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THOMSON REUTERS

800-968-8900

cs.thomsonreuters.com/engagement

5.0 overall

BEST FIT

Small to medium sized accounting firms with a focus on audit engagements, especially those currently relying on PPC Practice Aids for guidance.

STRENGTHS

- Strong integration with PPC Practice Aids and other Thomson Reuters products

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Engagement CS helps complete the accounting offerings within the CS Professional Suite product lineup. Engagement CS provides tools to enhance tax, audit and other accounting related engagements within a paperless workflow system. With strong integration features with PPC Practice Aids and the popular Microsoft Office products, Engagement CS provides a strong solution for small to medium size accounting practices.

BASIC SYSTEM FUNCTIONS

The interface of Engagement CS is generally composed of a three pane layout. The engagement navigation structure is on the left side of the screen, all currently opened documents are on the right side of the screen and various notes and user information are housed on the bottom of the screen. The dividers between each of these panes may be adjusted to provide more space as necessary and to fit any size monitor or screen resolution. Above the three panes layout sits a traditional drop down menu navigation structure accompanied by a row of various shortcut icons.

Trial Balance CS, which has been reviewed separately, is included with the license cost and provides the trial balance functions for Engagement CS. Trial Balance CS is customizable in nearly all aspects of the software. From trial balance views to reports to financial statements, users have the ability to specifically tailor these to each client file. A recently added feature within Engagement CS allows multiple staff members to simultaneously view the trial balance while others are making adjustments. This keeps all the underlying data in “real time” at all phases of the engagement and removes the necessity to sync data between users.

Engagements may be setup from preformatted templates included with the Engagement CS installation or users may create their own templates based on various firm or client specific needs. Tight integration exists with Microsoft Word and Excel products and both products receive a custom add-in toolbar to quickly

exchange data with Engagement CS. Once users create templates, they may be shared

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limited or full access to individual files within a particular engagement, for instance.

As mentioned above, the interface generally rests within a three pane design, with engagement navigation on the right portion of the screen. Engagement navigation is done through a folder tree structure similar to Windows Explorer and is equally as customizable. This design should provide users a high comfort level in navigating through engagements. Files may be imported into the folder tree structure through menu options that allow users to import the files or through simple drag-and-drop. Engagement CS also has a scanning module included and allows documents to be directly scanned into the engagement. Regardless of method, upon import users are allowed to assign document name, workpaper reference and folder location as well as any user specific access restrictions.

Document sign-off is easily accomplished within Engagement CS. Users may sign-off on documents individually or through multiple documents at one time. Engagement CS allows up to five levels of sign-off to be setup with each engagement. Document sign off activity is also displayed and is available in the engagement folder tree pane. Here, users may easily see which documents have been signed off, which user performed that task and when that document sign-off occurred.

All documents housed within Engagement CS are automatically tracked through audit controls. In the bottom window pane, users may easily see the activity within each document. This activity window indicates which users accessed a particular file and when. When a file has been altered after being signed off or reviewed, it converts to red as a warning that something has changed. Based on user permissions, users may accept or reject the new changes before finalizing the engagement. 5

WORKFLOW & COLLABORATION

Engagement CS allows multiple users simultaneous access to each engagement. One

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When only a few users are performing audit work in the field and additional staff remains in the office, pieces of the engagement may be forwarded to users. Users may be forwarded portions of the engagement through USB drive or via email. Again, all user permissions are retained as if the user was on the office network. Binders can be locked down when checked out in order to prevent data conflicts. At this point, a user with administrative rights must intervene and determine which information needs to be imported and if additional changes are necessary.

All documents housed within Engagement CS retain their original file format, which allows users to perform any necessary edits within the native software. Engagement CS does, however, have the ability to read most files within the software. For the files that Engagement CS recognizes, users may preview the document in the rightmost window pane and add notes to the files as necessary without fully editing the files. All notes added to documents are tracked automatically through the audit trail history and may be viewed in the bottom window pane at any time. Engagement CS also has a built-in PDF editor to perform many popular edits to scanned documents. This, in turn may reduce the need for full PDF editing software to be installed on each user's computer.

When an engagement is complete, Engagement CS allows users to run final audit check reports that display any potential errors, such as documents that have not been signed off. After determining that the engagement is final, Engagement CS converts all files to read only and prevents any additional changes from occurring. The entire engagement folder tree and all documents housed within Engagement CS may then be exported as a bookmarked PDF and saved as an archive copy or forwarded to a third-party firm for peer review purposes. 4.75

INTEGRATION/IMPORT/EXPORT

Since Engagement CS is part of the Thomson Reuters CS Professional Suite, it

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Removed upon opening an engagement forward to a subsequently, carrying changes to the core of the file, such as additional procedures or updated text are automatically imported based on the subscription level of PPC.

Engagement CS also offers tight integration with the Microsoft Office product lineup and Adobe Acrobat. Add-in menus are provided for Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook and provide quick access to document sign-off procedures and any underlying financial data when building financial statements. Users may also run several functions natively within the respective Microsoft Office products as if they were performed within Engagement CS. Other file types, such as emails, text files and recent versions of QuickBooks may be imported as well. Engagement CS also imports data from Capital Confirmation and TValue. 5

HELP/SUPPORT

Over the past few years, Thomson Reuters has steadily been increasing the built-in help and support module for Engagement CS. Users may access traditional Help options through the drop down menu navigation at the top of the screen. Within the traditional help module are links to several PDF files and videos. The included videos are generally brief and cover general topics for users to get started with the product. Licenses of any product in the CS Professional Suite lineup also provide access to a variety of online help solutions. An online knowledgebase and dedicated private social network is available for users to interact directly with their peers on specific knowledge and engagement based issues. All above mentioned help options are fully included with each license. Email and phone based support is available, but generally at a per-instance or hourly rate. Annual support contracts are available to alleviate any anticipated support expenses. 5

SUMMARY & PRICING

Engagement CS is a comprehensive workflow and management system offering a

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