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The Checkpoint product is a research platform covering a wide range of tax and accounting topics. Tax research is just one of many subject matters addressed in Checkpoint, and that will be the focus of this review.

Ease of Use/Search Routine:

Research begins with a keyword or words entry and checking boxes to select from the sources to which the user is subscribed. These options include Primary Sources (IRC for example), Editorial, Legislation, News, and Archives. The selection of source choices can be saved for future use.

More complex search strings can be built using the words and, or, and exclude, as well as specific phrases. The search results page presents one line per category of source, with the number of documents found to the right (even if that number is zero, another user-defined option). These result lines are organized in an indented hierarchy that reflects the main organizational structure of the source material. A source category with one or more hits is highlighted and, when clicked, opens up another hierarchy with results ranked by relevancy (if so chosen by the user), a title and brief summary, and a relevancy score. Relevancy is determined by a combination of word frequency within the document and within the entire database.

Content:

The tax research content is a combination of the familiar RIA, PPC, WG&L, EBIA brands, and BNA. For cross-border tax issues, content is included from

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Customization:

Upon the initial login, the new user is stepped through a series of windows to set the default homepage layout and areas of research. This involves selecting the Home tab (Tax or five others), followed by the default research area, the preferred news source for the Newsstand, selections and frequency of emailed newsletters, preferred format for exporting, and options for result set display. Any of these options can be changed later.

The Income Tax Developments Wizard will guide the user through selection of jurisdictions and topics to compile a custom-scheduled search, with an email notification when new results are available. A very notable feature is custom folders, created and named by the user.

Selected search results can be saved within a folder, and this collection of research can be retrieved, modified or deleted later as needed. Finally, the entire homepage can be heavily customized in appearance by dragging any of the 14 content panes around or even removing them entirely. These panes reflect the many sources and types of content available under the subscription.

Help, Support & Updates:

The Help link opens a new window that presents extensive Help text in the familiar Windows format, organized into chapters that can be searched by keyword. New this year is the International Tax Wizard and state and local chart creation for partnership returns. Technological enhancements are released four times per year; other content is updated as available, particularly the new developments and editorial content. A Checkpoint subscription is priced by the content chosen, starting at \$1,000 minimum and going up into five figures. The vendor also noted that there are some products available starting at a few hundred dollars. With

a combination of rich content and easy customization, Checkpoint is an outstanding

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