Response Number 892

Q.1 What are your views on the proposal to introduce real-time reporting for B2B and B2G transactions?

In general I'm in favour of any attempt to modernise, automate and/or digitise these processes. I personally hate having to deal with manual paperwork and try to do everything online where possible. Provided the proposal allows me to continue filing things the way I need to, I'm in favour of it

Q.2 What matters should be considered in planning for a transition to a new VAT Reporting system?

I'm self employed and working from home. Some of my VAT reporting is complex (... to me, someone without any accounting/finance experience). I would love to see any new tools being built with an emphasis on "dumbing it down" as much as possible and avoiding using unnecessarily complex terms. Keeping it as simple and plain language as possible.
Given I work from home, some of my reporting is filing claims for partial bills. e.g. a small percentage of my electricity, heating, broadband bills etc. I'd be worried the design of a new system might forget about these types of use cases, allowing someone to provide an invoice, but only request/claim 20% of the amount. It would be key for me, that this be considered

Q.3 If your business is currently subject to a VAT reporting programme in another EU or non-EU country, can you please share best practice, recommendations or lessons learnt?

no

Q.4 Have you any observations, concerns or recommendations on a move to mandatory electronic invoicing for B2B & B2G domestic VAT transactions?

I think it would be a mistake to force it, at least initially. As mentioned previously, we have no guarantees all use cases will be possible initially. Both systems would need to be available at the same time until it's confirmed the new system works for everyone. After thats been made clear, I've no objections

Q.5 Revenue is particularly interested in hearing views from businesses that are already engaged in eInvoicing Public Bodies within Ireland or engaged in B2B eInvoicing throughout Europe and beyond. How did you prepare and what challenges prevailed in your preparations for eInvoicing?

N/A

Q.6 What suggestions would you offer in Ireland's arrangements for a mandatory B2B and B2G eInvoicing programme?

Since covid a lot more people are working from home, and becoming self employed. I personally find the current systems far too complex for an average user. It's not possible to use without hiring an accountant, which is excessive for self-employed people. We need a focus on keeping it simple and user friendly

Q.7 Revenue are cognisant that small businesses may have different perspectives and requirements to large businesses, so what information prompts would you find useful for businesses in completing the VAT return?

- Explanation of any financial terms
- Examples. Currently I find this very lacking. We need lots of "If Bob earns €10,000 from a company based in Ireland, he must do X. If he earns €10,000 from within the EU he needs to do Y. If he earns $10,000 from USA he needs to do Z" etc.

- Live chat would be super helpful
- I've called revenue many times with questions and issues, and find the operating hours of the phone lines to be crazy. One depart closes at 1pm everyday, another is open until 4:15, another won't pick up the phone if it's after 4:50. We need a better ability to contact people for help
- I've had a lot of trouble with accountants. Personally I would be open to paying money every year for the chance for someone from revenue to sit down with me, review what I have, help me out etc
- Probably way out of scope, but I would also love an online book keeping tool. Rather than having to fill out form 11's and figure out everything. I'd love a tool where I can just input amounts of money as they come in, say what country it came from, mark expenses etc. Then at the end of the year, click a button and have it populate everything for me. Again, I'd pay money for this knowing that an external accountant can't screw it up costing me fines etc.