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quelqu'un da.*

**\*"TALK BUSINESS TO ANYONE IN THE WORLD"**

**XBRL:** The ideal solution to transforming your  
business reporting requirements.

# Quel est XBRL ?\*

## What is XBRL?

XBRL is a technology language for the electronic communication of business and financial data which is being implemented in an increasing number of countries around the world. It provides major benefits in the preparation, analysis and communication of business information. It also offers cost savings, greater efficiency and improved accuracy and reliability to all those involved in supplying or using financial data.

XBRL stands for eXtensible Business Reporting Language. It is one of a family of "XML" languages, which is becoming a standard means of communicating information between businesses and on the Internet.

XBRL is being developed by an international non-profit consortium of over 450 major companies, organisations and government agencies. It is an open standard, free of licence fees. It is already being put to practical use in a number of countries and the implementation of XBRL is growing rapidly around the world.



## How does XBRL work?

The idea behind XBRL is simple. Instead of treating financial information as a block of text – as in a standard Internet page, spreadsheet or a printed document – it provides an identifying tag for each individual item of data. For example, company net profit or net current assets each has its own unique tag which is understandable to computer software systems. These tags contain information about the item including its description e.g. 'accounts receivable', its value and currency and whether the amount is a debit or a credit.

All the elements or tags are grouped together into a collection of financial and business reporting terms known as a 'taxonomy'. These taxonomies are available for free and are downloadable from the websites of XBRL international, standard setting bodies and specific country XBRL websites. XBRL is extensible, meaning that the terms available for use can be customised so that companies using XBRL can create their own elements – called "extensions" – to describe a unique reporting situation.

Information on XBRL International can be found on [www.xbrl.org](http://www.xbrl.org)

## What can it do?

The introduction of XBRL tags enables automated processing of business information by computer software, cutting out laborious and costly processes of manual re-entry and comparison. Computers can recognise the information in an XBRL document, select it, analyse it, store it, exchange it with other computer systems and present it automatically in a variety of ways to users. XBRL greatly increases the speed of handling of financial data, reduces the chance of error and permits automatic checking of information.



Companies can use XBRL to save costs and streamline their processes for collecting and reporting financial information. Consumers of financial data, including investors, analysts, financial institutions and regulators, can receive, find, compare and analyse data much more rapidly and efficiently if it is in XBRL format.

XBRL can handle data in different languages and accounting standards. It can be adapted flexibly to meet different requirements and uses. Data can be transformed into XBRL using suitable mapping tools or it can be generated in XBRL by appropriate software.

XBRL is not an accounting standard and will not change what is reported, only how it is reported.



XBRL South Africa is a not-for-profit organisation operating as a company formed in terms of section 21 of the Companies Act, 1973. Its primary objectives are to promote the use of XBRL in South Africa and to create taxonomies for South African specific reporting requirements, such as the listings requirements issued by the JSE limited. It also supports and undertakes education and training activities.

XBRL International operates in the different countries through so-called country 'jurisdictions'. XBRL South Africa is currently a 'provisional jurisdiction' and will be applying for full jurisdiction status in 2009.

XBRL South Africa currently has over 20 corporate members and a few individual members. Information on XBRL South Africa can be found on [www.xbrl.org/za](http://www.xbrl.org/za).

XBRL South Africa is governed by a Board of Directors and its operations are carried out through a steering committee which includes one representative from each of the members. The administration of XBRL South Africa is provided by The South Africa Institute of Chartered Accountants.

All the cost including the annual subscription to XBRL International are funded by contributions made by the corporate members. Currently corporate members contribute R20 000 per annum.

## The South African XBRL vision

The members of XBRL South Africa envision a time when all financial and other business information produced in South Africa will be done in an XBRL format. This includes all information produced by all organisations internally in an electronic format and any information transferred electronically to regulators and other stakeholders or published on the Internet.

If all information could be produced in an intelligent XBRL format it would save organisations, regulators such as the South African Revenue Services, the Financial Services Board, and the country, hundreds of millions of rands. It would also speed up the flow of information and make it much more usable since it is much easier to analyse, aggregate or compare in an XBRL format.



## The South African XBRL vision

XBRL is endorsed by some of South Africa's significant business enterprises from both the private and government sector. Some of the members include:

ABSA



Alexander Forbes



Alexander Forbes

AngloGold Ashanti



CQS



Deloitte



Ernst & Young



Firststrand Bank



Financial Services Board



Gold Fields



INCE (PTY) LTD



Investec



# Les Membres de XBRL à

## Les Membres de XBRL à Afrique du Sud

### die mitglieder von XBRL in Südafrika

## Afrique du Sud

IQ Group



THE IQ BUSINESS GROUP

JSE Limited



McGregor BFA



Nedbank



**NEDBANK**

PricewaterhouseCoopers

**PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS** 

Softline PASTEL



Standard Bank



**Standard Bank**

South African Reserve Bank



South African Revenue Services  
(SARS)



Telkom SA Limited



The South African Institute of  
Chartered Accountants



**SAICA**  
THE SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE  
OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS  
Leaders in business

*Contacteur des Etats-Unis*  
*Contacteur des Etats-Unis*

## Contact Us

To find out how XBRL will benefit your business, contact XBRL South Africa and we will assist you with this information.

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