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800-630-2218 tax.CCHGroup.com

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*From the August 2005 **Review of Sales & Use Tax Software***

CCH's sales & use tax solution is a combination of services including the CertiTax product suite, ZipSales Returns and ZipSales Database/Lookup with Taxability, and eSalestax.com. The CertiTax suite of products includes CertiCalc, CertiShip, CertiAudit and CertiFile. ZipSales Returns is a sales tax preparation system that supports all taxing jurisdictions in the United States. ZipSales Database is a tax rate database, mapped by ZIP code, and broken down by state, county, city and local taxing jurisdiction. eSalestax.com (www.esalestax.com) is a marketing site that gives prospective users the ability to learn about the product and sign up for trial usage.

ZipSales Returns is a hosted service that is mapped to a company's accounting program and allows for real-time transfer and sharing of data in support of populating, calculating and filing sales and use tax returns.

Pricing for the CertiTax product suite is \$560 to \$18,000 annually, depending on volume. ZipSales Returns costs \$2,875 to \$17,000 annually, depending on volume. ZipSales Database with Taxability (for general merchandise) costs \$2,520 to \$6,300 (tiered based on number of states). Pricing varies for other product groups.

Navigation & Data Entry – 4.5 Stars

As previously noted, CertiTax and ZipSales Returns is a hosted web service that is accessed via a web browser. After setup and mapping to the local accounting program, CertiTax and ZipSales Returns manage the process of calculating sales tax on an invoice-by-invoice basis in real-time. In most situations, no additional data entry is required, as tax returns are automatically populated with data created and

stored during the order entry process. Users can override calculated amounts on

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worksheets from data uploaded from the company's sales and accounting programs, providing review-ready returns that are ready for either paper or electronic submission to taxing jurisdictions.

Users can review, edit, print and audit tax returns, including archived returns, audit trails and reports. Users are presented with current and historical returns in a format that is sortable by return date, jurisdiction and other data, with returns appearing as forms in *.PDF format that can be directly edited or approved. The system allows overriding of return data and logs activities to the audit trail.

Please note that accounting practitioners prepare returns from "scratch" in support of client compliance needs. While I was able to create and print sales tax returns, ZipSales Returns was designed to interact with commercial accounting packages.

CertiTax and ZipSales Returns provides, creates and manages data that enables and supports management review of the sales tax filing process, including a list of returns with the amount of tax paid, filing/e-filing status, GL reference codes and more.

Paper Filing, Electronic Compliance & Payment – 5 Stars

ZipSales Returns is extremely capable when it comes to tax compliance, offering complete support for paper filing as well as offering support for electronic filing in all jurisdictions for which it is required. ZipSales Returns supports Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) for remittance of tax collections.

Rate Updates – 5 Stars

As a web-based service, CertiTax and ZipSales Returns provide all tax rate updates and adjustments to rate tables as necessary. Users need not take action.

Help/Training – 4.5 Stars

Support includes FAQs, traditional telephone and email-based customer support,

online and downloadable User Guides, web-based and live seminars, hands-on

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that only a comprehensive solution can deliver. This is not a system for simple return compliance; it is a system designed to deal with complexity of multiple entities, multiple product codes and multiple tax jurisdictions — a fit to medium-sized businesses.

I spoke with a “veteran” web service user of three years who said the product is easy to operate. He also added that “support for paper and electronic filing is excellent. We never wait more than 15 minutes. We are very satisfied.”

2005 Overall Rating – 5 Stars

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