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From the Nov. 2008 Review of
Client Write-Up Systems

Both ATX and TaxWise, now operated by CCH through its Small Firm Services (SFS) division, are well-known for their comprehensive tax suites geared toward small to mid-sized tax-focused offices. In addition to accounting program options that now include payroll, trial balance, fixed asset management and a Client Checkbook tool, CCH SFS also offers a Client Write-Up system designed for ATX and TaxWise users, providing GL, trial balance, reconciliation, after-the-fact payroll, AP, AR and financial statement generation functions. The system costs $420 as a stand-alone that integrates with the user's tax suite, with $336 renewals. An $89 training program is required for the initial licensing of the program. A bundled package that includes Client Write-Up and a live payroll system with all state tax tables is available for $825.

LEARNING CURVE & EASE OF USE – 4.5 Stars
Although branding and name elements are dependent upon which system is being used, the ATX and TaxWise Client Write-Up systems differ only in their integration with the two tax compliance programs, providing a well-designed interface that opens to the most recently used client files and offers primarily text link access to primary features such as checkwriting and reconciliation functions, posting journal entries, and generating financial statements. The main screen also provides pull-down menus across the top for additional access to various lists, after-the-fact payroll functions, data-entry activities, several summary Quick Look tools, reports and utilities.

Within the journal entry task window, Client Write-Up provides a spreadsheet view of the journal, with tabbed access to account setup functions, the check

register, batch posting, review of financials and the ability to set recurring

importable into the write-up system. Additional import functions are also offered (see Integration/Import/Export section). CCH has recently added credit card reconciliation functions to the programs, as well.

Transaction amounts can be set to automatically distribute to appropriate GL accounts, with the system examining data in several ways, including journal and check entries, financial statements and in Charts of Accounts. Users can set up multi-year budgets. The built-in after-the-fact payroll functions automatically record employee and vendor information for reporting purposes, and include the ability to offer direct deposit. It also provides forms for federal, state and municipal compliance, including W-2s and 1099s.

REPORTING & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – 4 Stars
In addition to customizable full financial sets, Client Write-Up offers a broad selection of additional reports, ranging from trial balance and GL, charts of accounts, journal registers, cash activity, budget reports, payroll options, and compliance output, with GAAP-compliant template-based formatting that can be tailored to specific client or institution needs, including customized placement of all elements. The program also offers Spanish language reporting for financial statements and charts of accounts.

A
Practitioner Says:
"We have a two-person firm located just outside of Denver, Colorado. Our main focus is tax preparation, followed by consulting and write up. We chose the TaxWise Client Write-Up program because of its price and compatibility with our tax software, and we

was a little week on clarity and relevant examples, but it has improved."

INTEGRATION, IMPORT/EXPORT – 4.5 Stars

For data transfer to year-end returns, Client Write-Up integrates directly with the firm's TaxWise or ATX tax application, and the program offers import of client GL data from QuickBooks, Peach-tree and CSV formats. Client Write-Up also offers integration with the PayCycle online professional payroll system.

SUPPORT, TRAINING & HELP SYSTEM – 4.5 Stars

In addition to the expected index-based Help utility and topics, the program provides a full electronic User Guide, Setup Checklist and a Year-End Guide that provides tips for performing quarterly and year-end tasks, information on regulatory and tax changes, as well as program changes. Training is required with the initial purchase of the system ($89), but technical support is free. The support websites for ATX and TaxWise offer additional materials, program updates and support options, including a host of training and CPE-eligible training opportunities.

RELATIVE VALUE – 4 Stars

For practices that have been traditionally focused on tax compliance, but perhaps now are looking for a more consistent year-round client relationship, the Client Write-Up systems available for ATX and TaxWise offer an intuitive and cost-effective means of establishing write-up services. With good import functions and integration with the firm's ATX or TaxWise compliance system, Client Write-Up provides broad reporting, customizable financials and capable after-the-fact payroll that can be turned into a full, live payroll system.

2008 Overall Rating:

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