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Apr. 17, 2007

*From the April/May 2007 [Review](#)  
of [Professional Tax Preparation Systems](#)*

The ProSystem *fx* suite of tax, accounting and productivity software from CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business, is one of the most comprehensive offerings on the market for professional accountants, providing applications for virtually every aspect of client service and workflow, including write-up, engagement, year-end tax compliance, sales tax compliance, paperless document management, asset management, online tools and tax research. The ProSystem *fx* Tax program is comprehensive in its own right, offering compliance support for all federal and state forms, along with many municipalities and included e-filing for applicable forms. Because of its high-end integration and thorough approach to tax compliance, the highly advanced system is one of the most-used by leading CPA firms. Various bundles and pay-per-return pricing plans are available, while a four-user license of ProSystem *fx* Tax with support for all entities (1040, 1120, 1120S, 1065, 706, 709, 990, 5500) and all states costs about \$10,000. However, actual firm needs may result in a lower price.

**Learning Curve — 4 Stars**

Designed for use either in a stand-alone mode, or in networked, multiple preparer settings, ProSystem *fx*'s user interface is consistent across all of its tax modules, opening to a client selection screen that is tailored to the specific user by showing only those returns to which they are assigned for preparation or review. From this screen, a menu on the left allows the user to easily sort, filter or search client returns and then either create a new client return or select an existing one to work in. Users can select either form-based, interview or worksheet methods of data entry and can toggle between the methods as desired.

All of the data-entry methods provide a Navigation menu on the screen that displays

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calculated or transferred data include links to the source documents, while users also have the ability to attach documents to any field. Authorized users can override calculated entries, and notes or comments can be added to any field with the information highlighted for review. Overall, ProSystem *fx* Tax has a generally intuitive interface, but its comprehensive feature set can be a little overwhelming so formal training on the program is recommended. The other products in the ProSystem *fx* Office line generally follow the same interface structure and share databases, strengthening the integration within the suite.

### **Use/Workflow & Productivity Tools — 5 Stars**

ProSystem *fx* is a workhorse for larger practices, providing extensive tools and workflow management functions designed to increase the efficiency of the preparation and review process. One of the most significant new features is the optional ProSystem *fx* Scan (formerly BOCDIP), which allows firms to scan client documents into a program that automatically identifies what type of document it is (W-2, K-1, 1099, brokerage statements, etc.) and then creates bookmarked PDF files for the documents. ProSystem *fx* Tax also has a new online e-filing status system that shows when, whether and why returns have been released for transmission, transmitted, accepted or rejected. The new e-file system also supports multiple direct deposits of refunds. The system supports multiple monitors, and its integrated modules share data throughout, such as with its K-1 data transfer feature. As well, personalized to-do lists and due-date monitoring functions for each of the staff provide a structured process. During preparation, users have line-by-line access to research and instructions, and can attach notes or tick marks to fields that need to be revisited or reviewed later.

Managerial functions in the program include an audit trail of activity within

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leaving the program or document on which they are working. ProSystem *fx* Tax can also integrate with CCH's practice management system, providing more extensive management and control over workflow processes. The system includes integrated depreciation and depletion reports that can be linked to a government form.

### **Integration/ Import & Export — 5 Stars**

As a suite of tax, accounting and firm productivity products, the ProSystem *fx* line is exceptionally adept at automatically transferring data between programs and modules as needed, but always provides easy drilldown access to the source document for calculated or transferred entries. This can greatly reduce data entry for the professional in addition to helping ensure correct data entry. The available integrated tax research functions of the Tax Research Network and CCH@Hand are also excellent tools. ProSystem *fx* Tax integrates Schedule D with the BasisPro Analyzer from Wolters Kluwer Financial Services, and can import M-3 information from third-party software. The program also sports simplified Excel data importing and improved PDF functionality.

### **Support/Training & Help System — 5 Stars**

ProSystem *fx* Tax includes an excellent built-in Help system that includes a variety of right-click Help functions such as links to field-specific instructions, research, guidance and links to online support. Tutorials and instruction guides are also included with the program, and the company's online support center has FAQs, downloadable updates, and product demonstrations. CCH offers several formal training options, including on-site and online seminars, web conferences and an annual tax update session. The company also holds an annual user conference with training programs.

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