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Which came first, the chicken or the egg? When we look back on this time in the evolution of the Accounting Profession, I predict it will be nearly impossible to say which came first – the proliferation of mobile applications, or the changing dynamics and expectations of our clients and staff. No matter the answer, we have crossed the tipping point into a brave new world.

Clients and staff expect accessibility first and foremost to information and to their providers of professional services. New staff members joining our teams have limited and distant experiences that were not all “connected.” What is a common baseline assumption really underscores a more critical point – our profession needs to continue to adapt and evolve.

The rapid development of mobile solutions providing innovative new features and added functionality for accounting professionals can be tied to changing expectations, rapid consumerization (the crossover of things from our personal to work lives), and the constant innovation of devices that has made these things possible.

Not too long ago, Wolters Kluwer, CCH customers were telling us that being able to call up important tax information by tapping their smartphones while meeting with clients and getting work done outside the office would be ideal. To meet their needs, our first generation of mobile tax research, content and solutions, including the free

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demands for wanting to view specific files, securely retrieve client data, key in billing time and update project statuses – all while they were on-the-go and at any time.

Today, the formidable combination of readily available, up-to-the-minute research integrated with advanced, cloud-based workflow tools, really separates future-ready firms from the rest of the pack when it comes to meeting clients' growing needs. More robust mobile functionality offered with our solutions such as the [ProSystem fx Mobile](#) app, the [e-File Status](#) app for checking the status of federal tax returns and now even quick access to documents via the cloud-based [CCH Axcess](#) tax preparation, compliance and firm management solution really enables professionals to get more accomplished on-the-go than ever before.

Those changing client and staff expectations in this thriving era of innovation are making the phrase, "I'll check when I get to the office," nearly obsolete. Mobile efficiency is now considered the rule, not the exception, when it comes to day-to-day tasks such as:

- Viewing and updating the status of current projects assigned to firm staff members
- Responding to client needs when contacted outside the office (current work status, recent billing information)
- Having mobile access to files stored in document management systems – quickly calling them up whenever contacted by clients
- Communicating/collaborating with clients via mobile devices (specifically via mobile apps that are client facing)

Although it may not be practical to complete a tax return from end-to-end on a mobile device, the advent of more mobile tax workflow functionality and research content that is seamlessly integrated with existing firm software solutions has dramatically closed the gap between professionals accessing what they need, when they need it and serving clients on their time tables. And more mobile innovations

are on the way as our customers tell us other things they'd like to do and more

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