

## BUSINESS PLANNING FROM A TO Z

Do you have clients that are new to business or are thinking of starting a business? A new free tool is now available for you to help them start up.

The Australian Government's 'New to business' checklist can help you and your clients answer fundamental questions at various stages of their business.

► *Before they start their business*, the checklist can help your clients decide which plans to consider and how to go about planning for their business. It can also help them decide how to structure their business, how they can finance their venture and even how they can start as an independent contractor.

► *When they start their business*, the checklist can guide your clients through the process of registering their business name, ABN, GST and other business registrations.

They can also learn how to cover their intellectual property, be across their taxation obligations, comply with their legal requirements and arrange their insurance.

► *When they buy their business*, the checklist can help your clients decide if they want to buy an established business or a new franchise.

► *When they run their business*, the checklist can help your clients with any ongoing employer and occupational

health and safety obligations.

If they consider exporting, importing or tendering, the checklist can also guide them through the process.

The checklist is simple to use and contains a summary to help your clients mark their progress through the guide. A federal, state and territory government agency index at the back of the checklist also allows your clients to easily find a list of key contacts for further information.

### Reducing business red tape

Numerous focus groups in rural and metropolitan Australia and more than 28 government agencies were consulted in the development

of the checklist, which followed a key recommendation from the recently released *Rethinking Regulation: Report of the Taskforce on Reducing Regulatory Burdens on Business*.

Printable and interactive versions of the checklist are available for download from [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au) — the Australian Government's award winning business website. The interactive version gives your clients the added benefit of being able to customise their checklist, access direct links to resources, work offline, save progress, add notes and email a copy to others.

Both versions can be viewed and downloaded from [www.business.gov.au/checklist](http://www.business.gov.au/checklist). **NA**

## ONLINE DOCUMENT SERVICE ADDS VALUE

Sydney accounting firm Nexia Court & Co – part of the Nexia International group and ranked 31 in the BRW 2006 'Top 100 Accounting Firms' – decided recently to coordinate all of its Trust deed and Company registration services through the online provider [www.cleardocs.com](http://www.cleardocs.com).

**Cleardocs** challenges the traditional 'shelf company' market in Australia, by providing a unique, automated, online solution at a fraction of the cost of competitors. For example, its Self Managed Superannuation Fund (SMSF) deed costs only \$137.50 compared to an industry average well over \$350. Cleardocs marketing manager Dan Peters says that its company registration product is also

unique: "It is the only way professional firms can register companies electronically with ASIC, and receive their certificate of registration and legal constitution instantly".

### Leveraging the efficiencies of the internet

Nexia Court & Co manages more than 300 SMSFs, and many more companies, and was looking for a solution that could ensure they were utilising the best technology available to deliver the best value possible for clients.

Nexia's manager of superannuation services, Liz Westover says "the move to Cleardocs was a conscious decision to minimise costs and maintain consistent quality for our clients. By coordinating the

provider across our firm for these kinds of services, we can be assured that we are sourcing these fairly standard products from a reputable provider at the best possible price."

In the case of SMSFs, Nexia identified a "growing risk across the firm that was inherent in catering for hundreds of different fund's deeds sourced from dozens of different providers over the years", says Westover.

"Cleardocs' \$99 deed upgrade service allowed us to safely, legally and cost-effectively upgrade our clients' deeds and replace them with a new plain language Cleardocs deed – catering for all the latest provisions and changes in legislation. We felt this was an excellent way to minimise

compliance issues for our clients, and minimise risk for our firm."

### Online technology married with traditional legal expertise

A key part of Nexia's decision to select Cleardocs was its relationship with major national law firm Maddocks. Dan Peters from Cleardocs highlights that "the online service from Cleardocs can create tremendous efficiencies for professional firms – but it is not meant as a replacement for quality, expert legal advice. The relationship with Maddocks is of fundamental importance to us, and the free legal helpline Maddocks provides is massively appreciated by the thousands of Cleardocs customers across Australia". **NA**