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Collaboration

The acceleration of change and adoption of new technology is occurring at a rapid pace. The environment in the profession includes shifting filing deadlines, retiring baby boomers, and increased regulation. More than ever, firms must foster a culture

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Accounting firms should elevate themselves beyond compliance work to become partners to the businesses they're serving, Jon Baron, managing director of the Professional segment with the Tax & Accounting business of Thomson Reuters, told

nearly 1,500 tax and accounting professionals today at the company's 35th annual

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mobile than in the past, and they expect that same kind of access, convenience, and connectivity from their accounting professionals and other service providers.”

“Today, clients and prospects expect more,” said Baron. “It goes beyond accounting. Clients want a partner that provides advice and assistance in truly driving their business and financial results, not just a firm that manages compliance requirements.”

According to Baron, the top three IT areas small and medium businesses are managing are cloud computing, social media, and mobile solutions. Today there is more data to review and more analytics available than in the past, so it is essential that accounting professionals find better ways to manage data, both in-firm and for their clients.

Baron provided data on technology and growth trends, adoption patterns, and profession economic indicators, each providing insight as to where the profession is enjoying success and where practitioners need to increase their pace of change. Baron provided data from various profession surveys and resources and highlighted these areas:

- 35% of firms report not having a firm website.
- 40% of firms are not leveraging a document management system and thus not taking advantage of paperless workflow efficiencies or the elevated client service of offering client portals.
- 83% of firms are not using any cloud-based solutions.
- 76% of firms still rely on paper as the primary method of delivering completed tax returns to clients.

“Thomson Reuters strives to help our clients navigate this fast-paced, technology-driven world,” said Baron. “We’re dedicated to our current product suite and also

committed to our clients' future, providing them with innovative, cloud-based,

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workflow that offers anytime, anywhere access via any device with an intuitive, easy-to-learn, clean interface.

The longest running professional conference of its kind, this year's SYNERGY Users' Conference continues more than three decades of growth since the event began in Fort Lauderdale, Florida in 1981. Over the years, the annual conference has evolved into one of the profession's premiere venues for sharing insights, exchanging ideas, and gaining hands-on experience with the latest technology in the tax and accounting profession.

The conference also brings back the popular roundtable discussions organized for both large and small firms, and keynote presentations by profession leaders and motivation experts. In addition to Baron, this year's roster of keynote speakers includes Tom Hood, CEO of the Maryland Association of CPAs and the Business Learning Institute, and Eric Saperston, best-selling author, award-winning filmmaker, and "Live In Wonder" enthusiast.

Accounting • Technology

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