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40 Under 40 Honoree: Brian Tankersley, CPA.CITP — 38  
Principal, Brian F. Tankersley CPA, Knoxville, TN

**EDUCATION:** BSBA Accounting; BSBA Finance — University of Tennessee

**FAMILY:** Wife, “the lovely and talented Janette Burgin”;  
Son Baker (5)

**HOBBIES & INTERESTS:** travel, gadgets, photography of my five year old son, Formula One racing, baseball, riding my mountain bike; I’m fascinated by all types of technology and transportation (trains, planes, automobiles)

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:** AICPA, TN Society of CPAs, ACFE, Sleeter Group Network

**OTHER PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT:** Associate, K2 Enterprises; Senior Faculty Member, Becker CPA Review

**BLOG:** <http://blog.bftcpa.com>

(focuses on CPA firm technology and has been mentioned in numerous media outlets)

**What’s the one piece of technology that MOST helps you get through your normal workday?**

“My favorite gadget is my PalmOne Treo 755P Smartphone from Sprint. I use this phone for portable e-mail, telephone and on-the-go high-speed (EVDO) Internet access. The applications on the phone make it possible for me to take advantage of those two- to five-minute gaps when I’m waiting on someone or something and away from my laptop. Apps I use include Google Maps for Palm,

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and my iPhone. These wonderful gadgets connect me to the Internet with the speed of EVDO Rev. A (1000K downloads, 300K uploads) just about everywhere I go. I can plug the card into my laptop directly in airports (or even on the plane before the door is closed!), and can also use the router to create a portable wireless network wherever I am so I can use my Skype phone or share my portable wireless with other travelers who look like they need a random act of kindness in the airport. I can also teach from two different laptops during an all-day seminar without having to worry about which one has the Internet connection.”

### **What will be the biggest change over the next five years in the ways tax and accounting firms operate?**

“I think the technology for automated input and processing of data will mature and make it possible to automate much of the data input work, which is currently being outsourced. This will force all of us (including the outsourcers) to move up the value chain and provide more sophisticated services (e.g., less busy work, more deliverables) to justify our revenue stream from a client. Some examples of this software category include tax prep software applications like CCH's ProSystem fx Scan, SurePrep's 1040SCAN system, and Intuit's Source Doc Auto-Entry. In addition to tax prep, I expect software publishers to automate other routine tasks like payables invoice entry, expense report preparation, payment application, entering checks from digitized copies from the bank, automatic matching of entries to assist with reconciliations and other areas of intensive clerical data entry and matching. Enhancements to optical character recognition software and increases in computer processing power will make it possible to finally have an application read and input data efficiently. Many large companies began using tools to do this over 10 years ago, and I expect

these tools to make their way down to small and mid-sized accounting firms in

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of humor.

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Technology

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