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Tax Research Systems

The Tax Research NetWork (TRN) from CCH is a comprehensive research and tax information suite that includes federal, state, local and international primary source materials and guidance, along with current tax news and analysis. The web-based system allows practices to integrate this data and TRN tools like CCH@Hand into their tax, accounting and Microsoft Office applications, allowing for quick access to information. Several modules are available through TRN, permitting professional firms to select the key topics and tools needed to support their clients and with pricing dependent upon their subscription. Base pricing starts at about $500, with add-on modules starting at $199.

EASE-OF-USE/SEARCH ROUTINE — 5 Stars
TRN's modules are accessible via several different ways, with the primary TRN online search function opening in the user's web browser to a tabbed interface that provides a customizable main screen called the My CCH Favorites, which can include items from CCH's Tax Tracker News and other sources. Other tabs include options for searching news and documents related to specific areas, such as Audit, Federal and State Tax, Estate, Payroll, and other options. Each of these areas, or Libraries, provides additional sub-sections that let users quickly search those topics by the type of source, including primary documents like the Internal Revenue Code, rulings, cases, tax treaties, analysis or the CCH Master Tax Guide. Users can easily set favorite resources or save frequently needed searches that will be incorporated onto the My CCH tab. Users can also access the research system using CCH@Hand or Log-In Express.

The online search system's interface provides a field for performing

processes and make navigation more intuitive. Search screens let users sort items by date or relevance and predetermine the maximum number of results to return. A thesaurus feature is also provided to help strengthen searches. CCH also supports advanced search techniques, such as citing where terms must be in relationship with each other (within three paragraphs or sentences, for example), which also greatly narrows hits to the most relevant findings.

CONTENT — 5 Stars
Users can access an immense collection of libraries, tools, practice aids and other resources through Tax Research NetWork's various add-on modules, including IRS Rulings, cases, tax treaties, BNA's Portfolios, Aspen-Miller accounting and audit guides, state source documents, and a variety of tax news sources. The system's daily Tax Tracker and Smart Charts also enable users to stay on top of legislation that could affect clients' tax treatments.
TRN's Practice Aids and Lookup Tables include FinEst Calcs, Client Letter and Depreciation Toolkits, Interactive Research Aids, Topic Navigator, ZipSales Lookup, IRS Actuarial Factors and a Tax Calendar. Users can access a library of more than 13,000 federal, state and local tax forms and instructions. New modules available through Tax Research NetWork include the FIN48 Manager, Internal
Controls Library, Worldwide Tax Rates and Answers – Europe, Not-for-Profit Compliance Module, Liquor Law Reporter, Podcasts on hot industry topics, New Selection of Audio Conferences, and the Business Incentives Manager.

CUSTOMIZATION — 5 Stars
TRN's customizable home page allows users to set up automatic searches and bring up items through Tax Tracker news that are specifically related to their area of practice and their client base. News sources and hits are accessible from this tab, while still keeping other areas of the program easily reachable.

Additional customization features extend to CCH@Hand, as well as to the saving

unites tax and accounting clients with the research system. Professionals can then quickly run searches based on client areas, with the system automatically noting which clients may be affected by pending legislation or other issues.

SUPPORT & UPDATES — 5 Stars
TRN is exceptionally user friendly, and its customization options further this, providing a search system that is intuitive and including powerful tools. The web-based solution offers good built-in Help features, along with a reorganized Support tab on the interface that offers access to more in-depth assistance regarding searches and usage of other program features, as well as various tips to help users perform smarter searches. Support is included in program pricing.

2008 Overall Rating: 5 Stars