Adobe

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MEDIA ALERT

Adobe research reveals Australian consumer and small business owner trends ahead of tax season

- The new research by Adobe revealed that 40% consumers say tax filing is gruelling and time-consuming, with paperwork and complex rules as top pain points.
- The research also found that 8 in 10 small business owners see AI as a valuable tool for tax prep, few feel confident that it ensures filing accuracy.
- Adobe Acrobat AI Assistant can help consumers and small business owners to prepare taxes faster by summarising documents, digitising receipts, and organising materials in one place.

SYDNEY, Australia — July 23 2025 – Filing taxes is one of the most dreaded tasks for consumers and small business owners in Australia and New Zealand, with ever-changing tax rules and regulations, and the volume of paperwork as the top challenges, according to the [2025 Adobe Acrobat Tax AI Survey](#) in Australia and New Zealand. The new research also reveals that most people use digital tools to support their personal or business tax return lodgements. Despite recognising AI's potential to simplify the filing process, a majority of taxpayers are yet to harness it.

Narelle Behn-Carey, Principal Digital Strategist, Digital Media Enterprise, APAC at Adobe said, "Whether it be a time-poor professional or small business operator, when you don't have the resources or understanding to comb through complex rules and regulations, one overlooked detail can lead to costly mistakes. It's no wonder that tax time leaves many feeling overwhelmed and underprepared.

"AI-driven platforms such as [Acrobat AI Assistant](#) with its contract intelligence capability has potential to transform how people approach tax time, helping them file their returns more accurately and confidently. Some taxpayers are already seeing AI's potential, but there is opportunity for more people to harness its potential to their advantage," she added.

Tax complexity weighs heavily on consumers

The research reveals that 40% consumers find the process of filing taxes gruelling and time consuming, with managing paper documents, organising materials for tax professionals and navigating complex rules identified as the most common difficulties through the process.

Tax time trends among consumers

55%

Typically file their tax return early, keen to get their refunds as quickly as possible

69%

Want to get their tax return right to avoid penalties or audits

29%

Are fully confident about preparing their tax return

While more than half of the respondents file their tax returns early to get their refunds as quickly as possible, just 29% of consumers feel fully confident about preparing their tax return correctly. This complexity often results in stress, delays, and missed opportunities such as overlooked deductions or errors in filing.

How small business owners approach tax time

For small business owners, time and difficulty emerged as the top tax struggles, with 1 in 4 respondents (24%) spending more than 11 hours on their tax return. Seven in 10 respondents are also prioritising filing taxes early and correctly, yet less than 18% of these small business owners are confident of their ability to accurately prepare business taxes.

Tax time priorities for small business owners

64%

Typically file their tax return early, keen to get their refunds as quickly as possible

70%

Want to get their tax return right to avoid penalties or audits

18%

Doubt their ability to accurately prepare business taxes

Confidence in AI's potential to simplify taxes

With all audiences sharing very similar challenges, the majority see value in leveraging technology to support with tax lodgements. Eight in 10 small business owners recognise the potential benefits of AI, with more than half agreeing AI tools can simplify tax preparation by organising and navigating documents (53%), and by consolidating materials (51%). Consumers also recognised AI's benefits with filing taxes, citing convenience and speed as potential advantages.

Behn-Carey added, "Tax season doesn't have to be a source of dread. AI tools can transform tax prep from a last-minute scramble into a streamlined, informed, and proactive process. With Adobe Acrobat AI Assistant users can summarise tax details, digitise receipts, and now even navigate legal agreements with confidence. Our contract intelligence feature built within AI Assistant can further help consumers and businesses compare terms, spot key dates, and verify content faster all while keeping their data secure."

Contract intelligence to support better decision-making

Beyond tax-specific tasks, contract review is a growing area where many consumers seek clarity. Whether reviewing vendor agreements, lease terms, or client contracts, Adobe Acrobat AI Assistant's contract intelligence makes it easier to understand complex documents. The feature helps identify key clauses, compare versions and summarise content within the trusted Acrobat environment.

Adobe Acrobat AI Assistant is designed with security and ethics at its core. Adobe doesn't train its AI on customer data and blocks third-party access. Built on trusted AI models like Liquid Mode, the Acrobat AI Assistant delivers accurate insights by deeply understanding document structure. The contract intelligence features use advanced prompt engineering to surface key information quickly and reliably. Since launching in February 2024, adoption has surged, with customer interactions doubling quarter over quarter.

To know more about the Acrobat AI Assistant, visit here: [Acrobat AI Assistant](#)

Methodology: Adobe Acrobat Tax AI Survey in Australia and New Zealand

In January 2025, Adobe and Advanis surveyed 1,013 consumers and 269 small business owners across Australia and New Zealand as part of a global study. The research set out to explore their attitudes and behaviours when preparing their taxes, as well as the digital tools that can simplify the process.

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