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**Darren Root** • Dec. 01, 2011

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As 2011 closes, my hope is that many of you can look back over the year and see real progress in your firms. Each year at the magazine, we conduct our annual Reader's Survey, and I would like to share some of the results with you so you can compare your own progress with your peers. The following represent some key statistics about the profession as a whole:

- 38% of firms currently have a website.

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- 18% use one or more applications to get information delivered on a PDA or tablet device.

I took a look at the previous year Reader's Survey to compare it to 2011 results, and I'm pleased to report that the number of firms moving toward technology is increasing — adopting advanced solutions at a steady rate. However, there is still a big divide between those who are implementing next-generation tools and those who are not. In fact, the CEO of one of the profession's largest technology vendors indicated that he believes the numbers are better reflected by "40% of firms are surging ahead and roughly 60% are standing still." That means there is still a lot of work to be done in educating accounting professionals on the direction they need to go to avoid being left behind.

The firms that are thriving are those that have a strategic plan in place and a clear understanding of the type of clients they want to serve. They also have a relentless desire to build a highly efficient internal system that allows them to streamline processes and operate at peak productivity year round. They are thought leaders who are always searching for the smartest technologies to augment their well-oiled machines.

Overall, I am excited and encouraged about 2012, especially as I look at the volume of innovative solutions being presented to the profession. As the integration story unfolds, I see the ability to create a single client database across applications — making sharing and exchanging of information incredibly easy and fast. Forward-thinking vendors are working on such exciting features as touchscreen technology. I witnessed this at the 2011 CCH User Conference where I was informed that the company is working on touchscreen for their tax solution. While at the 2011 Thomson Reuters User Conference, I was updated on the company's future rollout of

a solution that allows firms to brand their own unique mobile application for their

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