the Ministry of Finance.

### Resources used:

The cost of development:

- Implementation, hosting and technical assistance of the web site and internet application by an external company amounted to almost PLN 58 000.

Indirect costs:

- The application has been operated within the regular job responsibilities of individual departments of the Ministry of Finance and the National Tax Information.

# Lessons Learned

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## Lessons Learned

You have to be prepared that monitoring of all questions and answers can be time consuming.

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## Conditions for success

Good, professional team dedicated to this task.

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