

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

From the Sept. 2008 Issue

What it Means for Tax & Accounting Pros: Part II of II

In last month's issue, I started this column with the goal of defining Web 2.0, a buzzword that's been floating around for a couple of years, but one upon which not everybody can agree. I dove into a much bigger pond than I had expected. Check out the first part of the column for a brief primer on the subject (www.CPATechAdvisor.com/go/2021).

In part two, I look at the technological elements behind the innovation, and also explore how the phenomenon has affected the tax and accounting space.

The Development Side of the Equation

As noted above, developers are key to the evolution of Web 2.0 applications, and as new technologies and programming tools came into use and developers became

more attuned to potential consumer needs, the websites they created started including more functionality as described in the Interaction and Collaboration sections in last month's column. Technically, most of the programming techniques and languages have been around for some time, but it has been the combination of these techniques and code bases that has enabled the Web 2.0 movement. Even the base elements of much-hyped tools like AJAX, which stands for Asynchronous JavaScript and XML (eXtensible Markup Language), have been around since the 1990s. Another programming technology, SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol) is likewise an XML-based protocol. It is really greater programming expertise that has led to the development of these programming methods, and which has allowed the creation of multi-purpose Web applications that increasingly feel like traditional desktop programs.

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

they incorporated many of the interaction and collaboration features that are hallmarks of Web 2.0. Microsoft's input into this arena has focused on personal and small business versions of the Office Live Workspace, which provides anytime access and collaboration tools for Word, Excel, PowerPoint and other Office programs.

In the professional accounting space, the more notable of these include the full accounting suites from NetSuite and Intacct (both originally developed in the late 1990s) and AccountantsWorld, an integrated suite of professional and SMB business management tools. For professional tax compliance, GoSystem RS opened the field, with Orange Tax Suite Pro coming to market three years ago. While there are programs from other vendors in the tax and accounting space that can be used online via remote access technologies or offer online collaboration tools, these particular systems differ in that they were designed specifically for use over the Internet. They also provide various tools for managing workflow processes across multiple users, sharing files, adding notations for review or other purposes, linking to online resources, and electronic calendar sharing and communication options.

Workflow Optimization

For the professional tax and accounting space, the latest developments in Web 2.0 are centered on automating and optimizing workflow processes by providing capabilities that extend the basic functions found in programs like Groove and SharePoint to more specifically address the unique needs of an accounting and tax practice. These include programs like SurePrep's DreamWorkpapers, and two winners of this year's Tax & Accounting Technology Innovation Awards — XCM Solutions' Accelerated Workflow Automation and Copanion's GruntWorx system.

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

privacy and understand how the benefits for both the program developers and users are significant, and because they are mutual the Web 2.0 evolution is rapidly progressing.

So what is Web 2.0?

Some may decry it as a buzzword, and while it is that, to some extent, it is so much more. It is the new era in Internet usage — not definable as much by the technologies themselves, but by the users of the technologies. While subjectively defined, at its heart, Web 2.0 is an evolutionary process that has driven all of the most innovative advancements to the computer experience over the past eight years, and which will steer our course into the Internet future.

Technology

CPA Practice Advisor is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors.

© 2024 Firmworks, LLC. All rights reserved