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Conference heard a lot of talk about the practicing in the cloud. But they didn't just talk about it, they walked it.

Taija Sparkman • May. 09, 2012

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Professionals at the Fourth Annual Accounting Technology New York Show and CPE Conference heard a lot of talk about the practicing in the cloud. But they didn't just talk about it, they *walked* it.

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As Root led participants to each booth, vendors provided quick demonstrations of their products and services, while offering best practices and answering questions.

Key takeaways from each exhibitor included:

- **Office Tools Professional** – With this solution, users can bring all of their clients into one database that can be used for time management and workflow. It also features a company-wide calendar and integration into CRM.
- **CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business** – The key to having a good website is to have useful and relevant information that is constantly pushed out to clients. It's not enough to simply have the information on your website. "You don't want to work in the business. You need to work **on** the business," advised David Bergstein, CPA.CITP, Director of Strategic Relationships.
- **ShareFile** – With approximately 40 states making it illegal to email confidential data such as tax returns, professionals need other ways to share documents electronically with their clients. ShareFile offers a secure file transfer solution that doesn't require third-party access or logging in through a website.
- **Intacct** – With this solution, firms can reduce their turnaround time from 30-45 days to almost immediately, collaborating with clients in real-time. Firms of any size can use Intacct and it allows users to keep simultaneous tabs open on multiple clients. Similar to opening tabs in an Internet browser, this feature is not currently available in desktop software.
- **Thomson Reuters** – Firms need a strategy in place when planning to implement client portals and other cloud technology. The five important things to keep in mind when beginning the transition process are: the chosen cloud solution must

integrate seamlessly into your existing system or it will cost you more money and

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accountants need to offer 24/7 access via client portals as well. In today's world, websites are more than just marketing tools. They are the foundation for business and firms need to effectively utilize them.

- [Xero](#) – Xero has branded itself as the “beautiful accounting software” and is currently connected to over 5,000 banks in the U.S. Every night its software is updated with the latest bank rates and it offers more than just banking transactions. Xero features a comprehensive dashboard, real-time rebalancing, real-time foreign currency gains and losses and the ability to take pictures of receipts. Many accounting firms have started bundling Xero software with their services and selling it to their clients.

Technology

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