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*From the [Jan. 2009 Review](#)
of Tax Research Systems*

[Ed. Note: This article appeared along with the review section.]

Technology, the Internet in particular, has proven to be a wonderfully torturous phenomenon. On the one side, technology has enabled virtually all of our society to be much more productive, performing much more work in the same amount of time. It's also given us the ability to instantly access a wealth of content, knowledge and tools larger than humans have ever been able to. Some have even been freed from office environments, working remotely or from home.

For many, these benefits have also come at the cost of increased workload, while the ever-present connectivity has caused an unprecedented battle between work-life balance. Wi-Fi Internet access, G3-enabled smart phones, laptop computers and various other gadgets keep us seconds away from work, whether we're in the office, our car, our home or even on vacation.

Another challenge posed by giving us access to virtually all of the libraries, documents and information in the world is wading through these mountains of knowledge to find what we actually need. Once again, everything is out there and can generally be found for free, especially government-produced materials. But you can also find pretty proprietary information such as research and analysis, greatly in part due to unauthorized copying and posting to various websites where their credibility may be questionable.

For taxation issues, it is imperative to not only be able to quickly locate relevant information, but to also have the utmost confidence in its reliability.

And this is where much of the value lies in subscription-based tax research

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there are less comprehensive options that provide the essentials, such as core tax law, treasury regulations and other government offerings. The availability of this information has even led to free tax research websites managed by reputable organizations. These sites cannot offer the same breadth as the paid subscription systems, especially in terms of analysis and commentary, but they do offer a valuable service to professionals who need specific information from these sources. Here's an introduction to a few of them.

TAXALMANAC.ORG

Run by Intuit, TaxAlmanac.org is specifically designed for tax professionals and is actually managed by the practicing professionals who use the site. It is set up similarly to [Wikipedia](#), allowing practitioners to access primary source documents and also interact with each other. The result is an online community of tax and accounting professionals that can share their collective knowledge with each other, helping each to determine appropriate tax treatments and solve other issues.

ACCOUNTANTSWORLD.COM

AccountantsWorld offers an array of mostly web-based programs for professional accounting firms, but also provides free tax and accounting content on its website, including news, tips, articles, listings of government entity websites and other tools. It also hosts several professional discussion forums that enable practitioners to interact and help each other.

1040.COM

The 1040.com website, managed by Drake Software, serves two purposes. First, it is a general tax information and news website primarily geared toward lay taxpayers, but its content, tools and calculators can also be of value to professionals.

Drake also uses its 1040.com domain as the hub for its professional websites,

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