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to our clients, we could make an infinite number of things better. The choice is ours. For some, the answer is “intuitive;” and for others, it involves detailed analysis. The risk, of course, is the time and money it takes to fix or replace something.

Generally, we assume that fixing something is easier than replacing it, both from a time and money perspective. Let's take that favorite car you've had for a number of years. First, one thing goes wrong and then another. As you make the recurring trip to the repairman, you soon begin to ask yourself, “Should I continue fixing the car until the sum of the parts is greater than the original price or replace it with a new car?”

Fixing it is the incrementally easier thing to do, but at some point you realize that your time, peace of mind and dollars would be better suited invested in a new car. As you start to do a little research on some new cars, you learn about new features such as Bluetooth or better fuel efficiency that you realize you've been missing. In fact, you become convinced that you can't live without a new car, and off you go to buy it.

In the end, you spent time and money on both. Minimizing the time on fixing something you are going to replace is hard to do. Knowing when to fix and when to replace have been critical to my success at work.

I believe that we all spend time fixing our processes and people more than we like. The reason we don't replace them is because of the cost involved in both absolute dollars and emotionally. Understanding the dollars is simpler than understanding the emotion. How many of us held on to that first car longer than we should have because of the memories we created with it? That emotional attachment is very strong with the systems and people we put in place to run our businesses. Over time, we become emotionally attached to the way we do things and to the people we hire. That attachment can be an albatross around our neck.

I know it's a tough subject, but as entrepreneurs we have to deal with people issues,

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time and, unfortunately, the same is true for any person (employee or customer), and that is why it is critical to remove the emotional attachment.

What about processes? My last few columns have discussed the advantages of SaaS/cloud computing (see www.CPATechAdvisor.com/go/2663 and www.CPATechAdvisor.com/go/2745). I believe and know that the business world is moving towards data being stored in the cloud. The advantages are too great. It's more secure, has built in disaster recovery, provides for better support, and speeds up the product development timeline. That said, the move to SaaS has not become mainstream. Desktop software companies continue to spend significantly more on fixing things in their desktop products, not replacing things. Small businesses continue to be wary of "the cloud" and are sticking with the tried-and-true solutions they've used for the last 20 years, installing upgrades and patches when available. What a shame.

Accountants are fortunate to have an extremely robust ecosystem when it comes to SaaS. Great workflow, accounting, tax and finance solutions are available in the cloud. The cloud means no more routing paper around the office and syncing client data with desktop machines and servers, automatic scanning and conversion of tax/financial documents, multi-user anytime/anywhere access to data, and much better security and default disaster recovery. Best of all, once you make the switch, you no longer have to spend time fixing or upgrading your tools. The "fixing" is done for you. What a deal!

SaaS applications drive tremendous time savings by better automating business processes, but another huge advantage is your savings in IT costs. SaaS applications save you time and headaches when it comes to managing complex server and network infrastructures, helping you avoid the investment of time every time those systems need to be fixed. Have you thought about the time savings and what you could do with it? Add more customers, increase revenue, or play an extra round of

golf. Why continue fixing your desktop applications when you know that someday

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