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CPA Practice Advisor



Accounting CS Payroll is entering its fourth year as a payroll solution. Scalable to

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software offering within the CS Professional Suite. Built on a SQL database platform, Accounting CS is a sturdy program allowing multiple concurrent users and fast switching between client files. The database platform also enhances security within the system and users from both the firm staff and client staff may be tightly controlled through role-based security.

Each client has a dedicated dashboard that is fully customizable per payroll client. Multiple tabs are available and within each tab separate sections, called portlets, which may be added to further customized the dashboards. Default dashboards and portlets may be established and applied to other client files as required. An interactive map of the United States is provided and as users click on the various states, appropriate form, due date and other related payroll information is displayed.

Payroll items associated with earnings, deductions, withholdings and other benefits are wholly maintained by Accounting CS Payroll. Users simply select the state, and local jurisdictions if necessary, and the appropriate payroll items are automatically generated. As employees are added from other states and localities, appropriate payroll information is automatically added to the company and that specific employee. Further, all addresses go through a verification to ensure they are entered to the correct standards. These steps create a high level of accuracy and consistency within the solution and are not reliant on the accounting professional to remember which forms will always be required.

Accounting CS Payroll is intended to process payroll through batch processing. This allows for multiple checks and multiple clients to be processed simultaneously. This dramatically decreases the time necessary to process payroll. Should the accounting professional need to process payroll one check at a time that is accomplished through a spreadsheet style data entry screen. This allows the accounting professional to control all aspects, including altered direct deposit information, of the paycheck should that be necessary.

Prior to completing the payroll run, an on-screen review tool is provided that details

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Accounting CS Payroll has strong reporting options. Included with the system are dozens of preformatted reports. Each of these reports may then be customized through a variety of sorting and filter options. A custom report writer is provided to build reports from scratch if needed. Each report may then be saved and assigned to a report group for future use.

Accounting CS Payroll supports a wide variety of federal, state and local payroll tax compliance forms. Most standard reporting forms are installed with the software.

Upcoming payroll due dates are displayed on the clients dashboard and through a built-in tax calendar. Also displayed, are details on form filing requirements and other related payroll information. All information is wholly controlled by Accounting CS Payroll based on the client payroll setup.

Integration/Import/Export: 4.75 Stars

As noted previously, Accounting CS Payroll is a separately offered module available to firms using Accounting CS, which integrates with a number of other products in the CS Professional Suite. When processing forms W-2 and 1099, appropriate information is automatically shared with UltraTax CS, reducing the data entry needs for this information. Upon each payroll run, any reports or paystubs generated may be archived within FileCabinet CS, the document management solution from Thomson Reuters.

Timekeeping data may be imported from data entered by payroll clients through NetClient CS portals. This time information, along with any approved employee contact information, is automatically imported to Accounting CS Payroll to help reduce manual data entry. Direct import of time may also be achieved through included text and Excel file import utilities. New for the current year, is the ability to

import full payroll data information directly from Excel. This aids in setting up new

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be accessed through the dedicated Help menu.

Web-based and live training options are available to further enhance the user experience. Many web-based videos and documents are in focused areas, which may aid in assisting users only requiring training in specific areas of the software, such as report generation. Fully customized on-site training is also available. Pricing for all web, live and on-site training is dependent upon needs.

Client Self-Service Features: 5 Stars

Payroll clients and their respective employees may access payroll data through NetClient CS, the portal solution offered by Thomson Reuters. Accounting professionals can fully brand this portal with their logo and website color schemes. Access is tightly controlled through user login information for both payroll clients and employees to prevent unauthorized access to sensitive payroll data.

For payroll clients, the ability to enter, monitor and approve time is provided. This allows all timekeeping to remain in-house and forwarded to the accounting professional only when time to process payroll. This portal interface also provides a secure way for accounting professionals to provide checks and paystubs securely to payroll clients to print on their local printers.

Employees may use the portal solution to enter their time, access recent and previous paystub information, annual W-2 forms and to process changes to withholding allowances. Employees may also update their personal contact and address information. All changes, once approved by the payroll client, is then pushed through the system automatically.

Summary & Pricing

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Strengths:

- Built for smaller clients but scalable to meet needs of large companies if necessary
- Payroll setup is maintained by software for accuracy and consistency
- Strong reporting options
- Tight integration with other CS Professional Suite products

Potential Limitations:

- For full integration with accounting, users must also be licensed on that solution
- Very little human resource management capabilities
- Some remote access features require purchase and configuration

2013 Overall Rating: 5 Stars

Payroll • Payroll Software

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