

# The EB Digest

September 2011



## iXBRL Breathing Space

**This time last year nobody had heard of iXBRL, the electronic format in which accounts have had to be submitted to HMRC since 1 April 2011.**

However as company owners have since found out to their cost, the drive to increase the efficiency of data collection by HMRC has merely transferred the burden onto business – with most companies now having to pay for their accounts to be tagged!

The ultimate goal is that a single set of accounts will be filed which will be suitable both for HMRC & Companies House. While attractive in theory, this has a number of practical difficulties...Are you ready for iXBRL software?

**Read more at iXBRL**

## Riot-Induced IT Failure

**The carnage faced by a number of UK cities has seen many large and small businesses crippled, as rioters have looted goods and trashed and torched premises. IT Systems have, in many cases, been brought to a standstill through fire and theft.**

The damage caused to businesses has highlighted the need for appropriate online or off-site data backup, which can help enable businesses to get back on their feet after such disruption.

Following recent events, whether the smoking wreckage is a small business in a city centre, a superstore in a retail park, or a national distribution depot for consumer goods, the case for having off-site processing and data storage has suddenly become an important consideration.

Many businesses fail to put in place a suitable backup system to protect against such circumstances. Mark Child, partner at Kingston Smith Consulting LLP, explains: "Data is the lifeblood of most businesses. Emails, files, invoices, financial data, customer records, databases, and documents all make up vital company data that most of us cannot function without. It is vital that this business critical information is backed up regularly, to allow businesses to continue trading in the event of a disaster."

Many business owners do not have a contingency plan when disaster strikes. Below, Mark outlines some simple tips for ensuring that business owners can retrieve their business critical data, should the worst occur.

**Click here to read more**

## How do you Support Employees Through Tough Economic Times?

**A new CIPD survey says people are looking to change jobs for better pay rather than job satisfaction, which reverses the results of their previous survey. The CIPD say this is a direct result of people coming under continued pressure from the financial squeeze.**

More controversially, the CIPD also claimed these results highlight the importance of equipping line managers with effective people management skills to support staff through the tough economic climate and that employers should also provide debt management and financial planning advice and support to help employees!

Now I know that surveys are a standard tactic in generating PR coverage for all of us, but these conclusions seem a bit dangerous. Is it really the role of the line manager to support staff through the tough economic times?

**Cont'd**



MidasTouch

We recently launched our 'Midas Touch' entrepreneurial business network. Devised specifically with entrepreneurs and business owners in mind. We hope that the Midas Touch network will prove to be an essential resource for start-ups, established business owners, and of course those looking at their exit strategy.

Unlike many networks, which are either online, virtual, groups, or little more than a series of networking opportunities, Midas Touch aims to bring the best of both. At its core is a constant stream of seminars, roundtable discussions and networking opportunities, all focused on helping you run your business better. This is backed up by the online element which consists of blogs, discussion boards, and downloadable content. We aim for Midas Touch to become a close network of entrepreneurs and

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**We hope that the Midas Touch network will prove to be an essential resource for start-ups.**

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business owners, with real opportunities to meet and learn from each other. The network is free to join for entrepreneurs and business owners, and you can request membership via the website at: [www.midastouch.uk.com/membership](http://www.midastouch.uk.com/membership). Once you're signed up as a member of the network, you can attend regular networking events and seminars, get expert tips and advice from our online business doctor, contribute to network discussions, and learn about the changes in legislation that will affect your business.

The Midas Touch blog is also available for all site visitors including non-members, so don't forget to add the site to your RSS feed and get involved with your own comments. Visit the site at [www.midastouch.uk.com](http://www.midastouch.uk.com)

The Entrepreneurs'  
Network



Isn't there a danger in this suggestion of overstepping the lines between employer and employee leading to problems around confidentiality? Especially if the employee later faced performance issues or disciplinary measures in relation to their work. There is however an argument for a personal financial advice to be provided via an independent financial adviser external to the company as confidentiality would be maintained in this scenario.

[Click here to read more](#)

## Economic Doom and Gloom is a Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

**This week's news that the economy is just about managing to eke out some growth, at 0.2% for this quarter, is of course good news. Good news that we are not yet formally slipping back into recession, but with growth this low, and confidence equally fragile, it sometimes feels like we may as well still be in recession.**

Earlier this week we heard that many UK firms still lack the confidence to seek new finance to support their growth, with weak profit outlooks and a shortage of domestic demand both taking their toll, according to Lloyds TSB.

The bank's research indicated that one in five firms will be making cuts in the six months to come, with a roughly similar number looking to make some positive moves.

But this, in itself, could just be yet more Project Merlin smoke and mirrors. Elsewhere it has been suggested that changes in exchange rates and tax burdens are the biggest worries for businesses over the next six months, with the majority of firms seeming more confident about the future. Combine that with the external, one-off, downward pressures such as the Japanese and the Royal Wedding (responsible for -0.4% effect on output) and perhaps the outlook isn't so bad.

So it really all does seem to be hanging in the balance at the moment. No clear indicators of sustained recovery, but at the same time, a sense that we're still hanging on in there. All this has to lead to the question "Has the Government overcooked its austerity measures?" Only time will tell whether they've overcooked it or merely pushed it to the absolute limit, but one thing is very clear;

The longer we languish around worrying about slipping back into recession, then the more it looks as though this isn't going to be a short and nasty roller coaster ride but a long drawn out trek that will have to be endured – with a good chance that quite a few may not survive. It's called a self-fulfilling prophecy!

We need the politicians to do what they do best – we need them to talk us up, make the UK the place for overseas business to come to

invest, and make business want to invest to get ready for the upturn.

How are you feeling about prospects at the moment? Positive?

## Is your subcontractor your employee?

**There has been a recent decision by the Supreme Court on employment status (Autoclenz Ltd v Belcher), and whilst it does not represent a significant change in the law, it serves to emphasise the importance of looking at the true relationship between a worker and his 'employer' rather than just the written contract between them.**

This case reaffirms that the legal nature of a relationship between two parties is beyond what is written in the contract if it is asserted by either party, or in some cases by a third party, that the document does not represent or describe the true relationship.

[Click here for a summary of the case](#)

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