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of Tax Research Systems

CCH is one of the most widely known providers of tax and accounting research products, as well as compliance and practice management technologies. The company's web-based Tax Research NetWork (TRN) is the cornerstone of its research offerings, providing a comprehensive collection of federal, state and international primary sources and analysis, news, opinion, practice aids, calculators and lookup tables. The program offers integration with ProSystem fx Tax and other applications in CCH's arsenal, enabling users to tie research and other content directly back to specific client engagements. The system is comprised of several modules, which can be added depending upon practice specialty and client demographics. Pricing for TRN starts at \$599, while the optional modules are priced at \$199 and up.

EASE-OF-USE & SEARCH ROUTINE – 5 Stars

Users log into TRN using their web browser, with the screen then opening to a customizable interface that starts with the user's personalized desk-top. The core research libraries are available on tabs across the top of the screen, including options for Accounting/Audit-ing, Federal, State, Financial & Estate Planning, Special Entities, Pension & Payroll, and International. Also available are tabs for the add-on modules Perform Plus III and CCH ClientRelate. The program's primary search functions are located in the navigation bar at the very top of the screen, with options for search-ing by citation, checking the citator or accessing additional search tools. These advanced search functions include multiple search methods, the ability to sort by tax type or entity, various options for sorting and displaying search results, and even a thesaurus feature that can suggest additional terms to use in queries. Users can also re-run recent searches or search from news sources. The navigation bar also

offers text-based links to research histories, a keep list and the main menu.

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users can select individual publications, such as the U.S. Master Tax Guide in CCH's Explanations and Analysis section, or they can select the entire library, which also includes items such as the Tax Research Consultant, Standard Federal Income Tax Reporter, Federal Estate & Gift Tax Reporter, Planning Tools and other options. The program's Training and Support tab offers several utilities for assistance.

Several add-on tools are also available, including CCH Mobile, which lets users access TRN remotely. Also available is the TRN Express Toolbar, which adds links to the user's web browser for quick access to TRN. One of the most notable tools is CCH@Hand, a productivity feature that integrates with Microsoft Office to allow users to search multiple sources simultaneously while working within a document, including the TRN libraries, Google, the IRS and professional websites. Also, with the ClientRelate add-on, the system can automatically alert professionals to tax news or other developments that might affect specific clients based on their income, demographics or other issues.

CONTENT – 5 Stars

TRN's core libraries provide an extensive offering of primary source materials and expert opinion and analysis for all tax entities, with collections including federal, state and international taxation laws, as well as accounting and audit, pension and payroll, financial and estate planning, the IRC, tax treaties, rulings, and additional options. CCH also provides multiple news-based content sources, such as the Tax Tracker and Tax Highlights. The vendor recently introduced two new products geared for small and medium-sized firms. Practical Tax Expert spotlights income tax laws facing individuals and small business, providing practical examples, sample calculations, compliance pointers and other features. Practical Tax

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for downloading add-ons, accessing message boards, or signing up for newsletters and other items.

INTEGRATION/OUTPUT – 5 Stars

With the addition of Client-Relate, TRN can integrate with the tax compliance and planning components of the ProSystem fx suite, automatically searching legislation, news, analysis and other content that may affect client taxation based upon each client's financial attributes. TRN's content can also be accessed from within browsers or other websites by utilizing the TRN Express Toolbar and CCH@Hand, Returned research findings can be printed or output to Word or PDF format.

SUPPORT – 5 Stars

Since the product's redesign a little more than a year ago, TRN offers great customization and general usability, with ample support and guidance for users growing accustomed to the system. The program's Training & Support tab provides good Help features, while CCH's support center provides FAQs, tips and CPE-eligible training options. Technical support is included with the product's subscription pricing.

2009 OVERALL RATING:

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