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Brian Crofts — 34

**Group Product Manager & Innovation Catalyst, Intuit, Inc.
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Effectively working with a geographically dispersed team. We have team members across the country and overseas. Our workflow revolves around leveraging some of the newest apps and technology to create an environment of collaboration, accountability, and speed.

My team stays connected thru Skype & Google Hangouts and collaborates with online brainstorming tools like Lino.it & Google Drive—we also manage our workflow with an online development tool called Assembla. As a team, we're always open to new and better ways to work—often experimenting and trying new things as we go.

Have you embraced cloud computing for your practice? Are you moving your clients to the cloud? Over the past year, I've been in the business of helping accountants engage with clients exclusively online with TurboTax CPA Select—making it easy for clients to communicate, share & exchange information, and pay for services—increasing convenience and efficiency for both the accountant and client. I'm excited to see more and more firms move to the cloud—it's the foundation for creating new, higher value services for small businesses & individuals.

On a broader scale, how do you see new technologies changing the accounting profession in the near term (3-5 years)? Not surprisingly, the cornerstone tools of tax and accounting will continue to improve and move to the cloud. We'll see the shift from desktop and the adoption of SaaS increase at a much more rapid pace over the next few years. Client-accountant interaction will continue evolve as clients expect more immediacy in response and real-time access to information. In-office visits will be replaced texts, email, Skype, etc. I also see more advanced firms create proprietary apps that enable better and more secure communication and collaboration with their clients.

How mobile are you regarding your work? How have mobile devices and apps

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What tips on social media do you think are essential, but perhaps missed, by professionals and small businesses? It's important that you are clear about what you're solving for—what business or professional outcome do you want to achieve thru social media? Being clear on this upfront will dictate the content you share, investment of time/effort you spend, and help manage expectations.

What single piece of technology do you find the most important in your professional life? Internet – access to people and information

Not including your current employer, what company do you most admire and why? Amazon. Their culture is truly about innovation and creating new, sustainable business—and they have the track record to prove it. “We are culturally pioneers. We like to disrupt even our own business. Other companies have different cultures and sometimes don't like to do that. Our job is to bring those industries along.” – Bezos Amazon is willing to take risks—at times, they sacrifice profits in the short term to realize big opportunities for the future.

What brand/model mobile phone do you use? iPhone 5

Do you use a tablet for work purposes? Yes, iPad. Mostly for email and access to the web.

What is your favorite accounting mobile app, and why? Mint; instant access to most relevant personal financial information—displayed in a way that is both appealing to look at and easy to navigate. I always read the alerts and reminders it pushes out—the app helps to serve as a constant reminder of my financial goals.

How many monitors do you have on your desktop workstation? No monitors, just work directly off my laptop. I travel frequently and am rarely at my desk. I go between my laptop, phone, or tablet to get my work done—from wherever I am.

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