The programs in this review offer compliance for a variety of areas, from fairly comprehensive systems that offer compliance for almost all entity types with productivity and practice management tools, to programs that focus on individual and business entity compliance, to a few specialty systems that help professionals fill a niche left by the other tax vendors or offer additional analysis and workflow streamlining. Each of these programs approaches its tasks from uniquely different ways, but all are adept at providing reliable basic calculations and end products. It is what happens in between, of course, that determines whether a tax program is right for a particular user.

Each tax practice (and for that matter, each individual preparer) has its own likes and dislikes about navigation, data entry and workflow processes. They may not always do things the efficient way, but sometimes they don't care — it's just the way they do it. Add to this the greatly varied client types that different practices have and you get a very diverse set of needs. Some practices need compliance for every entity and have enough clients of those varying types to justify using a comprehensive tax preparation suite. These were reviewed in our April/May 2006 issue, which included only those programs that support forms 1040, 1065, 1120, 1120S, 1041, 706, 709, 990 and 5500. Not all packages include all of these forms because many tax professionals don't need them. The systems in this review provide alternatives to some of the larger suites for tax practices that don't need everything and to those that may need a specialty compliance tool.

The key to finding the tax software that is perfect for your firm is to first

survey is geared primarily toward your 1040 and tax and accounting practices.)

Technology

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