Awards, which were announced at a special reception on June 6, at the California Accounting and Business Show & Conference in Los Angeles.

Dec. 01, 2008

From the August 2005 Issue

Technologies focusing on data security, productivity enhancement and client convenience took top honors at the 2005 Tax and Accounting Technology Innovation Awards, which were announced at a special reception on June 6, at the California Accounting and Business Show & Conference in Los Angeles. Sponsored by *The CPA Technology Advisor* and *The NSA Technology Advisor*, the awards recognize advancements to existing technologies as well as innovative developments in software, services, hardware and other applications marketed to the tax and accounting profession.

This year's class of award winners included **CCH, DoubleSight Displays, Maxtor, Thomson Creative Solutions** and **Universal Tax Systems**. In all, more than 75 products and services were nominated for the awards. Nomination packets were sent out to over 25 individuals, including the magazine's editorial staff, contributing writers and advisory board, which includes accounting and tax professionals from across the country who are engaged in public practice in firms ranging from sole practitioners to major, multi-office regional practices. Nomination packets were also sent to various thought leaders in the tax and accounting profession. Each was asked to rank and rate all the nominated products and services via an online survey. The results were then tabulated to determine what products and services would be the recipients of this year's awards.

The awards were presented by Executive Editor Gregory L. LaFollette, CPA.CITP, at a reception ceremony attended by more than 150 conference vendors.

"Our profession faces many challenges in today's marketplace," said LaFollette.

Any software or hardware product or technology service can be nominated for an award, but to qualify, the technology must enhance the productivity of tax and accounting professionals, be commercially available at the time of judging, and be either less than two years old or have undergone a significant redevelopment or addition within that timeframe. All award recipients were selected on an "at-large" basis — there are no categories represented by the winners, nor are the winners ranked against each other. Nominations can be made by any person, including vendor representatives, resellers and end users.

2005 AWARD WINNERS
CCH Tax and Accounting (www.tax.CCHGroup.com) received an award for **CCH@Hand,** a tax and accounting research-focused application that gives users one-click access to research answers in CCH's Internet Tax Research NetWork from Microsoft Office 2003 products, including Word, Excel and Outlook, without leaving the document before them. CCH@Hand takes the user directly to the necessary information within the NetWork product, without ever opening a browser or logging in and without interrupting workflow.

"We're very honored by this special award, which confirms what our users already experience — that CCH is leading the way with innovation and integration to make them more productive and profitable," said CCH Tax and Accounting CEO Kevin Robert.

CCH@Hand also offers additional productivity gains beyond research within Office 2003, providing easy access to answers from various locations. A CCH@Hand toolbar, similar to the familiar Google toolbar, stays at the top of the users' Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. With the toolbar, users can type in phrases or citations for searches or launch a search by highlighting text on a web page.

"With CCH@Hand, users can go straight to the authoritative answers in CCH tax

Innovation Awards recognize the hard work we have put into producing a product that dramatically enhances productivity, especially for those in the accounting and tax professions."

The productivity boost can be quite dramatic, too. Microsoft Research Group studies "show that users performing standard tasks such as window management and switching between documents and applications can see productivity gains of 20 percent or more" with multi-monitor systems.

OneTouch II Maxtor www.Maxtor.com
The Maxtor OneTouch II requires no high-tech knowledge to set it up, giving small business users no excuse to not backup their computers. The new system includes an exclusive version of Dantz Retrospect, a software program designed for easy backup. The system stores everything, including documents, programs, system settings, e-mail and more, and includes a security feature called Maxtor DriveLock to prevent unauthorized access. The simple restore function allows the user to reinstall files that are accidentally deleted or, in LaFollette's case, can be used to recreate a complete computing system onto a new machine in the case of theft.

"We are honored that our Maxtor OneTouch II was selected by The CPA Technology Advisor for its 2005 Tax and Accounting Technology Innovation Awards," said Stacey Lund, vice president of marketing for Maxtor's Branded Products Group. "Small business owners, especially accountants, need a simple and affordable backup solution to protect their critical business and client data.

"The Maxtor OneTouch II drive is just that solution," she said. "It's easy to install, features Maxtor's exclusive DriveLock technology for added data protection, and is unequaled in its intuitive backup and restore functionality. So now, the most difficult part of backing up may be choosing which capacity Maxtor OneTouch II drive to buy."

Maxtor OneTouch II systems start at about $150 for a 100GB model, and go to $319

Advisor as one of the most innovative advancements for the accounting profession," said Jon Baron, President and CEO of Thomson Creative Solutions and Executive Vice President of Thomson Tax and Accounting. "This award provides objective recognition of Creative Solutions' ongoing efforts to make practical use of advanced technology to help accountants provide better service to their clients more profitably."

Baron noted that UltraTax CS 1040 Portals were developed in response to firms that wanted to offer their clients online access to their tax returns, but did not want the administrative work and expense of setting up a full portal system for their once-a-year 1040 clients. The product also lends itself toward the Creative Solutions mission of attaining the paperless firm
by providing a completely digital and highly efficient work environment.

"This innovative new service was created as a direct result of customer input," said Baron. "We had several of our customers express a desire for this type of service at our Users' conference last year, and we were happy that we could provide it for them."

Built on the vendor's proven NetClient CS portal technology, UltraTax CS 1040 Portals allow firms to post read-only *.PDF copies of each client's completed tax return within a private and secure portal that is accessed from the accounting or tax firm's web site. Once the return is available, clients can access and print it as many times as they need throughout the year when needed for loan applications, refinancing, student financial aid, or other purposes. In addition to being more convenient for the client, who can log in at any time of day, the portal technology is a more secure delivery method than e-mail and drives traffic to the accountant's web site to further enhance client relations.

TaxWise www.TaxWise.com **CashWise Card**

"We are honored by this award and pleased with the initial success of the CashWise

CashWise card will again be available to tax professionals using TaxWise for the 2006 tax season.

In response to requests from professionals, **ATX** (www.atxinc.com) developed the **Portfolio Tax Analyzer**, a tool for handling stock, bond and mutual fund transaction calculations in a fraction of the time it used to take and without multiple years of security payment record books to consult. The system significantly reduces the time-consuming process of researching securities payment and cost basis information needed to complete tax forms (Schedule B and Schedule D).

CNG 5.0 from **Cabinet NG** (www.CabinetNG.com) is the document management industry's automated filing solution
that begins filing as the user begins typing. With its "Shared Access Filing Environment" (SAFE), firms can manage large volumes of documents, optimize workflow, enforce privacy and improve efficiency without the need for filing cabinets that consume precious floor space. Unlike most electronic document management systems where filing happens at the end of the process, Cabinet NG allows the creation of documents within the electronic filing cabinet, so important documents are instantly filed.

Confirm from **Capital Confirmation** (www.CashConfirm.com) is a secure electronic confirmation service that helps protect against fraud during the confirmation process. The system provides a closed network where each user is identified and specifically defined. All actions are traceable
to a unique authenticated user, as opposed to the paper confirmation process, which is an open system where any and all unauthorized parties are free to request and respond to confirmations with little to no ability to track their activities.

The **Capital Backup/Vytal Vault** system from **Compunite Computers**

scanning system that provides
business professionals with a simple and fast scanner that also makes it easy to convert information contained on paper into digital Adobe *.PDF files at the touch of a button. The ScanSnap scanner's "always on" convenience, connectivity and small size allow it to sit comfortably on any desk. The ScanSnap also reinvented the "one-button" approach to eliminate elaborate scanning applications and the need for cumbersome driver interfaces.

Groove Networks' (www.Groove.net) **Groove Virtual Office** delivers the "virtual office" through software that
allows teams of people to work together over a network as
if they were in the same physical location. Groove helps organizations, large and small, save money, time and virtually eliminate travel by offering both a desktop application for instant joint work, and a set of customizable, open collaboration capabilities that enhance the utility and value of existing solutions.

With **QuickBooks: Premier Accountants' Edition 2005, Intuit** (www.QuickBooks.com) brings the functionality and ease-of-use of QuickBooks to the professional accountant. The system contains advanced bookkeeping, write-up and financial reporting tools to help professional accountants deliver great client service more efficiently. And it integrates directly with the software most clients use, which can dramatically reduce data entry.

Net Worth Express PRO Edition from **Kiss Computer Company** (www.NetWorthExpress.com) is a unique software program that allows professionals to create and maintain Personal Financial Statements (a.k.a., Statements of Financial Condition) for their clients. The software and its professional reporting
capabilities are designed to make applying for or maintaining credit with financial

institutions easier and more comprehensive. In addition, Net Worth Express

WebEmployee is part of the advanced payroll services from **Thomson Creative Solutions** (www.CreativeSolutions.Thomson.com). It is an online service that a professional accountant's clients can offer their employees to access and keep track of their pay records. Web Employee provides these employees with individual, password-protected, private portals they can access from the accountant's web site, where they can view electronic copies of their individual pay stubs and W-2s and verify their pay information. Web Employee integrates with Payroll CS and Payroll Compliance. When combined with electronic data entry, remote check printing, and direct deposit, Web Employee allows firms to have a 100 percent paperless payroll process.

The Tax and Accounting Technology Innovation Awards from *The CPA Technology Advisor* and *The NSA Technology Advisor* help recognize technologies that enable tax and accounting professionals to be more efficient, productive and profitable. In some cases, the results can be dramatic, greatly improving client service or streamlining production efforts. To gauge how well your firm is making use of technology, please take the Productivity Survey located on our web site at www.CPATechAdvisor.com/productivity. In addition to assessing the effectiveness of your firm's use of technology, the survey provides guidance that can help you develop a plan for more efficient implementation.

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