CPA
Practice **Advisor**

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From the November 2010 Issue

Along with professional tax preparation, write-up has long been a cornerstone client service for many full-service accounting firms, providing monthly, quarterly and annual engagements that equate to a fiscal checkup for client businesses. The core elements of account reconciliation, fixing improperly posted transactions and preparation of financial statements are critical to these entities truly knowing their health, and serve as a firm foundation for ensuring against employee fraud, as well as for planning, budgeting and valuation.

2010 Client Write-Up Review Sections:

- **Basic System Functions**
  - General Navigation/Ease-of-Use
  - Multiple Concurrent Users
  - Multi-Client Mgmt/Setup
  - System Customization, Alerts
- **Core Write-Up Features**
  - Account/GL/Journal Mgmt Adjusting entries, re-class and recurring

While the end products are generally similar to what they were 20 or even 10 years ago, write-up has changed dramatically over this time, particularly from the accounting professional's perspective. Almost gone are the days of shoebox accounting and physical ledger books, with even the smallest of businesses increasingly relying on off-the-shelf bookkeeping software to manage all, or at least most, aspects of their businesses. These technology tools have generally been great for productivity, but when it comes to fixing the errors that users make, well ... that's where write-up has turned accountants into technological

entries

sleuths, poring over hundreds or thousands of

- Customizable Reporting/Output Formats
- Financial Statement Generation, Customization
- Communication Templates & Deliverables
- Invoicing/Billing Functions
- **Import/Export/Integration**
  - Import Capabilities
  - Imported data review functions/process
  - Integration w/Payroll apps
  - Client Portal Options
  - Export to common file formats
- **Help/Support**
  - Built-in Support Features
  - OS/Browser Compatibility
  - Support website/documentation
  - Live Support

books. Recent advances in this area even allow for client financial information to be directly downloaded from their financial institutions and then viewed on-screen alongside their check registers and transactions. Not only does this allow for quicker and more automated reconciliations, it also allows for live reconciliations at any time, instead of having to wait for a bank statement.

One of the most significant advances in write-up in decades, however, is still evolving. A few systems on the market combine professional accounting and client-side data, enabling both sides to always have access to company files. These integrated systems are centered on the professional's accounting and write-up package, with clients having secure access to a web-based bookkeeping system that is actually an extension of the professional program.

Clients only have access to their own company files, and can even be restricted to only a few tasks, such as entering sales, check printing or running basic reports. More advanced clients may be granted full access to their payroll,

inventory management and payables. The extent

the integration capabilities of a professional write-up program, particularly with regard to importing and exporting data from a client's bookkeeping system to a professional tax compliance or trial balance system is one of the most important elements in determining the program best suited to a professional practice.

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AccountantsWorld — Accounting Relief

AccountantsWorld was the first major vendor to offer a totally web-based accounting system for professionals, offering its software-as-a-service Accounting Relief write-up system with the ability to manage any number of clients for a monthly or annual price. The system includes comprehensive features with full GL, trial balance, reconciliation, after-the-fact payroll and financial statement generation...

Read Full Review

CCH Small Firm Services — Client Accounting Suite

The TaxWise and ATX brands, which each offer popular professional tax compliance packages, also include a suite of accounting systems, including write-up, trial balance, fixed asset management, client checkbook, payroll, firm management, document management, W-2 and 1099 compliance, and payroll reporting.

Read Full Review

CYMA Systems, Inc.

Accountant 2011

With QuickBooks being the most common small business accounting program in the United States, it's no surprise that most public accounting practices have also adopted the system, if not for total practice use, then at least for their clients who use it. The benefit of having the same general program simplifies data transfer, and finding para-professionals who are already experienced with the system is fairly easy.

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Review

Micronetics, Int'l — Accounting Xpert Enterprise Edition

Micronetics has developed professional accounting software since 1978, and last year introduced the completely redesigned Accounting Xpert Enterprise Edition, a comprehensive write-up system that includes full GL, AR, AP, payroll, reconciliation and financial statement generation...

Read Full
Review

PC Software Accounting, Inc. – Client Write-Up for Windows

PC Software Accounting, Inc. (PCSAI) introduced the first version of its Client Write-Up for Windows system in 1997, and has continued to develop and add to the program since then. The most recent version, 9.24, continues to provide comprehensive professional accounting features, including full GL, financial reporting, bank reconciliation, after-the-fact payroll, tax interfaces, and payroll compliance reporting.

enabling greater collaboration, streamlining write-up and payroll functions and increasing data accuracy.

The Versatile Group — Certiflex Dimension

The Versatile Group offers professional accounting and business management systems under the CertiflexDimension brand. The company's professional Client Write-Up program and integrated business accounting series includes full GL, AR and AP...

Related Article

BlackLine Streamlines Complex Reconciliation Functions

As a business grows and retains more of its accounting expertise in-house, the processes associated with period closes and reconciliations are just as important as for those who use an outside accountant. They still need more comprehensive tools than most traditional off-the-shelf business applications can provide, especially for balancing hundreds or even thousands of accounts, while ensuring that proper accounting principles are maintained.
BlackLine Systems has been developing custom accounting solutions specifically for such businesses, starting with the First National Bank of Nebraska in 2001.

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