



**Deloitte.**

**THE RIPPLE EFFECT**

Stories of purpose and lasting impact

# Can the buddy system work in business? (Spoiler: Yes!)

**How a retailer boosted compliance efficiency—starting with contract personnel.**

# IF THE TEAM'S WORKING A BACKLOG, CAN IT CONTRIBUTE STRATEGICALLY?

## THE SITUATION

These are times of great transition in business, and the retail industry is no exception.

That is what one retailer was experiencing; changes to the business were overwhelming its tax department, and the bottleneck was preventing growth.

The tax team was finding it difficult to manage the volume and complexity of requests from both within the business itself and taxing jurisdictions. Why? Because the business model for which tax was designed was already resource constrained and missing newer skills related to technology. So finding people with specialized multi-jurisdictional fuel tax knowledge—along with experience in related fuel tax technology—was challenging, to say the least.

Further complicating the picture, the company was in the middle of a finance transformation and implementing new systems that would directly affect fuel tax compliance.

Effects of these constraints and challenges were rippling outward through the entire business. Multiple demands on the same people on the tax team created challenges completing compliance obligations (which were themselves becoming more complex); and if the team couldn't meet compliance, they couldn't take on the additional projects the company would need to grow the business.

It was a repeating (and unfortunately all too common) cycle. If tax team leadership was to serve as the trusted business partners and advisors their C-suite needed, there would need to be a change.



## THE SOLVE

The company worked with several teams at Deloitte to free up the tax bottleneck through a combination of training and additional resourcing. This would up-skill employees, clear the project backlog, and provide the capacity the company needed to think strategically about the business. Here's what happened.

First, our Excise Tax team assigned tax professionals with a combined 40 years of experience in fuel excise tax to bring in-house staff up to speed through a full-day, on-site technical training.

Then the company engaged Deloitte to provide contract personnel to augment the company's tax team, providing two additional team members to assist in compliance and special projects (as well as fill in for staff turnovers). The Deloitte team members weren't just consultants to the company—they became a part of their tax team by working collaboratively, efficiently, and adeptly.

Being on the ground gave the team real-time insight into the challenges the company was facing; they knew that Deloitte could do more to help. The team identified experts in each of the areas in which the company was experiencing challenges and brought attention to additional solutions to help solve their problems.

Based on Deloitte's fuel tax technical expertise, our experience and knowledge with the related software, and the breadth of our team's experience with all items—including finance transformation—the company felt confident it could entrust us with providing even more support. We're now helping with all transaction or indirect taxes (fuel, sale and use, and property), including technology and compliance services.

Finally, our Tax Technology Consulting team helped the company improve its strategic position in the industry by implementing new technology to manage fuel supply and distribution.

ADDITIONAL HANDS MAKE **LIGHTER WORK**  
(AND SPACE FOR **STRATEGIC THINKING**)).

# THE IMPACT

The company both significantly improved the quality of its tax compliance process and identified savings opportunities.

In so doing, it improved its tax department's strategic value to the company, particularly in the eyes of the executive leadership.

The company invested in additional automation and a tax software upgrade. The resulting time savings allow leadership to focus on other special projects and value-added initiatives beyond compliance.

Meanwhile, the upgraded fuel management system has helped the company expand its business model, be more competitive in the fuel distribution business, and position itself for greater agility in responding to future changes.



WHEN THE TEAM FACED CHALLENGES, WE BROUGHT  
IN REINFORCEMENTS.

# LET'S CONNECT.

Do these challenges sound familiar?



**MARSHAL SULAYMAN**

Principal

Deloitte Tax LLP

[msulayman@deloitte.com](mailto:msulayman@deloitte.com)

+1 832 816 4694



**About this publication**

This publication contains general information only and Deloitte is not, by means of this publication, rendering accounting, business, financial, investment, legal, tax, or other professional advice or services. This publication is not a substitute for such professional advice or services, nor should it be used as a basis for any decision or action that may affect your business. Before making any decision or taking any action that may affect your business, you should consult a qualified professional adviser.

Deloitte shall not be responsible for any loss sustained by any person who relies on this publication.

**About Deloitte**

As used in this document, "Deloitte" means Deloitte Tax LLP, which provides tax compliance and advisory services. These entities are separate subsidiaries of Deloitte LLP. Please see [www.deloitte.com/us/about](http://www.deloitte.com/us/about) for a detailed description of our legal structure. Certain services may not be available to attest clients under the rules and regulations of public accounting.

Copyright © 2023 Deloitte Development LLC. All rights reserved.

Member of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited