

Government backs UK entrepreneurs with tech support and software to help them grow

- Help to Grow: Digital scheme launches today – part of the government’s flagship support programme for small businesses
- scheme provides businesses with discounts of up to £5,000 on approved Digital Accounting and Customer Relations Management (CRM) software
- dedicated website providing free, impartial support now open to boost businesses’ digital skills

The government’s Help to Grow: Digital scheme – designed to support smaller businesses in adopting digital technologies so they can grow – has opened for applications today (20 January).

Under the scheme, eligible businesses can now receive discounts of up to £5,000 off the retail price of approved Digital Accounting and CRM software from leading technology suppliers. This software will help them to effectively manage their finances and build customer relationships, ultimately levelling up the way businesses are run and helping them to scale up.

From today, businesses can also access practical, specialised support and advice on how to choose the right digital technologies to boost their growth and productivity through [a new online platform](#).

The new Help to Grow: Digital scheme sits alongside the Help to Grow: Management scheme launched in 2021 as part of wider government efforts to back businesses and level up the economy.

Through Help to Grow: Digital, the government is providing business leaders with the advice and funding they need to embrace digital technology and help their business grow.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

I want UK businesses to be primed and ready to seize all the opportunities on the horizon as we build back better from the pandemic.

Adopting technology means higher performance, and the Help to Grow: Digital scheme is future-proofing our small businesses and putting the UK at the forefront of the worldwide digital revolution.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

Small and medium sized businesses are the backbone of our economy, creating jobs and prosperity across the UK.

When I announced this at Budget I said we wanted to help businesses become more innovative, more competitive and more profitable and I am excited this programme allows them do that.

Help to Grow: Digital will help them to grow and flourish by adopting new technologies that are proven to improve processes and boost productivity, levelling up their digital technology and skills.

Mike Cherry, National Chair at the Federation of Small Businesses, said:

Small businesses are often keen to embrace new technologies, but we know that 1 in 4 lack confidence in their own basic digital skills. For those small firms who are eligible, providing the means to make improvements through projects like this will make a real difference for those that are keen to expand their knowledge and skills.

Our own research has shown that just 40% of small business owners have used applications like cloud services and online data storage or back-up. It's crucial that practical changes like this scheme are put in place to help small firms adopt digital technologies, making improvements to their own business and driving growth.

We're encouraging as many eligible small firms to apply and make the most of this new scheme.

Business Minister Lord Callanan said:

Tech is proven to boost business productivity and help firms, however big or small, to work better.

The cost-effective support, advice and software offered through Help to Grow: Digital will help to level up the UK economy, backing jobs and growth and bolstering the ability of our businesses to compete globally.

Tech and Digital Economy Minister Chris Philp said:

We're working hard to make sure small businesses can capitalise on technology's potential to give people new skills, create jobs and power growth in the economy.

The support and advice provided by this new scheme will supercharge small businesses and build a workforce with tech talents fit for the future.

Lord Karan Bilimoria, CBI President, said:

The launch of Help to Grow digital will help thousands of SME businesses invest in technologies. Supporting businesses on their digital transformation journey is fundamental to unlocking economic growth, boosting productivity and creating a more resilient future for firms.

The financial support and practical guidance offered under this scheme as well as under the Help to Grow: Management of which I'm a member on the advisory council, will be a valuable additional resource to business leaders.

Driving greater technology adoption continues to be a central aspect of the government's Innovation Strategy, and will be essential in delivering a high skill, high wage economy.

Through the Help to Grow schemes, the government is helping businesses to boost their productivity with training and software that is proven to get results.

This is also just the start of the new scheme. The government is looking to bring on further products that will help small and medium-sized businesses to grow, including new software to help businesses maximise their sales online.

Help to Grow: Management offers business leaders management and leadership training. Designed to be manageable alongside full-time work, businesses receive 50 hours of training across 12 weeks.

The course is 90% funded by government and delivered by leading business schools across the UK, with the support of experienced entrepreneurs and leading figures from industry.

Courses have been running at business schools across the UK since June.

The Help to Grow: Digital scheme is delivered through [a new online platform](#)

To qualify for the financial discount through Help to Grow: Digital, businesses can be from any business sector, but must meet all 4 of the following criteria:

- be a business based in the United Kingdom registered with Companies House or be a registered society on the Financial Conduct Authorities Mutuals Register
- be employing between 5 and 249 people.
- have been actively trading for over 12 months, and have an incorporation date of at least 365 days prior to application
- be purchasing the approved software for the first time
- eligible businesses will receive one financial discount towards the purchase of one approved software product up to a maximum of £5,000 (not including VAT) in Customer Relationship Management and Digital

Accounting software product categories

- additional software product categories will be available with the discount soon, including e-Commerce software
- the financial discount covers 12 months' worth of approved software product core costs, exclusive of VAT

The approved software products from technology suppliers on the Help to Grow: Digital online platform for wave 1 are:

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software:

- Zestia Ltd
- Zymplify
- Livepoint Software Solutions Ltd
- Esteiro Business Solutions Ltd
- Deskpro Ltd

Digital Accounting software:

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software allows businesses to store their customer contact and order data all in one secure, central location. CRM has the capability to simplify business processes and enable businesses to be more profitable and efficient.

Businesses who use CRM systems to manage their sales and customers see on average [an 18% boost to their productivity](#).

Digital Accounting software makes essential business finance tasks like raising invoices, tracking spend, and sharing information easier to manage. Businesses who adopt Digital Accounting software see on average an [11.8% increase in employee sales over 3 years](#).

To find out how your business can get Help to Grow, [visit the GOV.UK Help to Grow page](#).