

# Softline Pastel's new portal makes BEE compliance easy

Softline Pastel's one-stop Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) portal, BEE 123, was recently launched. It offers a range of tools, software, directories, news and BEE network partners to assist businesses of all sizes to understand and implement their BEE requirements.

"BEE compliance is a real factor in winning and retaining business, and is actually far simpler to implement than most people think," says Saul Symanowitz, BEE 123 divisional director. BEE123 includes Scorecard Software, which calculates empowerment scores. Users just have to enter the business's data for each of the seven BEE elements without having to understand complex codes and formulae. Scenario planning is also possible in the software and its embedded help functionality explains BEE in simple English.

Proposed amendments to the BBBEE Act and the new PPPFA regulations which came into effect in December have elevated the necessity for BEE compliance, making it an essential for securing business. "A BEE certified company is able to access and generate new business because its clients will earn points by using them as a supplier," says Symanowitz.

## Thousands of suppliers already listed

The directories within BEE 123 make it easy for users to find BEE certified businesses. The suppliers directory has thousands already listed and enables certified business to list themselves so that others can find them.

To provide a valid BEE certificate, Pastel has established a Verification Partner Network in conjunction with South Africa's leading SANAS accredited verification agencies. This network will assist all businesses in obtaining their certificates. For Exempt Micro Enterprises - those with a turnover less than R5 million per annum - BEE certification is particularly simple. These businesses are automatically deemed to be BEE compliant and can obtain their BEE certificates directly through the BEE123 portal.

Other features include a news section, FAQs, glossary, relevant BEE legislation documents and access to hands on training sessions on practical BEE knowledge and Scorecard Software.

"With the growing consensus amongst private sector businesses that empowerment is vital to trade and an important tool for economic growth, there is nothing to stand in the way of all enterprises becoming compliant. Now BEE 123 offers a one stop solution," concludes Symanowitz.

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