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www.proseries.com

800-934-1040

From the [May 2012 review](#) of professional tax compliance systems (traditional workflow).

Best Fit: Small to mid-sized firms focused on large 1040 client bases, but also with the need for varied business compliance. Firms who require workflow solutions and integration with QuickBooks.

Strengths

- Optional scan and organize system, plus direct download of tax documents from financial institutions
- Supports for all major types of entities (federal, states and some local taxes)
- Integrated options for research, fixed assets, document management and W-2/1099 reporting
- Integrated client invoicing system and optional credit card payment acceptance

Potential Limitations

- Lacks client portals or direct file-sharing
- Limited support for multi-preparer return collaboration and review

ProSeries is a well-known brand for small and mid-sized tax professionals, offering packages that cover compliance for all taxed entities and with features for document automation, client billing, client communications, research and integration with accounting programs. For the 2011 tax year the program has added new exporting options, client copy watermarking of returns and more federal, state and local forms.

Core Product Functions/Features – 4.75 Stars

The more comprehensive ProSeries bundles include compliance capabilities for 1040,

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provides a client list that can be filtered to show the returns assigned to a specific preparer. Users can sort and filter this spreadsheet view to focus on form type, electronic filing data, bank products and diagnostics information. Other features of the HomeBase include links to core program areas, such as the E-File Center, tax import utilities, customizable system alerts and snapshot overviews. The E-File Center offers an excellent single page overview for managing return submissions, checking their status and tracking receipts and acknowledgements. Options for accessing tax research and an online community of ProSeries users can be accessed through a task pane on the right hand side of the screen.

During return preparation and review, the interface offers a menu tree that displays all forms, schedules and worksheets for the active return. Additional forms can be added by either expanding the menus or using the forms library tool among the menus at the top of the screen. The menu tree groups forms by type and return area, such as income, adjustments, credits, deductions and other categories. Preparers can use either a forms-based entry mode or interview worksheets, and can move between the two options at any time.

Paperless Workflow – 4.5 Stars

The developers of ProSeries have done a good job of building useful workflow tools into the system. These tools include integrated tax research, a utility that alerts users to missing data and makes it easy to send an email reminder to the client, plus return and refund tracking tools. Recently added paperless and digital integration functions also help streamline data entry tasks. With the optional ProSeries Tax Import feature, preparers can scan in client source documents and have them returned as a bookmarked PDF digital workpaper with documents in proper order for reviews, with the ability to add annotations and review notes. Along with the PDF, the

preparer receives an Excel file containing line item cost basis details on trades for

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Other program features that aid in workflow productivity include integrated email options, as well as customizable client letters, reminders and checklists that can be sent to a client directly from within ProSeries. These and other communications and notes can then be attached to returns. Additional file management functions are available in the ProSeries Document Management add-on, which offers unified digital organization of any type of documents, which can be first converted into PDF format. The DMS system also offers search functions, tracking of tasks and events and the ability use Microsoft Word from within the system.

ProSeries security features include a customizable role-based user access rights, which can be used to limit preparers to specific clients, program features and management tasks.

Integration – 4.5 Stars

ProSeries offers tight integration between its various modules, automatically calculating data as it is entered and transferring it to required forms and schedules. The system offers K-1 import bridging returns for business entities and individuals, and offers a built-in trial balance import utility. An add-on fixed asset management solution includes multiple books, support for traditional and custom depreciation methods and treatments, and various disposal options. A tax planner is also available as part of the Federal 1040.

In addition to the previously mentioned integration with the “scan and organize” digital workpapers and direct file download from financial institutions, returns in ProSeries can be linked to QuickBooks data files. This allows live data to be continually fed into a business return, saving data entry time and ensuring accuracy of final data. The system also offers import from Quicken, Trial Balance data from Accountant's Trial Balance (ATB) or a generic dBase Trial Balance file as well as any

accounting programs that can generate .txf files. Intuit offers free conversion of prior

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For 1040 refund proceeds, ProSeries users can offer direct deposit debit cards. The card can be used with traditional bank product, RTs, , or the card can be used as a way for customers without a bank account to receive a direct deposit from the IRS. For receiving payments from clients, preparers can use the Intuit ProLine QuickCollect system, which deducts preparation fees from a client's return. The debit card, bank products and QuickCollect payment system can be managed from the billing utility and the program's e-file management console. Firms can use the QuickBooks Online Terminal to receive client payments by credit card, and members of the QuickBooks ProAdvisor Program can obtain discounts on monthly merchant service fees through Intuit.

Help/Support – 4.5 Stars

ProSeries is simple for users to learn and familiarize themselves with, providing how-tos, topical guidance and line-specific help and instructions. Users can also access the Intuit Live Community, an online user board, while working within the program, because sometimes the best advice comes from other professionals who are familiar with the program. Intuit's online support center for ProSeries includes additional articles, topics, practical tips, videos, FAQs, overviews of features, e-filing resources and other tools. Free guided and self-training options are available, some eligible for CPE credit. The website includes updates, although ProSeries can automatically check for and install updates when available.

Phone and web-based chat support with live, U.S.-based support assistants is included with pricing, and is available during tax season from 5am to 7pm Pacific time on weekdays, and 8am to 3pm on Saturdays. During the last week of tax season, support hours are extended until 10pm, and then until midnight on the last day of filing. ProSeries is not offered in a hosted or SaaS model.

Summary & Pricing

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ability to prepare business returns on a pay-per-return basis. The more comprehensive professional packages start at \$2,999 for the PowerTax Lite system, which includes Unlimited Federal returns for 1040, 1120, 1120S, 1065, 1041, 990 and four states, unlimited e-filing, fixed asset management and additional features. (Network license is sold separately). Pay-per-return pricing is also available for the overall ProSeries system.

2012 Overall Rating: 4.5 Stars

Software • Taxes

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