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document distribution to a graphical environment and now to a more useful blend of video, sound and graphics. Not all websites have made the transition, of course, and not all provide the information they could or should.

But with each passing year, there are more websites with better information and services. Certainly with respect to tax preparation and information, the sites have improved substantially in just the past few years.

For the 2009 tax season, therefore, we revisited sites to see how useful they might be to assist accountants in surviving busy season.

Here's a quick list of the five we found most useful:

1. The IRS Website (www.irs.gov).

What began as an online bulletin called the Digital Daily in 1996, the official

IRS website took shape in 2002 and was renamed IRS.Gov. But the more significant

changes came with a late-2006 makeover. Customer surveys had indicated that

navigation and search capabilities were poor on the old site, so the agency spent five months developing criteria and then held a shootout among search

engines. The result is an appealing website with a strong set of features for tax professionals.

Here you'll find the latest changes to tax laws, a checklist of how to prepare taxes for clients, assorted tips and forms, as well a insights into the IRS strategies and messages for the year. You'll also discover

a complete set of federal tax regulations, an electronic “reading room”

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discussion forums where tax practitioners can ask questions of other tax professionals.

TaxAlamac.com is immensely popular. From November 2007 through April 2008,

there was an average of 5,502 unique visitors per day to the site, an increase of 55 percent over the previous year. The site gets a lot of international visitors, as well, mainly from tax professionals who are doing returns for U.S. expatriates living in their native countries.

Of special interest is the summary of changes in the final version of the American Recovery and Re-Investment Act, the stimulus package just signed into law by President Obama.

3. Tax 2.0 (www.tax2point0.com).

This site, operated by corporate tax consultants [Vertex, Inc.](#), provides an interactive forum for tax professionals. It offers news, forums and blogs from leading tax commentators. The home site for Vertex has always been a useful place for tax professionals to visit, particularly in the Resource section. A strong group of interesting tax links outlines organizations, research sites and government sites from the local to the federal.

4. Tax Topics (www.taxtopics.net).

Tax Topics is a compendium of links to articles, other resources, federal and California tax laws, and other information compiled by author Alan G. Kalman. It is less a website than a portal, offering virtually the largest collection of links to information on its own and selected other sites.

5. Domino's Pizza (www.dominospizza.com).

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your pizza will be delivered hot, combined with economy and security,

put

this at the top of the delivery list if not the flavor list.

Of course, there are lots of other sites that may prove helpful but are not in our top five.

- **CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business**, provides free news and analysis of recent tax and financial regulations on its homepage www.cch.com.
- **Thomson Reuters** has an outstanding state electronic filing guide that saves time and effort at cs.thomsonreuters.com/support/reference/elf.
- **The Tax Policy Center** at www.taxpolicycenter.org/index.cfm has everything you want to know about how tax law is being formulated.
- **BNA** offers tax articles and news that may be of value when tax decisions need to be made. Find that site at www.bnasoftware.com/News_Articles/Index.asp.

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