



Growing Your Value

Client Collaboration



Delivering Accounting Services Remotely

ENABLING COLLABORATIVE, FLEXIBLE SERVICE DELIVERY

The world is more digital than ever before.

Digital technologies offer new ways to deliver accounting services of all kinds. While many opportunities exist for accounting firms to automate back-end processes, collaboration portals offer a unique opportunity to change the client's experience of working with your firm.

Both compliance and advisory services can be elevated through collaboration technologies. They become one of the most prominent aspects to clients of your service delivery and communication.

When all clients provide information to an accounting firm via a single collaboration platform, challenges such as project management, accountability and deadline delivery become far more manageable.

And more transformational automation opportunities become possible. This guide has been developed to help teams understand and implement the techniques important to successfully collaborating with clients. Allowing accounting firms to perform services more effectively and maximize the value delivered to clients.

These tips and techniques come from our experience over many years performing accounting services. They will help you work in new, more valuable ways to deliver a new experience to your clients.

Our Top Five Collaboration Tips

Our key tips to mastering client collaboration.



Client Collaboration

1. **Information Request**
2. **File Exchange**
3. **Project Management**
4. **Portfolio Working**
5. **Obtaining Transactional Data**

Navigating this Guide

There are active hyperlinks and video links embedded throughout this guide highlighted in **bold underlined orange font**, or with a play icon. If you are reading this in print form, please note that you can see any or all of these techniques brought to life by visiting: <https://signup.inflosoftware.com/> or www.vimeo.com/user84134839

1

Information Requests

Working remotely changes the information you need from your client.

Typical lists should be adjusted to request information which would usually have been inspected or discussed with the client when on-site.

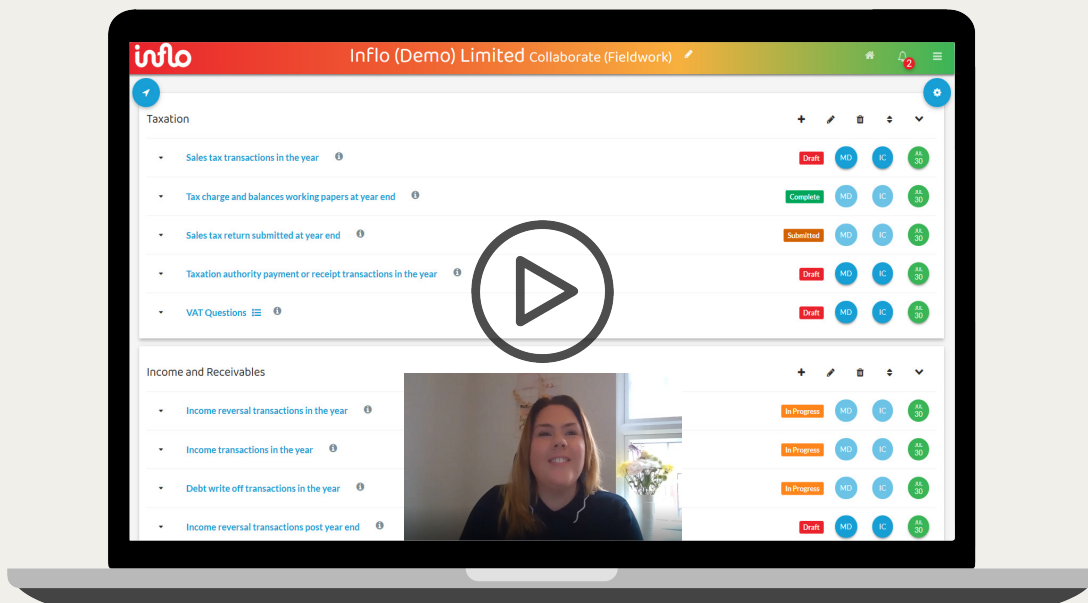
Obtaining transactional data significantly reduces other information requests. You should remove requests for transaction listings or analysis which is available from the data to benefit your client. Many traditional requests can potentially be obtained from complete data sets.

Investing time into your request list demonstrates that you value your client's time and focuses your approach. It is also worth reviewing the request lists for multiple services to avoid duplication or disconnect between your teams.

Creating standardization across client information requests also increases opportunities to centralize certain common activities. Such standardization also creates opportunities to leverage advanced techniques such as robotic process automation (RPA).

Pro Tip

Creating standard information requests for engagements improves efficiency and consistency.



Rachel Sanders, Duncan & Topliss, explains how prepared-by-client lists can be used within Inflo to enhance client experience.

Learn How

Inflo can import requests from Excel, roll-forward an engagement or copy another. You can also use InfloHI to create a new list via artificial intelligence.

2

File Exchange

When performing services remotely one of the first priorities should be establishing a consistent approach to collating client information.

Whatever the prior approach, clients are accustomed to receiving a list of information requests from their auditor. Transitioning information requests to a structured, secure platform housing these familiar information lists minimises the change for clients.

The opportunity goes beyond the secure transfer of information to and from client contacts though. Layering workflow into the exchange removes any ambiguity over the process and embeds strong project management across the engagement.

Communication is also improved through a transparent, single place for information exchange and for everyone involved to discuss the engagement.



Rachel Davis, Just Audit, shares how her team audit from home using Inflo and her pride over client feedback that her collaboration approach was better than a Big 4 firm's.

Pro Tip

Digital collaboration often serves as a key first step towards incorporating more progressive techniques into audit services.

Learn How

Inflo's structured client collaboration provides the real-time status of all information requests on any device.

3

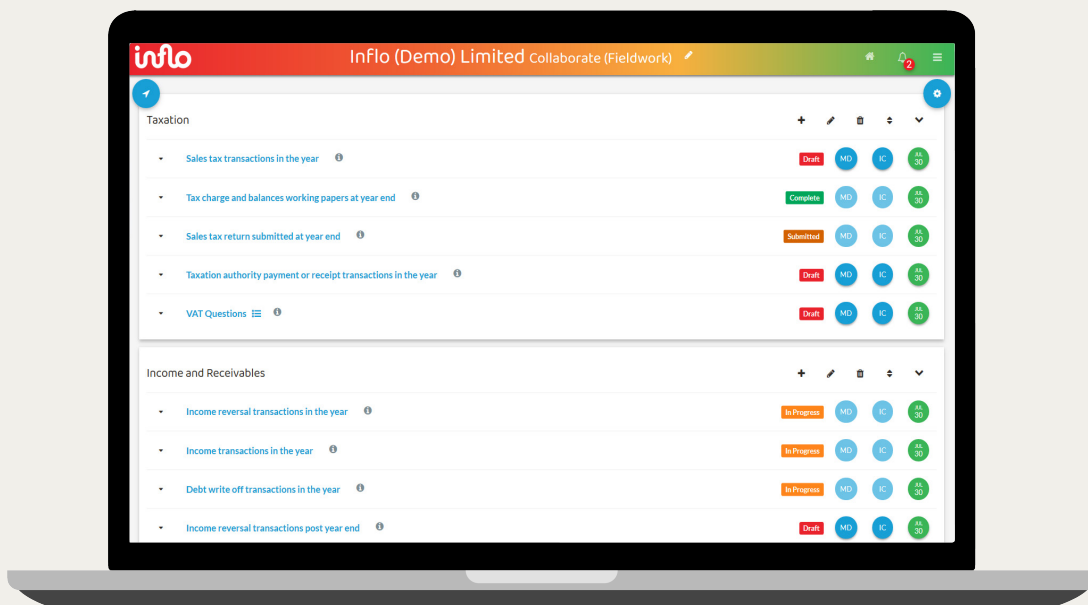
Project Management

Delivering remote audit services profitably relies upon strong project management.

Accountability across both your team and the client team is an important component. All tasks and activities should be assigned to a single individual accountable for its completion.

Each task and activity should also be assigned a deadline for completion, agreed up front and monitored throughout to ensure resources can be appropriately assigned.

This applies equally across information exchange and completion of the audit file.



Pro Tip

Retrospectively review delivery against deadline to support overrun conversations and/or improve future engagements.

Collaboration and file exchange technologies which include project management functionality eliminate significant time spent checking status and following up on outstanding information.

As an added benefit, such technologies objectively record delivery against deadlines.

Learn How

Inflo provides accountability, deadline monitoring and automated reminders to project manage engagements for you.

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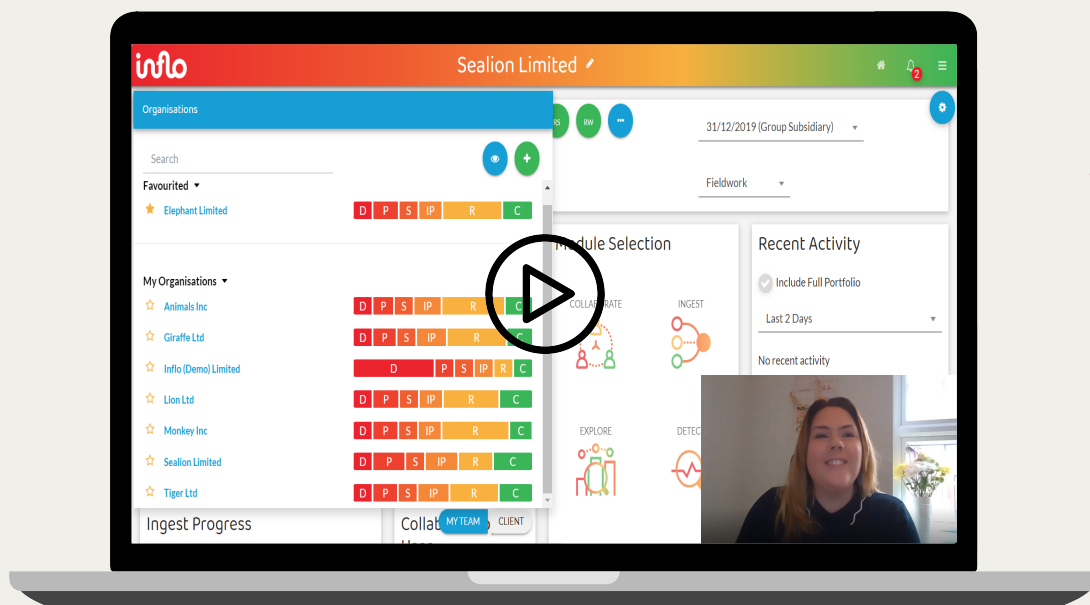
Portfolio Working

Remote auditing provides a greater opportunity for your team to work across a portfolio of engagements rather than being allocated to a specific client.

With a single platform performing all **file exchange**, your team can instantly see all their assignments and the client information ready for their review.

This has the added advantage of making your business less susceptible to client delays, allowing teams to quickly refocus their efforts towards other engagements.

Changes in the availability of your team, whether through illness or reprioritization of service delivery, also have less impact as work can quickly be reassigned to other members of your team.



Rachel Sanders, Duncan & Toplis, explains how she uses Inflo to monitor the status of her client portfolio and the information ready for review.

Pro Tip

Frequent portfolio reviews, on a weekly or daily basis, between Managers and staff benefits prioritisation of work across an available portfolio.

Learn How

Inflo allows you to review the live status of information requests assigned to you as well as each member of your team, with quick and easy reassignment.

5

Obtaining Transactional Data

Working remotely can present challenges when you need to ask the client team quick, simple questions.

However, obtaining transactional data from the client's accounting system provides your team with a deeper level of information. It allows them to answer their own questions and reduce your reliance on client interaction.

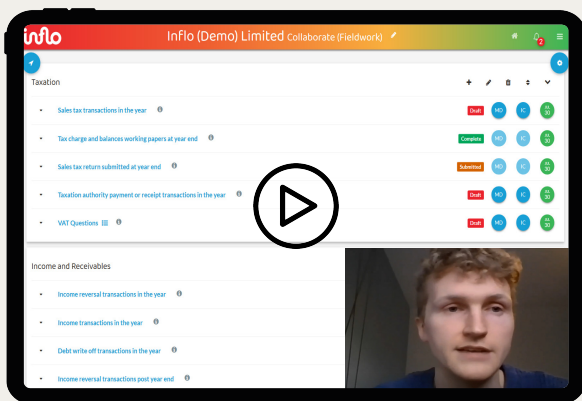
This has the effect of granting you read-only access to the client's accounting system. But even better than that, the user interface for your teams is identical across all of your clients, regardless of the accounting system they use.

Intuitive visualizations help your team drill down and explore the origins of variances on any device making the work more engaging.

Obtaining transactional data from the client's accounting system also serves to eliminate version control issues when you have multiple engagement team and client team members working on an audit engagement at different times from different locations.

Pro Tip

Progressing from requesting files to requesting data is key to unlocking automation opportunities.



Tom Emmett, Grant Thornton UK LLP, explains how his client found the Inflo data upload incredibly easy after years of frustration running system reports.



Andrew Moyser, MHA MacIntyre Hudson, shares his unsuccessful efforts to beat Inflo's record of 100% extraction success.

Learn How

Inflo extracts 100% of transactions from 100% of client accounting systems through an easy-to-use client upload wizard.



Growing Your Value

Start Today

Implementing these tips couldn't be easier.

Sign up for **free today** and review our demonstration client to see for yourself.

Or take advantage of one of our new-firm packages:

- Sign up to our **Starter** package to implement the 4 client collaboration techniques in this guide on an unlimited number of client engagement.

Contact sayhi@inflosoftware.com to discuss, or if you have any other questions.



inflosoftware.com



Webinar

For more information on upcoming webinars, visit our website [here](#).

