

# Federation of Tax Administrators Provides a One-stop Shop for Sharing Standards With State Tax Agencies

**OVERVIEW**



**Customer:** Federation of Tax Administrators  
**Industry:** Government Services  
**Location:** Washington, D.C., USA

**Kiteworks Capabilities Used:**

- Email
- File Transfer
- Automated File Transfer
- File Sharing
- APIs
- Web Forms

The Federation of Tax Administrators (FTA) was organized in 1937 to improve the quality of state tax administration by providing services to state tax authorities and administrators. These services include research and information exchange, training, and intergovernmental and interstate coordination. FTA also represents the interests of state tax administrators before federal policymakers where appropriate.

FTA serves as a custodian and facilitator to the development of state tax standards, connecting states with a technology standards practice that encompasses both the State Modernized e-File (MeF) Program and other tax-type schemas. The organization assists state tax agencies in applying best practices to tax administration to simplify the administration of taxes, increase knowledge sharing, improve compliance, and boost productivity.

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**– Ryan Minnick, Special Projects Manager, Federation of Tax Administrators**

## Seeking Secure Ways To Share Information

Every year FTA’s E-Standards practice works with states and the e-file industry to develop schemas for use with state systems. State tax agencies modify these schemas to fit their specific needs and requirements and share the final version with the developers of state e-file software.

The final schemas were always shared publicly, but with recent increases in tax fraud cases, the schemas must now be confined to authorized users. “We needed a solution that would enable our organization and the state tax agencies to share information securely,” explains Ryan Minnick, special projects manager with FTA. “It had to be a proven, enterprise-grade tool that would be easy to administer and expedite the collaboration between states and the e-file software industry, while simultaneously implementing secure access.”

## Deploying Secure File Sharing

FTA evaluated several solutions and selected Kiteworks for its strong security controls, its ease of use, and a recommendation from one of FTA’s stakeholders. “Kiteworks came highly recommended by a state revenue agency that had already implemented the platform for secure collaboration,” Minnick recalls. “Their positive experience and high marks for Kiteworks’ ability to secure confidential information added to our decision to select this product.”

## Case Study

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FTA selected Kiteworks to power the organization's State Exchange System. Leveraging Kiteworks' authorization with the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP), FTA deployed Kiteworks in a secure, isolated virtual environment. The enterprise-grade security inherent in the Kiteworks platform assures FTA and their state agency stakeholders that all shared content receives the highest level of protection.

FTA purchases individual licenses for each of the states and gives the state agencies full control over their own folders, files, and access rights. "Kiteworks' licensing structure was a huge benefit for us as licenses are only needed for individuals who contribute or upload information," Minnick relates. "States can grant authorized access and download privileges to any number of users, including specific industry staff who can download current information when needed."

## Realizing Significant Benefits

FTA has seen a number of benefits after deploying Kiteworks:

- *Encryption in transit, in use, and at rest.* Data is encrypted through a single platform, no matter its status, providing all users a big security benefit.
- *A one-stop shop for e-file providers.* Tax software companies do not have to go to multiple websites or portals to access each participating state's tax information for use in developing their applications.
- *Avoidance of duplicated implementation across states.* "We needed an easy, efficient, self-service tool that could be implemented quickly," Minnick explains. "When we deployed Kiteworks across multiple income tax jurisdictions, 200 hours of setup translated to thousands of hours of benefit because each jurisdiction didn't have to create its own solution."
- *Wide adoption.* Since launching the State Exchange System at the end of 2016, nearly all state participants in FTA's Modernized e-file Program have adopted the system for securely distributing their information to authorized software vendors. "Using Kiteworks for the State Exchange System has created a level of efficiency for states and e-file software providers that has exceeded our expectations," Minnick contends. "The platform is a huge equalizer, taking the time constraints states work under and making needed information easily and securely available."

## Needs

- Secure file sharing to meet new confidentiality standards
- Easy-to-deploy solution with the flexibility to meet the needs of multiple jurisdictions

## Kiteworks Solution

- Kiteworks secure file sharing to post, share, and collaborate on sensitive information between jurisdictions

## Business Impact

- Secure and efficient collaboration between FTA and state tax administrations
- Consolidation of tax information for e-file software providers at one site, rather than fifty
- Time, labor, and financial savings for state tax administrations with a centralized file sharing solution
- Operational efficiency gains by uploading new technology standards and tax schemas into a single folder rather than emailing updates to dozens of state tax authorities and e-Fileers individually

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# Kiteworks

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