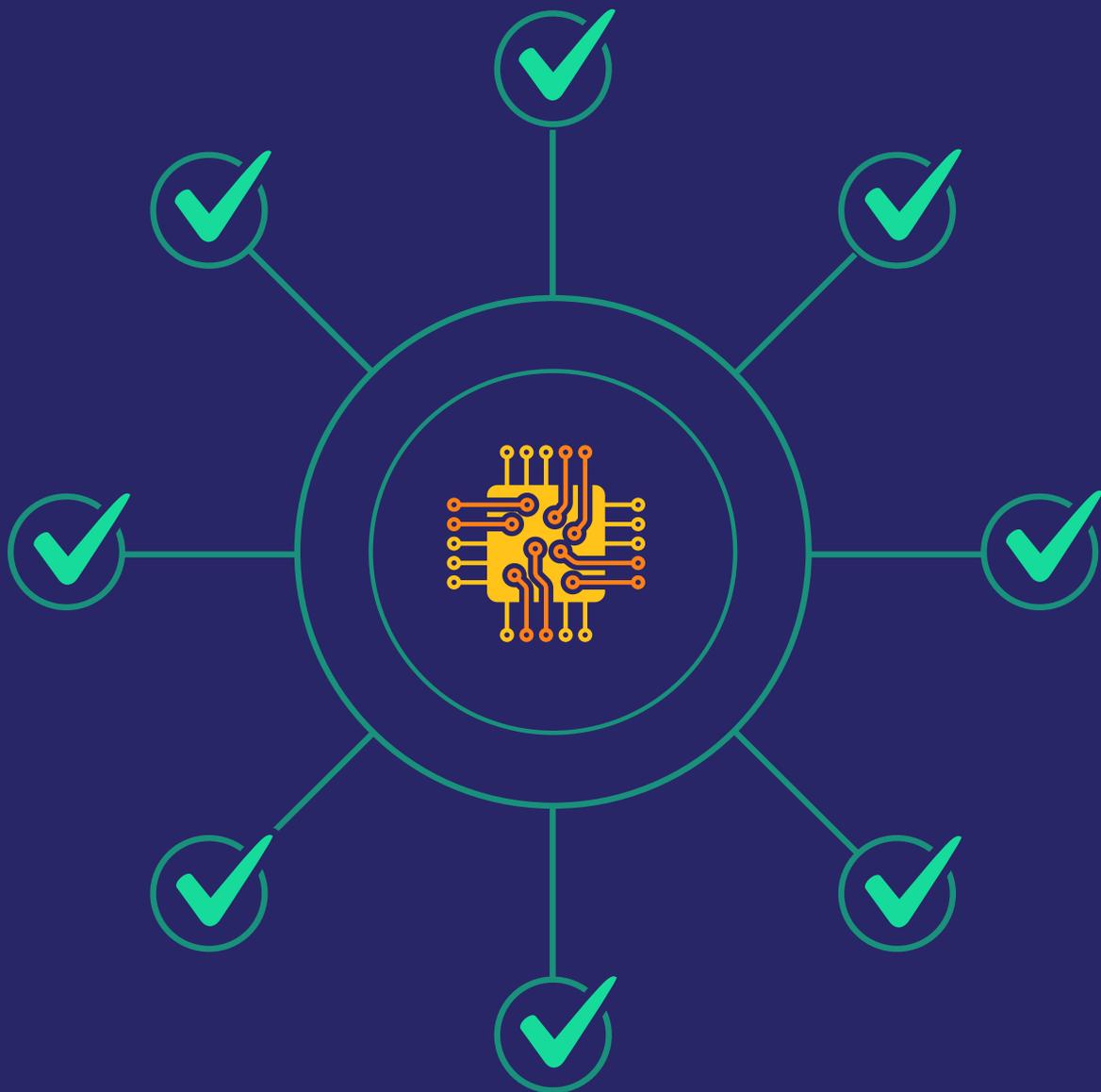


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# MTD Guide: Making sure your clients are ready



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*With the first stage of Making Tax Digital (MTD) beginning in April 2019, you might expect preparations to be well under way for most businesses.*

We have already helped a number of our clients communicate MTD with their customers, and knowing how challenging this task was led to the creation of this checklist.

In reality, many are still completely unaware of the scheme, while those who know about it are often slow to prepare.

Expressing the importance of MTD to your clients and inspiring them to take action can feel like a challenge, but a carefully-planned communications strategy can help.

Here are four steps to help you communicate with your clients about MTD.



# 1. Divide your clients into groups

To help target your MTD communications, start by assessing your client base to find out who needs what kind of information, and when.

You may have already collected this information as part of your internal planning for MTD.

For each client, find out:

- when they will need to comply with MTD
- how they currently keep their accounts
- what kind of support they'll need
- how they prefer you to communicate with them.

When it comes to this last point, think about how you might be able to speak to clients outside of your usual communications.

You might already be talking to your clients on the phone, through emails or by post, but how often are you updating social media or hosting events and webinars?

## 2. Explain what MTD is

According to research conducted by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, 40% of businesses about to be affected by MTD for VAT are still not aware of it.

To promote better awareness among your clients, make sure your communications clearly explain what MTD is and what it entails.

### Example

MTD is the Government's initiative to digitise the tax system.

The first mandatory stage, MTD for VAT, takes place from 1 April 2019.

This will mean all businesses that are VAT-registered and have a turnover above the £85,000 VAT threshold must:

- keep digital records for VAT
- use MTD-compatible software to submit returns to HMRC.



### 3. Tell clients why they should care

It's hard enough to convince busy clients to stop and pay attention to your MTD updates, let alone to persuade them to make fundamental changes to their accounting process.

Some light scare tactics wouldn't be out of place here – make them aware of the emotional costs of failing to comply, the scale of the change, and the stress they could face if they leave it too late.

On the other hand, don't forget to talk to your clients about how MTD will benefit them, making their accounting process more efficient and better informing their business decisions.

Of course, time is the biggest pressure for clients who'll be included under MTD for VAT, so don't forget to include some key dates.

**1 April 2019** - MTD for VAT becomes mandatory (excluding deferred businesses)

**1 October 2019** - MTD for VAT becomes mandatory (for deferred businesses)

**2020 at earliest** - MTD becomes mandatory for other taxes

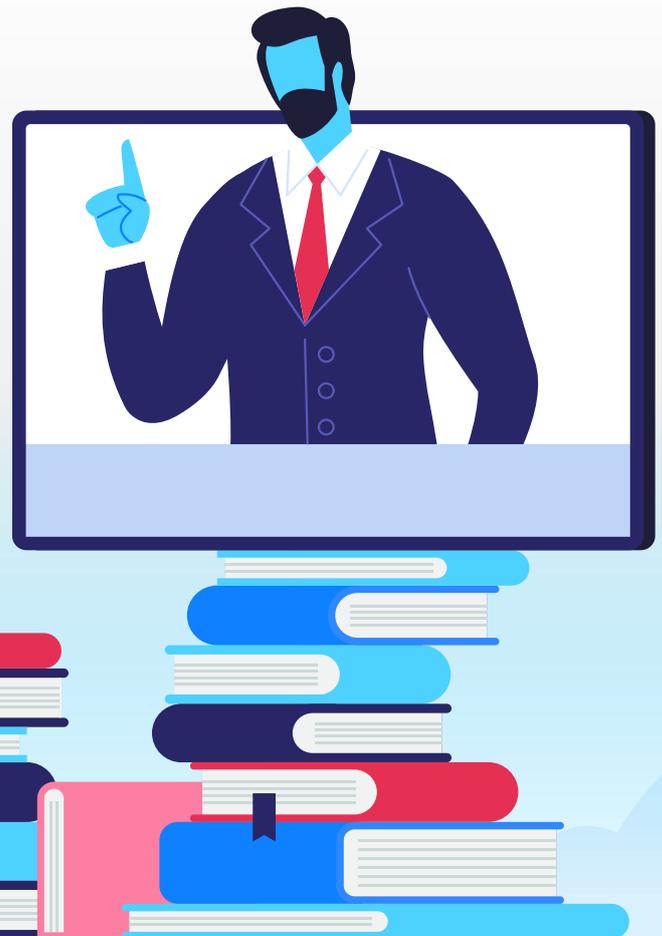


## 4. Promote yourself as an expert

MTD is a new system for businesses to get used to, and part of your role is to guide them through it.

This is a great opportunity to promote the expertise of your practice, and reassure your clients they're in safe hands.

Consider how your services for MTD fit in with your current brand and marketing strategy, and how blogs or social media could help you promote them.



## Want to chat?

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