

## INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR: MARK SILVER

*Author of: The Deloitte Vat Handbook*

*“VAT is the most significant tax accounted for by any entity and the consequences flowing from non-compliance are severe.”*

*~ Mark Silver, Associate Director, Tax Services at Deloitte.*

### Getting to know Mark Silver

Mark has spent over 25 years specialising in VAT and is the author of the popular Deloitte VAT Handbook. Read on to learn more about what inspired him to follow this particular career path.

**Mark, I notice that you are an admitted attorney, so how did you become involved in tax?**

I served articles with Adams and Adams in Durban and practised in their maritime law department, but with the decline in international trade during the mid to late eighties, decided to change my area of specialization to that of tax. I joined Deloitte in Cape Town in 1989 where I served my articles in audit and transferred to the tax department in 1991 where I became deeply involved with the introduction of VAT. I was appointed as a tax partner in 1993 in the Durban office where I was responsible for consulting in both direct and indirect taxes. In 2005, I was offered the opportunity to specialize in VAT and direct the national indirect tax practice, which I did for 5 years or so.



**So you have spent over 25 years working with VAT?**

The reason I was attracted to tax in the first place was that it harnessed both accounting and legal technical skills in an extremely dynamic environment. I enjoyed the strong communicative aspect in consulting and was involved in presenting numerous tax seminars and drafting and editing tax publications over the years. The introduction of VAT at an early stage in my tax career was particularly exciting and it allowed the opportunity to ‘get in at the ground floor’. Further, I believe that it is a well-founded and drafted piece of legislation in respect of which our fiscal authorities wisely chose to apply the lessons learned from its introduction and application in other similar jurisdictions. I like the idea of working with a tax regime like VAT which is truly universal.



Mark you've just completed the 11th edition of the Deloitte VAT Handbook.

***What inspired you to write this book?***

After my involvement with the introduction of VAT in 1991, I became involved in the publication of the Deloitte Vat Handbook which had been initiated by my colleague, Chris Beneke. At that stage there was a dearth of comment on the VAT Act and there was a pressing need for guidance on the implementation of the new tax. The first edition which we published in 1991 was only 250 pages and the 11<sup>th</sup> edition which came out in March this year is over 870 pages.

***What does the book cover?***

The book attempts to provide a complete theoretical framework together with practical guidelines in simple terms. The commentary is followed by the Vat Act and Tax Administration Act, together with relevant regulations and the key Interpretation Notes, Rulings and Case references. All of these are cross referenced in the Commentary, so providing one complete reference.

**Who should buy this book and why?**

- The Deloitte Vat Handbook is essentially aimed at persons dealing with VAT on an operational level. It provides a systematic approach to VAT and also strives to keep up with and provide clear explanations to the never-ending developments in VAT legislation and practice.
- Most tertiary institutions offer tax qualifications which incorporate limited segments devoted to VAT, but only one or two offer courses exclusively focussed on VAT. This is an ideal textbook and is prescribed by UNISA.
- The Deloitte VAT Handbook also provides the structure and content for practitioners who are unable to attend formal training courses on VAT.

