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Sep. 01, 2009

*From the September 2009 Review of [Professional Payroll Programs](#)*

Since

its acquisition of ATX and TaxWise a few years ago, CCH has continued to develop and add additional modules to both systems, essentially making each product line into suite options for small practices. Both tax programs now offer professionals the ability to add live payroll, as well as integrated W-2/1099 compliance, client write-up, fixed asset management, document management, scan-and-populate features, and website development. This review is specific to the ATX version; however, the payroll program has the same core feature sets in either brand, and can also be used as a stand-alone payroll processing tool. The system can be used by professionals managing any number of clients and employees, with support for all states and municipalities, and the ability to customize deductions and pay types. The Payroll system costs \$520, and for \$895, users can get the Client Write-Up system with Payroll included.

**DATA ENTRY & KEY FEATURES:**

ATX Payroll opens within a separate window from the tax system and can be used as a stand-alone system. The program opens into a primary home screen that defaults

to the last client employer used, with text-based links to core payday tasks for entering employee time information, calculating payroll, selecting and processing

the payroll, posting functions and reconciliation functions, as well as links to unpost options, employee reports and the employee selection list. Traditional

pull-down menus are also offered at the top of the screen, giving access to

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Em-ployee data screens offer similar functions, with a tab-like menu on the left offering quick links to employee-specific pay rates, contact information, taxes, deductions and bank routing data. Direct deposit is included with the system and allows up to four accounts per staff member.

With the program's customizable data-entry options, em-ployees can be hourly, salaried, tipped, commission-based or pretty much any other type of pay including shift differentials, and can be set up for any payday frequency. An unlimited number of deductions can be set to each employee, including garnishments, 401Ks, taxable and nontaxable insurance premiums, uniform allowances and other items, with the ability to print third-party checks for remittance of these collected liabilities. The program also can track accruals for paid time off set at any method.

When running payrolls, an automatic attendance feature allows users to set the system to automatically populate time and other information to defaults and then edit data as needed, or can manually enter all data for employees for that selected pay run. Once data has been entered and reviewed, the system calculates the run, produces direct deposit files and lets users print checks, with summary reports immediately available for printing or viewing on-screen. No employee self-service portals are available.

#### **REPORTING CAPABILITIES:**

Managerial and payroll re-ported options are available from the main menu as well as from many of the system's employee and client management screens, and include period summaries, liabilities, histories, withholding, third-party pay, registers and dozens of other selections. ATX Payroll offers electronic magnetic media reporting of quarterly and annual federal reporting, and can

produce signature-ready print versions of federal and state forms. The program

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The ATX Payroll system can import employee data in spreadsheet and plain text format, which allows for a two-step import from most employee timeclock programs.

The system also directly integrates with the vendor's Client Write-Up package. Data can be output into multiple formats, including Excel files that can be imported by other accounting systems, along with PDF and RTF.

#### **RELATIVE VALUE:**

ATX Payroll (and its sister product, TaxWise Payroll) provides a capable live payroll program that professionals can use to provide payroll services to small and mid-sized clients. The system provides a good basic feature set, with all-inclusive pricing that includes unlimited direct deposit and some federal electronic filing capabilities. Users can purchase a two-hour, CPE-eligible training webinar for \$89.

#### **2009 Overall Rating:**

Payroll

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