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From the August 2008 Issue

For many practices, the transition to a paperless office environment (or at least a less-paper one) has resulted in significant changes to workflow. Old methods of managing engagement folders are no longer applicable; the way review functions are processed are inherently different; management functions have changed. In short, the paperless revolution has brought new challenges and new opportunities to further increase productivity and enhance efficiency. Programs focused on streamlining these and other public practice issues claimed the spotlight at this year's **Tax & Accounting Technology Innovation Awards**, held in June at the California Accounting and Business Show & Conference in Los Angeles. The 2008 winners were Copanion, Inc. for the GruntWorx system; XCM Solutions for its Workflow & Information Automation Software; CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business, for ProSystem fx Document E-mail Management; and Thomson Reuters for two of its products — Engagement CS and PPC SMART e-Practice Aids – Risk Assessment.

Now in their 5th year, the Innovation Awards were presented by Executive Editor, Gregory L. LaFollette, CPA.CITP, who noted that this year's award recipients seemed to share a common purpose of maximizing efficiencies in public practices. "The movement toward the paperless accounting and tax practice, which professionals have been undertaking for nearly a decade, is well on its way to completion," LaFollette said. "The next step in the continuing evolution of the professional digital environment is rethinking workflow processes to maximize productivity, and each of the products selected for awards this year approach various workflow processes with the goal of streamlining tasks and management functions."

Over the past few years, the Innovation Awards have emerged as the most honored

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Nominated products or services must be less than two years old or have undergone a significant revision or addition during the past two years. They are voted on based upon their innovation and the potential benefit the products or services are likely to deliver to the profession. A total of five awards are presented each year on an "at large" basis, with no categories or rankings.

"Each year, the nominations increase in number and improve in quality, which is both wonderful for the profession and challenging for our judges. We sincerely appreciate the efforts of our nearly 50 judges who vetted this year's nominations. It is a daunting task, indeed!"

Coppanion,
Inc. — GruntWorx
www.Coppanion.com

The GruntWorx system automatically scans, organizes and bookmarks tax documents to save time finding, organizing, entering and reviewing tax data. The web-based solution makes it easy and affordable for any size firm to use scanned tax documents to prepare returns.

GruntWorx reads scanned tax documents, automatically recognizes the type of form, and consistently organizes forms in a single PDF file for each client. The system uses advanced technology to identify tax documents, including brokerage statements, tax organizers and handwritten notes. The PDF file output option allows users to add tick marks and notes to prepare workpapers, while the consistently

organized file helps standardize workflows. The bookmarks make it easy for support

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with thousands of client tax documents over a few short weeks every tax season,” said Steven Ladd, CEO of Copanion. “GruntWorx delivers the highest levels of accuracy in an affordable tax document automation solution that’s easy to use so any size firm can increase productivity. The rapid acceptance of GruntWorx shows that we’re delivering a solution that really makes a difference in tax season. We’re honored to be recognized for an innovative solution that makes tax document automation practical and usable for every practitioner.”

XCM Solutions — Workflow & Information Automation Software

www.XCMSolutions.com

By providing real-time access and control over workflow processes, the web-based XCM Workflow Automation system helps reduce the inefficiencies of moving work manually through accounting and tax practices. From preparation processes through completion, the program maintains and enhances standardization of effective workflow processes, which helps ensure individual accountability. By freeing up time otherwise spent managing these manual workflow processes, partners, managers and staff are also able to spend more time focusing on client service.

Since the program is web-based, staff can access their assigned work from anywhere at any time, whether at the office, client site, home office or other locations. Users are presented with customizable dashboards to prioritize their responsibilities on a real-time basis. In addition, XCM allows members of the firm to easily control client work with one click of a button.

“We’re honored to have our peers recognize XCM as an innovative technology,” said Mark Albrecht, CPA, CEO and Founder of XCM Solutions. “Our customer-guided development process has helped us continuously raise

the bar for workflow automation solutions for the accounting profession. We

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CCH ProSystemfx Document is an electronic document management system geared toward the unique needs of public accounting practices, providing ease of use, enhanced collaboration, simplified regulatory compliance, and protection of firm and client information. The E-mail Management feature in Document further enhances the system by giving users the ability to drag and drop e-mails directly from Microsoft Outlook into client folders in the document management system, as well as the ability to access Document's powerful functionality from within Microsoft Outlook.

With the intuitive look and feel of client folders, the E-mail Management function provides an easy way to manage e-mails and attachments, allowing instant access to everyone within the firm who needs access to these materials. It also provides detailed indexing, versioning, history and retention capabilities. E-mails thus managed through ProSystemfx Document automatically become subject to the firm's document retention policies, helping ensure compliance.

"We're very excited to be recognized for our ongoing commitment to innovation with this Innovation Award for CCH ProSystemfx Document," said CCH President Mike Sabbatis. "As a strategic partner to our customers, CCH is committed to providing professionals with new and transforming technology that enhances their productivity and efficiency."

Thomson Reuters — Engagement CS
[CS.ThomsonReuters.com](https://www.thomsonreuters.com)

The developers at Thomson Reuters took a broad view of professional practice workflow when designing Engagement CS, which integrates directly with all of the other professional tax and accounting programs the vendor offers. With

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tools, and has the ability to quickly import trial balance data. Engagement CS also integrates with PPC audit and risk assessment tools.

“We nominated Engagement CS for an Innovation Award because it does set the standard in the profession, supporting a completely paperless engagement process and ensuring compliance at all levels,” stated Teresa Mackintosh, CPA.CITP, Senior Vice President at the Tax & Accounting business of Thomson Reuters. “With ever-changing audit standards, we are diligent in enhancing Engagement CS to make compliance as easy for our users as possible. Supporting seamless integration with PPC SMART e-Practice Aids is one example of our commitment to product excellence.”

Thomson Reuters — PPC SMART e-Practice Aids – Risk Assessment **[PPC.ThomsonReuters.com](https://ppc.thomsonreuters.com)**

As a part of the PPC e-Tools suite, SMART e-Practice Aids – Risk Assessment is designed to give professional accountants access to electronic versions of PPC Guides, including specialty-focused guides for estates and trusts, auditors, employee benefit plans, financial institutions, governments, nonprofits, valuations and dozens of others.

Providing editable Microsoft Word and Excel versions gives users enhanced productivity features during completion and review, including customizable engagement templates and automated entry of common engagement information. Built-in formulas

also aid in user efficiency, and tick marks are available that work on all Word

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was recognized with a Technology Innovation Award, as this product has transformed

the way in which auditors across the United States have implemented the AICPA Risk Assessment Standards,” said Jim Reeves, Senior Vice President of New Product Development at the Tax & Accounting business of Thomson Reuters. “The integration between PPC SMART e-Practice Aids and Engagement CS is a wonderful example of how our products and services work together to provide a full range of solutions for tax and accounting professionals.”

In addition to these winners of the 2008 Tax & Accounting Technology Innovation Awards, Honorable Mentions were presented to Avalara for its AvaFile program, CPA Service Group for the Disclosure & Reporting Manager, and Thomson Reuters for GoFileRoom ES. These technologies were recognized for possessing significant innovative potential.

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