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businesses. The company reports that 65% of their users work with professional tax and accounting firms. Also, as one of two providers in this review which offer hosting of Canadian tax and accounting applications, firms with operations in both the US and Canada may be particularly interested in this company's offerings.

### **Strengths:**

- Offer custom server hosting of a wide range of applications (currently reported as over 400 programs) and databases used by accounting professionals, law firms, non-profit organizations, and other businesses.
- A standardized app hosting package is also available, with a more limited offering that includes QuickBooks, Sage 50, Microsoft Word and Excel 2010, as well as SpringAhead, Bill.com, and SmartVault.
- Cloud9's President/CEO is a former accountant with years of experience operating his own practice, and the company hosts an impressive listing of applications for accounting professionals.
- The company provides hosting to firms and their clients, with the income from client QuickBooks hosting offsetting the firm's total IT expenditures.
- New user setup is not automated, and may require intervention of tech support personnel during normal business hours (6A-6P weekdays, excluding holidays).

### **Potential Limitations:**

- Data centers are located in the Southwestern US

### **Overview**

Cloud9 Real Time is an application hosting services provider based in San Diego, California. The company is focused on hosting a wide range of applications for organizations in industries which include accounting firms, law firms, and non-profit organizations. 65% of the company's customers are tax & accounting

professionals (e.g. CPAs, EAs, RTRPs, and professional bookkeepers). Cloud9 is an

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and Microsoft Excel. All other Microsoft Office applications such as Outlook, Access, and PowerPoint are not supported in these plans. Plus accounts also provide support for common add-ins, including Bill.com, SmartVault, SpringAhead, as well as private labeling. Users can access both Sage 50 and QuickBooks using a single login for an additional \$15 per user per month, plus related publisher hosting fees. Although the company does not host Microsoft Office and Microsoft Exchange in the standard accounting software hosting, these applications are available on the company's custom server plans.

Support is available from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM PT, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Support is delivered in a variety of methods, including e-mail, web support ticket, and telephone. Emergency support tickets after hours are created by an answering service, and are forwarded to a support engineer if users cannot login, or if they cannot access data or applications. Any other issues, including new user creation, program troubleshooting, or file restoration requests are handled the next business day. Documentation to help end users and their IT support professionals connect computers, tablets, printers, and scanners to the securely hosted applications and data are available from the company's support website.

### **Summary & Pricing**

Standardized offerings for QuickBooks and Sage 50 hosting are priced at \$39.99 per month per user (Basic) and \$49.99 per month per user (Plus), and do not include Intuit hosting fees of \$5 per user per month. Users who prepay for these standardized hosting services receive a year of service for the price of ten months of hosting (e.g. \$399 and \$499 for Basic and Plus hosting, respectively.)

Since Cloud9's virtual servers are configured to meet individual needs, the company prices these services on an individualized basis.

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