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CA(SA) CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT SOUTH AFRICA

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"My sincere gratitude goes to the compliant taxpayers and traders who have continuously played their part in building our country. Ndza khenza." (SARS Commissioner, Edward Kieswetter)

Tax Filing Season 2025 officially opens on 7 July this year. This covers the 2024/2025 year of assessment: the period between 1 March 2024 and 28 February 2025.

During filing season, taxpayers complete and submit their tax returns, declaring their income and deductions to allow SARS to determine their final tax liability for the period under assessment.

This year, for the first time, the majority of non-provisional taxpayers will be automatically assessed.

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Taxpayer	Timeline	Details
Auto assessed individual taxpayers (non-provisional)	Notices sent out by SARS: 7 – 20 July 2025 Deadline: 20 October 2025	Non-provisional taxpayers with straightforward tax affairs that can be assessed based on 3rd party data from employers, banks, pension fund administrators, and medical aid schemes.
Individual taxpayers – not auto assessed (non-provisional)	21 July 2024 – 20 October 2025	Non-provisional taxpayers earn only wages/salaries (no other income) and pay taxes due via PAYE (Pay-As-You-Earn).
Provisional taxpayers	21 July 2025 – 19 January 2026	Companies are automatically provisional taxpayers. Individuals who earn income other than, or in addition to wages/salaries, on which tax has not been deducted/withheld, are also provisional taxpayers.
Trusts	21 July 2025 – 19 January 2026	All trusts are required to file a tax return annually, including those that are not economically active.

Auto assessed? Here's what to do…

1. If you have been auto assessed, you will receive notification by SMS and/or email directly from SARS after 7 July. (*Be sure to check with us that the notification you receive is legitimate!*)

2. Access your auto assessed income tax return through any of SARS' channels, such as the SARS MobiApp or SARS eFiling, to review and verify the completeness and accuracy of the information it contains. (*Be sure to check with us if you are uncertain of any aspect of the auto assessment!*)

3. If you are satisfied with the auto assessment, and there is money owing to SARS, it must be paid to SARS by the stipulated date. If there is a refund due to you, it will be paid directly to your bank account within 3 working days, if your details with SARS are correct.

4. If there is missing and/or inaccurate information on the auto assessed tax return, pertaining to either income or expenses which may affect the outcome of the auto assessment, it must be declared to SARS by submitting a ITR12 tax return by the 20 October 2025 deadline.

Not auto assessed? Here's what to do…

Non-provisional taxpayers who are not auto assessed can start filing their tax returns from 21July 2025 until 20 October 2025.

Provisional taxpayers (certain individual taxpayers and all companies) as well as trusts can start filing returns from 21July 2025 until 19 January 2026.

Top tips to streamline your tax filing season

- Verify all SARS communications received to protect yourself from scams.
- Check that all taxpayer and banking details are correct and updated with SARS to facilitate refunds and prevent identity theft and fraud.
- Prepare all required documentation early to avoid last-minute delays and to expedite a possible SARS verification or audit.
- Claim every tax rebate available to you to avoid paying more tax than required.
- Ensure that your tax return submissions comply with current regulations.
- Be certain to meet the submission deadlines to avoid penalties.

Fortunately, our team of seasoned tax professionals is ready to ensure you tick all these boxes. Let's make this filing season an easy one!

Don't Let Your Best Ideas Go: Why You Must Protect Your Intellectual Capital

"Too many businesses only realise the value of intellectual capital when a key person leaves – or a competitor copies what they've built." (Alicia Mendes, author of Futureproofing Through People)

In the rush to raise capital, improve profitability or streamline efficiency, business owners often miss what truly drives their success: the knowledge, relationships, and systems that power everything behind the scenes.

Whether you're a one-person start-up or a growing enterprise, your intellectual capital is the secret key to your future triumphs. It is therefore vital that this intangible resource is protected before it vanishes. Doing so could be the most profitable decision you ever make.

Understanding intellectual capital

Intellectual capital is grouped into three categories: human capital (skills and experience), structural capital (systems, intellectual property (IP), databases) and relational capital (customer relationships, brand reputation and partnerships).

A recent study by Ocean Tomo revealed that intellectual capital now constitutes approximately 90% of the S&P 500's market value – a significant increase from 68% in 1995. That includes patents, know-how, trade secrets, brand equity, and team knowledge.

With numbers like this, it's absolutely essential that you audit your intellectual capital just as you would your balance sheet. What processes are unique to you? Who on your team holds key relationships or institutional memory? Are your best ideas captured anywhere, or do they leave when someone resigns?

Culture and contracts

You have to understand that your people are the carriers of knowledge. Their experience, relationships with clients, and systems know-how can be invaluable. Unless you plan carefully, when someone leaves they often take that intellectual capital with them.

Retention doesn't just come from compensation. It comes from fostering a culture of recognition, curiosity, and inclusion. The 2023 Gallup "State of the Global Workplace Report" stated that, "employees who have had opportunities to learn and grow are 2.9 times more likely to be engaged." It is therefore essential that you ask your accountant to make space in your budget for learning programs, and other leadership developing initiatives.

But culture alone isn't enough. It's important to also back up your culture with a legal framework that protects you. This includes NDAs (non-disclosure agreements), IP assignment agreements, and clear clauses in employment contracts covering confidentiality and ownership of work.

Capture knowledge before it walks

Most businesses operate through a web of undocumented processes from verbal know-how, to "we've always done it this way" workflows. That's risky.

Developing internal playbooks, knowledge bases, and SOPs (standard operating procedures) is one of the most effective ways to turn intellectual capital into something transferrable and scalable.

Use tools like Notion, Confluence, or even simple shared drives to document repeatable knowledge. Then embed this into your onboarding and training cycles.

Nurture innovation and learning

Intellectual capital isn't static. Like any asset, it can appreciate or depreciate. One of the best ways to nurture it is by creating space for learning, experimentation, and cross-pollination of ideas.

Encourage teams to attend industry events, run internal hackathons, and allocate budget to learning and development. Even better, reward creative problem-solving that moves the business forward.

Make intellectual capital part of your valuation

It's vital that your intellectual capital becomes a cornerstone of your company valuation. Whether you're pitching to investors, selling your business, or applying for funding, it's important that you document your competitive advantages. Have you built a repeatable system others can't match? Developed internal tools that boost efficiency? Retained staff with rare skills? All of this translates into value.

Only by showing how your business can thrive even if the best individuals leave, can you give future investors the knowledge they need to trust you.

Protect what really drives value

Tangible assets can be insured. Cash can be raised. But your intellectual capital requires conscious attention and care. Whether you're building your first business or scaling your fifth, now is the time to treat your brainpower like the goldmine it is.

How Funding Budget 3.0 Will Impact You: Project AmaBillions

> ***"We accept the responsibility to achieve the 2025/26 revenue estimate presented by the Finance Minister Mr Enoch Godongwana." (SARS Commissioner Edward Kieswetter)***

Removing the contentious proposed VAT increases from Budget 3.0 led to a shortfall in revenue that necessitated new revenue sources.

One of these is the inflation-linked fuel levy increases of 16c for petrol and 15c for diesel, which became effective on 4 June and will impact all individuals and entities in the country.

Another alternative revenue source is going to come from SARS' upping its collection of outstanding tax debt – with Treasury expecting an additional R20 billion to R50 billion per year from intensified debt collection efforts.

The tax measures contained in Budget 3.0 will raise an additional R18bn in 2025/26. A further R20bn in as-yet-unknown tax measures are postponed to Budget 2026 – unless SARS collects an extra R35bn in outstanding taxes.

SARS has accepted the challenge and Budget 3.0 allocated a further R4 billion to SARS to fund the debt recovery. (In addition to the R3.5bn previously allocated to the cause.)

'Project AmaBillions'?

In what the media refers to as "Project AmaBillions" and what SARS calls its "compliance programme", an intensified effort will be made to collect a greater slice of the estimated R800 billion in unpaid taxes – the so-called "tax gap".

SARS reported that just over R400 billion of the tax gap consists of undisputed uncollected debt. The rest is made up of a further R100 billion in debt currently under dispute, more than 54 million returns outstanding dating back several years, and 156,000 South Africans with substantial economic activity who are not registered taxpayers, or are not filing their tax returns. SARS says that it will focus on the undisputed debt, while accelerating work on collecting all debt by dutifully implementing its compliance programme.

In the last financial year SARS recruited and trained more than 800 new employees to collect debt, mainly via telephone calls and legal instruments. These efforts, says SARS, must result in a minimum collection of R20 billion.

To meet its revised revenue estimate this year, SARS is:

- Closing the tax gap, with a focus on undisputed debt.
- Broadening the tax base, targeting hard-to-tax sectors in the informal economy, particularly small enterprises and self-employed individuals.
- Using advanced data analytics and artificial intelligence to detect tax-compliance risks and improve overall compliance rates.
- Combating the illicit economy.

How does it affect me?

As SARS significantly steps up its revenue collection efforts, those eligible to pay tax – whether registered taxpayers or not – can expect less lenience and more SARS queries, verifications, audits and collection efforts.

In fact, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) has been quoted in the media warning that the pressure on SARS to collect significantly more tax this year may result in "heavy-handedness" by SARS in its treatment of taxpayers.
SARS confirms that it upholds the rights of taxpayers to exercise their rights in law, which include among others, asking for payments to be deferred or paid in instalments, or to dispute the debt.

Taxpayers must also be wary of scams – the well-publicised increase in debt collection activity at SARS will be matched by an increase in financial scams by fraudsters pretending to be SARS employees or appointed debt collectors.

How we protect your interests

Even with SARS' well-funded and intensified focus on compliance and debt collections, our specialist tax team will continue to ensure that your interests remain protected.

Our up-to-date tax expertise and best practices ensure you have clarity on your specific tax obligations, and that all these tax commitments are met accurately and timeously.

We can confirm the legitimacy of any SARS communications to protect you from scams and respond promptly and professionally to legitimate enquiries on your behalf. This includes swiftly rectifying any non-compliance issues, and handling demands for outstanding tax debts correctly.

We also monitor that SARS follows the correct legal processes - including adhering to timeframes and procedures in respect of assessments, refunds, dispute resolution, and instituting debt collection measures such as unauthorised bank account withdrawals - to ensure your taxpayer rights are respected.

As Project AmaBillions intensifies, you can count on us to have your back!

Business Hack: How to Better Define Your Target Market

"Defining your target market is about understanding motivations, challenges, and goals. Without this, your messaging falls flat and your marketing budget burns fast." (Elena Kwan, Founder of MarketLens Consulting)

Fundamentally, businesses start because business owners believe they see a gap and aim to fill it. Their target market is built into the essence of the business. And yet, statistics show that at least one third of those business owners were wrong all along.

Many entrepreneurs think their product or service is for "everyone", but trying to serve everyone usually means you end up serving no one well. Identifying and refining your real audience is critical to creating effective marketing campaigns, building better products, and sustaining long-term growth.

Here are five practical tips to help you better define and refine your target market.

1. Start with the problem you're solving

As a business owner, the first thing you need to do is identify the specific problem your product or service addresses. Ask yourself: Who has this problem? Who is actively looking for a solution? The more precisely you can answer these questions, the closer you are to identifying your core market.

Once you understand the problem, look at existing customer data or run surveys to determine the people most likely to benefit from your solution. Don’t make assumptions. Focus on the *why* behind their purchasing decisions.

2. Build a customer persona (and revisit it often)

A customer persona is a semi-fictional profile of your ideal customer based on research, data, and interviews. Include details like age, job title, income, goals, frustrations, preferred social media platforms, and buying behaviours. Giving your customer a name and a story will help you recall the important aspects of the person you are serving.

But remember, a persona isn’t static. As you grow and collect more data, revisit and refine this profile. According to Sales For Startups, companies that use updated personas achieve 73% higher conversion rates than those that don’t.

3. Segment your audience

Not every customer will have the same needs or behaviours – and just because someone falls into your target market, doesn’t mean they are automatically going to buy from you. Audience segmentation allows you to create more tailored marketing strategies. Start with basic segments like age, location, or purchase behaviour. Then drill down into psychographics such as values, attitudes, and lifestyle.

For example, two people buying your eco-friendly cleaning product might do so for different reasons: one for health reasons, the other out of environmental concerns. Understanding these motivations enables you to craft more resonant messaging.

4. Use analytics to refine your focus

Data should drive your decisions. Use website analytics, social media insights, email open rates, and CRM (customer relationship management) data to understand who’s engaging with your content, who’s buying, and who isn’t. Look for patterns: Which landing pages convert best? Which demographic clicks through the most?

Your accountant can help you lift accurate sales data for different periods. This can be used to track the success or failure of special offers, product launches and other sales events to narrow down the areas that are working.

According to a survey by Salesforce, 76% of marketers say data-driven decision-making is crucial in campaign performance. By comparing your ideal audience to actual customer behaviour, you can adjust your messaging or target more profitable segments.

5. Actually talk to your customers

The most underrated source of insight is your customers themselves. Schedule interviews, send out surveys, or talk to users after a successful sale. Ask open-ended questions like:

- “Why did you choose us?”
- “What alternatives did you consider?”
- “What almost stopped you from buying?”

These conversations will undoubtedly uncover objections you hadn’t considered, new segments you didn’t plan for, or even product ideas for future growth. And remember: customers are often more honest in conversation than on email.

The bottom line

Defining and refining your target market isn’t a once-off job. It’s an ongoing process that evolves as your business, market conditions, and customer needs change. But investing the time upfront, and revisiting it regularly, can mean the difference between scattered sales and scalable success.

If you need help understanding your sales data, speak to us.

Your Tax Deadlines for July 2025

- 07 July – Monthly PAYE submissions and payments
- 25 July – Value Added Tax (VAT) manual submissions and payments
- 30 July – Excise duty payments
- 31 July – VAT electronic submissions and payments, Corporate Income Tax (CIT) Provisional Tax payments where applicable.

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