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Drake Software
(800) 890-9500
www.DrakeSoftware.com

From the **May 2013 review** of Professional Tax Preparation systems.

Best Firm Fit: Firms who prepare primarily 1040's (including multiple locations) who need to also prepare returns for other kinds of entities. Users who want a value-oriented application with a comprehensive suite of solutions for a single price. The company's most popular bundle, Drake Unlimited, includes all individual and business forms for Federal and State, unlimited e-filing for Federal and State, as well as free online training, a Tax Planner, Client Write Up, Client Status Manager, Drake Document Manager, a preparer website, Bank Software, and unlimited telephone support. This bundle also includes continuing education, free preparer websites at www.1040.com, and will integrate with the Company's optional SecureFilePro (www.SecureFilePro.com) portal solution.

Strengths

- Top rated live support and high customer satisfaction ratings
- Affordable all-inclusive pricing includes all entities, states, e-filing, tax planning, document management, and write-up system with live & ATF Payroll
- New web-based 1040 option and pilot project for a hosted version of the full Drake software.
- Integration with GruntWorx for paperless and automated tax prep
- Multi-office manager sync system; free basic websites for firms.

Potential Limitations

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solutions (see our 2013 review of this product at www.cpapracticeadvisor.com/10832729), and in 2012 by marketing the Beyond415 tax notice management solution to its customers.

Drake Tax includes support for outputting any documents to a PDF format for storage in their document storage system, the Drake Document Manager. The application also includes a tool for managing multiple offices which synchronizes data from the branch offices with the main office. Many documents, forms, and support, but not the application itself, are available in English or Spanish.

The software has a number of tools for evaluating tax scenarios, including a MFJ/MFS comparison tool, a tax planning tool, AMT calculations, and other tools and templates. Drake also includes a tool for client invoicing, but does not offer integration with merchant services.

For 2013, Drake has added two new ways users can access their software:

- Drake Hosted is a pilot project which is expected to be available to a wide audience in 2014 where the full Drake desktop software is hosted in the Drake Cloud.
- Drake Zero is a web-based professional 1040 preparation software which offers users the essential features needed to prepare individual income tax returns. This tool uses the same core calculation engine as the full Drake desktop software, and supports complex/multi-state returns.
- The Drake Document Manager will be able to be used with either on-premises or cloud-based storage

The Company plans to announce more details about these products in the second quarter of 2013.

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Summary and Pricing

Drake is a very popular tax compliance solution, and continues to make enhancements to its offerings to make them more appealing to existing and new preparers. The solution is designed for speed of data input using only a keyboard, and although the interface is not a work of art, the speed at which preparers can use this tool is very impressive.

Drake Unlimited includes all individual and business forms for Federal and State, unlimited e-filing for Federal and State, as well as free online training, a Tax Planner, Client Write Up, Client Status Manager, Drake Document Manager, a preparer website, Bank Software, and unlimited telephone support for \$1,495. (Significant discounts are available for early renewal.) A pay per return package is also available for \$285, and includes 15 returns, with additional returns available for \$19 each.

2013 Ratings:

Drake Tax 2013	
Core Product Functions/Features	5.0
Paperless Workflow	4.5
Integration	4.5
Help/Support	4.75
Overall Rating	4.75

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