Welcome from the editor, June 2017

Welcomes

01 June 2017

Proceed with caution

With the changes to CPD in January 2017, I took a look at the areas of my work that needed attention. I concluded that cyber security was something that I needed to update myself on so I enrolled onto an eight-week Open University course. It was then I learned and developed strategies against the impacts of malware. It proved to be a good investment of my time, especially since the WannaCry attack hit the headlines in May.

Cyber security

Michael Stout provides guidance on how best to protect your company or clients from malware attacks. Michael highlights that by adopting best practices, information security awareness training, and fostering a security awareness cultures, businesses can make it difficult for the hackers.

You can find a free cyber-security course on the CIOT website.

Making Tax Digital

Asking millions of taxpayers with a lack of an understanding of the digital world to engage digitally is an ongoing concern of Making Tax Digital. Kelly Sizer highlights that it is the mandating of MTD that concerns the Low Income Taxes Reform Group – this is a point enforced in their March 2017 report 'A future for the low income taxpayer' .

Whilst I write during purdah, there is still much being said about MTD. As Richard Wild notes, it seems largely 'business as usual' and I know that he has been talking

to branches about what we know now. I joined Richard, with Michael Steed at the ATT's Employers event in Bristol on MTD and was interested to hear some of the strategies that some firms are starting to develop in light of the changing landscape. 'MTD is coming' was the loud and clear message shared by the many software companies at Accountex. There was an interesting debate on MTD at the CTA Address and the point that stuck with me was some wise words from Paul Aplin. Paul really inspired me to get involved with the MTD pilots, highlighting that how can we know the impact of MTD until the pilot runs. The concern is that without a diverse test population we may only get as good a system as caters for those involved. It is interesting to hear IT experts, like Michael Stout, categorising the writing of software programs, coding, more as an art than engineering. Michael notes that 'Most programmers take a motherly pride in their code, but one should understand 'software engineering' is a fallacy'.

Tax administration will be different under MTD and Brexit. Georgiana Head looks at how the tax profession will change as a result. She considers that most direct tax advisers will have to rethink how they brand their practices and what added value they bring to clients.