system were among the technologies honored at The CPA Technology Advisor's 7th Annual Tax and Accounting Technology Innovation Awards.

Jul. 01, 2010

From the July 2010 Issue

Mobile professional payroll applications, online document storage, SaaS-based account-ing and practice management tools, and an in-practice knowledge sharing system were among the technologies honored at *The CPA Technology Advisor's* 7th Annual Tax and Accounting Technology Innovation Awards. The Awards serve to identify and honor new and emerging technologies that have the potential for significant positive impact on the profession and in the day-to-day work of tax and accounting practices.

Winners of the 2010 Awards are Account-antsWorld for Accounting Relief; CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business, for KnowledgeConnect; SmartVault, Inc. for SmartVault v3; SurePayroll for Mobile Payroll; and Thomson Reuters for its Practice CS Staff Management Module. Two additional technologies were given Honorable Mention
recognition: The AvaTax with AvaCert system from Avalara; and ProSystem *fx* Document SaaS, a part of the new SaaS Suite from CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business.

The Innovation Awards are selected by the awards committee for *The CPA Technology Advisor*, 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.

"There
are no specific subcategories for the awards, but there are trends that appear each year," said Executive Editor M. Darren Root, CPA.CITP, who also maintains

an accounting practice and consultancy. "Over the past decade, dramatic changes

practice performs requires a much broader view.

"Over the past decade or so, we've continued on from the paperless
movement to a point where workflow optimization is the key, and this includes
all aspects of how practices operate, collaborate internally and with clients,
and even how they interact with outside partners, vendors and service providers.
It requires a monumental re-thinking of how a practice can function most
productively
and efficiently, and it is being led by tech- and business-savvy professionals
who have spent their careers teaching clients and other tax and accounting
professionals
how to work smarter, more efficiently and more profitably."

Any technology product or service may be nominated for an award, but it must
be commercially available at the time of judging, and be less than two years
old or have undergone a significant redevelopment or addition within that
timeframe.

2010 TAX & ACCOUNTING

TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AWARDS

WINNERS & HONORABLE MENTIONS

Accounting
Relief
AccountantsWorld
www.accountantsworld.com
Client write-up, as we know it, may be nearing its end. Imagine a client
write-up engagement where there was no need to transfer client data,

no need to synch changes back into the client's system, and even the

to multiple businesses. It is a full professional suite that includes optional modules for integrated live and after-the-fact payroll, asset management, sales and use tax reporting, practice management and web-based
document management.

What makes the Accounting Relief system truly innovative, however, is that it includes a client bookkeeping component that is a part of the professional system. Each client can be set up to have their own web-based bookkeeping system, with the accountant able to set the functions
and access rights they are allowed. The interface is focused on the small business user, so it's easy to learn and use, but limited to only the aspects of their own accounts that the business and each of its users needs.

Information from sales, receivables, payables and other data is always immediately available to the accountant from their dashboards, and the data is already in their professional-level accounting program ... because it is the same program, just with different user levels and capabilities at the firm and for the client. When you don't have data moving around between systems, the result is improved efficiency and saved time, along with an increase in the accuracy of the data. Accounting Relief also offers integrated portals for collaborating with clients. It's an entirely new way of looking at client bookkeeping. As a web-based system, it is also easy to implement since there's no software or updates to install.

KnowledgeConnect

office or seniors to ask advice on a particular tax treatment of accounting issue. And with the AICPA estimating that as many as 75 percent of credentialed accountants will be eligible for retirement in the next 10 years, finding a way to chronicle the knowledge and experience of these leaders is critical.

Over the years, many firms have compiled their own best practices, case studies, resource guides and other documents, but CCH's KnowledgeConnect finally takes an innovative approach to knowledge management in the accounting profession. The program offers a centralized, indexed and easy-to-search system that allows staff to access knowledge resources faster and make more informed decisions for their clients and their own practice.

Among the core features of KnowledgeConnect is the ability to search across multiple databases from a single location, which connects firm employees with the knowledge they need. These multiple resources include the internal knowledge of an organization's leaders and subject-matter experts, as well as the ability to search across other CCH databases that professionals in the firm use on a daily basis in their normal workflow.

Current integration points exist to IntelliConnect, the CCH Support Knowledgebase and ProSystem *fx* Document with additional CCH integrations planned for future release. In addition, an organization can have custom integration points created to unique firm databases. KnowledgeConnect also integrates seamlessly with Microsoft Outlook,

simplifying the process of asking and answering questions and sharing

the future of an organization by ensuring critical knowledge is captured and shared, as opposed to being lost when a thought leader retires or leaves the company.

Practice
CS Staff Management Module
Thomson Reuters
CS.thomsonreuters.com
As an optional component for the Practice CS firm management system from Thomson Reuters, the Staff Management Module is the first staff management pro-gram designed specifically for the modern tax and accounting
practice. The system greatly eases the unique human resources and personal
staff management
functions of professional practices by giving firm managers a centralized location for tracking and analyzing benefits, sick time, staff targets, budgeting, staff scheduling and CPE credits.

As with the other programs in the Thomson Reuters CS Professional Suite, all information is seamlessly integrated with other components of Practice CS and is available, as needed, in other program areas. The system also provides features for performing analysis of firm and employee productivity, with managers having the ability to assign engagement
tasking based on multiple perspectives and to choose the workflow

management

design that groups a variety of pertinent information into single screens for easier viewing, faster progression from one task to the next, and better management of high-volume processes like 1040 tax returns with limited involvement of management outside of initial setup.

The Practice CS Staff Management Module offers an innovative and unique advantage to firms looking to further streamline internal management processes, which can then help improve engagement productivity and firm success.

SmartVault
v3
SmartVault, Inc.
www.smartvault.com
For accountants who have clients that use QuickBooks, SmartVault can be one of the greatest simple tools when it comes to improving collaboration
and client-side document retention. The system, now in its third version, is a web-based add-on to QuickBooks that provides advanced document management features
that can be used by both the client and their professional firm.

The easy-to-use SmartVault system lets users attach any document or file to any QuickBooks transaction, and allows them to store the digital documents in secure, online storage facilities, with the ability to instantly create copies of the document or share with other users. The system includes a built-in hierarchy for storing and sharing documents

and source files, with a three-step toolbar that creates a seamless

and customizing folder structures, greater online file and folder access, and enhanced intuitive Windows integration.

The system can also be set to automatically perform data backups of QuickBooks or other small business bookkeeping systems, with intuitive wizards that simplify setting up rules and features and performing searches of documents. For accounting practices, a centralized management portal offers additional tools for managing multiple clients, their portals and workflow functions.

SurePayroll
Mobile Payroll
SurePayroll
www.surepayroll.com
Professional payroll ... now, "there's an app for that." SurePayroll, which offers online payroll processing and management systems for professional
accountants and small business owners, has introduced its new SurePayroll
Mobile Payroll app for user of Apple's iPod Touch, iPhone and iPad.

The app can be downloaded for free from Apple's Apps store and is the first mobile add-on to the devices that is specifically designed for a professional payroll system.

The SurePayroll Mobile Payroll app integrates directly with the vendor's web-based payroll systems, which allows users of those programs to access

them from wherever they may be. All features of the payroll systems

summaries, use the payroll calendar, set human resources and benefits for employees, and connect to SurePayroll's customer service. With the addition of the Mobile Payroll App, SurePayroll gives active professionals more freedom, but with all of the power of one of the leading payroll systems on the market.

2010 HONORABLE MENTIONS:
In addition to this year's Innovation Awards, *The CPA Technology Advisor* extended Honorable Mention recognition to Avalara and CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business for the following technologies:

- Avalara – AvaTax with AvaCert
- CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business – ProSystem *fx* Document SaaS

Technology