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the accounting profession. In fact, as I review the past, it appears that we have transitioned through some significant “eras.” In the '90s, we experienced the *Decade of Hardware*. Each year had us replacing our computers just to keep up with the next lightening-fast processor. The 2000s represented the *Software Era* with the dominant emergence of full suites and hosted solutions. Looking at the '10s (how weird does that sound — the '10s?), it appears that we are now entering the *Workflow Era* — with a core focus on streamlining, automating and standardizing processes to significantly increase efficiencies.

I remember as a child looking ahead to 2010, knowing that I would turn 50 and wondering what the future held. My childhood was marked by television icons from *Star Trek* and *The Jetsons*, with all their cool futuristic devices. Remember George Jetson's “webcam?” Who knew that one day we would actually be able to talk to someone in a different location live and in-person using web-based technologies?

It is this very technology that helps us work more efficiently and streamline our processes firm-wide. On a commercial level, there are smartphones like the iPhone (which is rumored to have live webcam-like functionality in the next version). I also played with the iPad this week. Phenomenal! In fact, I'm waiting on mine to arrive this week with built-in 3G. In the accounting space, we have powerful SaaS applications, scan and organize technology, and so many other technological breakthroughs that support super efficient workflow.

*Efficiency* is probably the hottest buzz word in the profession right now. It makes sense that we've transitioned from the Software to the Workflow Era, because it's all about efficiency. Accounting professionals know all too well that time is money, so the faster we can move, the more revenue we bring in. Operating at peak efficiency also supports work/life balance and enables leaders to work *on* their firm and not *in* it. All of this is achievable because of advances in technology.

All the tools required to achieve ultimate productivity are widely available. The only

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Accounting SaaS products. If you have been following my column over the last year, you know that I am passionate about supporting a real-time, collaborative client accounting workflow in my own firm.

We also have a great lineup of feature articles, columns, and lots of activity with podcasts and webcasts this month. So be sure to check out all that we have to offer in this magazine and on our website at [www.CPATechAdvisor.com](http://www.CPATechAdvisor.com), and stay on a path of constant learning and research to support your firm's ongoing success. There is no better time than now to work on improving firm processes. We are out of busy season, and there are resources everywhere to support enhancement efforts. Good luck this year. I wish you all the success you deserve in this Workflow Era!

Hardware • Technology

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