

Cellphone-compatible version of TaxTim launched

Online tax assistant TaxTim has released a cellphone-compatible version of its website in order to appeal to the ever-expanding number of cellphone users in South Africa. In a 2011 survey it was found that a total of 7.9 million South Africans access the internet on their cellphones, while 6.02 million use a computer, laptop, or tablet to get online.

TaxTim is the brainchild of young South African entrepreneurs Marc Sevitz, a qualified CA and tax specialist, and Evan Robinson, an inventor and software developer, who after being selected to join the national Google Umbono programme in 2011, created a fun, easy and fast online tax return solution for anyone confused about tax. TaxTim was also chosen as one of Africa's Top 40 tech start-ups to present at the DEMO Africa conference in Nairobi in 2012.

You do not need a smartphone

Special care was taken not only to redesign the user interface right down to 128 pixels width, but also replace all features that require java script - thus you do not need a smartphone to chat with TaxTim, any regular feature phone will do. Despite the fuss over smart phones, at the moment in Africa only one in 32 phones is "smart". The website content and navigation has also been simplified so that the interface is easier to use on the smaller screen.

"Our goal is to ensure that every South African has access to simple and efficient tax assistance when and where they need it. A significant market exists who want to start filing tax returns, but have only limited connectivity to the Web. To this end, we are happy to announce the beta release of our mobi site offering all the functionality of the full-sized offering and compatible for use on all cellphones with Internet connectivity," said Evan Robinson, co-founder of TaxTim.

More people recognising the need for a mobile version

"Currently, about 16% of users on our site are browsing via their cellphones (close to the 17% national average), but as we start providing our service as a benefit to Employee Wellness Programmes that assist lower income earners, such as factory workers and mineworkers, we have found more people recognising the need for a mobile version," said Marc Sevitz, co-founder of TaxTim.

To use the TaxTim mobi site, go to www.taxtim.com on your phone browser and the site will adjust to the small screen.

The mobi site is also accompanied by a new mobile vehicle logbook product that is free to use all year round. Instead of keeping a paper logbook up-to-date and manually recording all the details of each and every trip for SARS, the logbook stores your records online and saves time by automatically pre-filling certain fields for you. Record your work trips, fill-ups and maintenance, then at year end these expenses are displayed appropriately split between work and personal. To get started, go to www.taxtim.com on your cellphone and click on the Logbook.

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