

A man in a dark blue suit and tie sits at a large wooden conference table with his arms crossed. Behind him are bookshelves filled with binders. The room has wood-paneled walls and a drop ceiling with recessed lights.

**Tim Larsen**

Squire & Company, PC  
Orem, Utah

**WINNING  
WITH INTEGRATED  
SOFTWARE**



## Solutions

### In This Issue

Page 2

#### Viewpoint

A new look—and a renewed commitment.

Page 3

#### Newsline

Kudos, new products, and a welcome to Accountware customers.

Page 6

#### Cover Story

Software integration helps grow revenue ahead of staff growth at Squire & Company, Orem, Utah.

Page 8

#### Idea File

Multiple monitors and a new way to offer service-bureau payroll.

Page 10

#### Software in Action

To Don Burniac, online, paperless service delivery is the shape of the future.

Page 13

#### Tips & Tactics

Using Data Mining in UltraTax CS and other tips.

**COVER:** Tim Larsen, managing partner of Squire & Company, PC, Orem, Utah, has seen integrated software from Creative Solutions help revenue growth outpace staff growth at his firm. (Photos by Stephanie Neal.)

Solutions is published by The Thomson Corporation and Creative Solutions, 7322 Newman Boulevard, Dexter, MI 48130; (734) 426-5860. Printed in the United States. Copyright 2005 Creative Solutions. Vol. 3, No. 1.

## A New Look - and a Renewed Commitment

You've probably noticed some recent changes to our product names as well as a new name for our suite of products: the CS Professional Suite. This new product branding strategy reflects our renewed commitment, as your technology partner, in rolling out next-generation software designed to take advantage of more advanced Internet technology and a more flexible and stable platform. It also reflects our commitment to offer you more extensive product integration to help you maximize efficiency in your practice and provide the best possible client service.

### Coming soon – greater speed, greater flexibility, more enhancements

You have already begun to see the rollout of these advancements in two revolutionary new products, Financial Analysis CS and Practice CS. These products have been the first to take advantage of Microsoft® .NET technology, which provides unprecedented flexibility, improved scalability, and more seamless connectivity with our web-based services. We are planning for deployment of this advanced technology in our accounting products, including Write-Up CS, Payroll CS, Trial Balance CS, and Engagement CS.

With this new technology, we can deliver numerous important enhancements that have been requested by many users, such as the ability to capture more than two years of history in Payroll CS. In addition, we will enhance our database platform by moving away from Microsoft Access to SQL Server 2005 (including the Express version for firms that do not need an enterprise-wide database server). The .NET framework combined with the SQL database provides a more stable development environment, allowing us to bring enhancements to market more quickly.

While we don't have specific timetables for rolling out these enhancements, our strategy will be evolutionary rather than revolutionary. That is, we will incorporate these enhancements and the underlying .NET architecture into our regular updates, rather than building them as separate, next generation products. The initial phases of this transition will begin sometime following April 2006. We will also begin incorporating .NET technology into the UltraTax CS family of products for the 2006 tax year.

### Our technology partnership: your role

As your technology partner, we are committed to our mission of providing you with the most productive software and services available in the profession. We will take full advantage of the latest technology to ensure that Creative Solutions users are the most efficient and profitable firms in the profession. As with any partnership, you have a role to play as well. Your role is to ensure that you have the proper hardware and operating systems to reap the benefits of these technological advancements.

With the deployment of .NET technology we will no longer be able to support the Windows® 98 operating system. This means that we will no longer test software scheduled for the spring and summer 2006 releases in the Windows 98 environment

*Continued on page 12...*

### CS Professional Suite

**“With this new technology, we can deliver numerous important enhancements that have been requested by many users.”**

## UltraTax/1040 Portals wins 2005 Innovation Award

For the second consecutive year, Creative Solutions received honors at *The CPA Technology Advisor* Innovation Awards ceremony. In 2005, UltraTax/1040 Portals was recognized as one of the most innovative new technologies for the accounting profession and was one of only five products/services acknowledged out of 75 total nominations.

UltraTax/1040 Portals were introduced to the professional market in Q4 of 2004 and have had a powerful impact on the way accountants serve their clients. This revolutionary service enables tax and accounting firms to post tax organizers and electronic copies of completed tax returns in a private and secure client portal that clients can access from their firm's website. These portals offer clients 24/7 access to their tax information without having to contact their tax preparer. Once the returns are posted, clients can access the read-only copy any time they need to throughout the year. The electronic delivery of the tax return is the final step in the totally paperless tax preparation process.

With the initial release for the 2004 tax season, UltraTax/1040 Portals users were required to have both the UltraTax

Client Organizer and FileCabinet CS installed to provide this service. For the 2005 tax season, we've streamlined the process, so firms no longer have to create the web organizer or push the return to FileCabinet CS to post and retrieve returns—making UltraTax/1040 Portals much easier to implement.

The Tax and Accounting Technology Innovation Awards were created to recognize significant advancements and innovative developments in software, services, hardware, and other applications, as well as advancements to existing technologies that are marketed to the tax and accounting profession. Receiving the 2005 Innovation Award for UltraTax 1040/Portals provides objective recognition of Creative Solutions' ongoing efforts to make practical use of advanced technology to help accountants provide better service to their clients more profitably. For more



information on UltraTax/1040 Portals, please contact a Creative Solutions Account Representative at (800) 968-8900 or complete the enclosed reply card.

## Direct deposit now available for CBS clients

In today's Internet-driven society, employees across the country are coming to expect direct deposit services from their employers as the norm. Now you can help your Client Bookkeeping Solution® (CBS) clients meet that expectation with the direct deposit feature in CBS.

CBS Direct Deposit is available with the CheckWriter, PayCheck, and Accounts Payable modules of CBS. With the CBS direct deposit feature, you can offer your clients the quick convenience of having their employees' paychecks automatically deposited into their bank accounts. In fact, you can use the CBS direct deposit feature to process and manage electronic payroll check deposits for your employees as well as electronic payments to vendors, tax deposit agencies, 401(k) plan administrators, and so on.

Through a special arrangement with InterceptEFT, a leading third-party Automated Clearing House (ACH) processor, Creative Solutions makes it fast and simple to provide direct deposit services for your clients. InterceptEFT takes care of all the details for you and your clients, such as dealing with the multiple banks necessary to process direct deposit and providing daily confirmations, reports, and monthly statements of transaction detail. InterceptEFT oversees and ensures the secure transmission of direct deposit data through the ACH system.

For more information on how Client Bookkeeping Solution and the CheckWriter, PayCheck, and Accounts Payable modules can save time and increase productivity for you and your clients, call a Creative Solutions Account Representative at (800) 968-8900 or complete the enclosed reply card.

## Financial Analysis CS offers seamless integration with Risk Management Association® data

After launching Financial Analysis CS last winter, we're pleased to announce that our most recent enhancement to this new program includes seamless integration with the Risk Management Association (RMA) Annual Statement Studies database. This capability significantly augments your ability to create meaningful and comprehensive industry comparisons for clients. For example, you can compare and contrast a client's financial standing against benchmark data from hundreds—even thousands—of similar businesses at any level of detail. This provides both the accountant and their client with a better understanding of the client's financial position compared to peer businesses.

The RMA Annual Statement Studies database contains financial data and ratios for more than 680 industries and is based on more than 190,000 statements. The current database contains data from 2004-2005 Annual Statement Studies, which includes more than 150,000 small- and medium-sized U.S. businesses that provided financial statements to commercial banks. Accountants can conveniently subscribe to an online version of RMA data directly through Creative Solutions, and the relevant information you select for analysis from those studies will flow directly to your clients' financial statements in Financial Analysis CS.

Integration between Financial Analysis CS and RMA represents another step toward helping firms increase productivity and profitability through software and technology advancements. The smart integration between these products will enable users to provide value-added consulting services that can enhance their clients' success.

For more information on Financial Analysis CS, call an Account Representative at (800) 968-8900 or complete the enclosed reply card.

## Interim financial statements—a new module for Client Bookkeeping Solution (CBS) users

Do you have CBS clients who want to produce their own interim financial statements? CBS Financial Statements enables clients to do just that—on their own and whenever they desire.

As with the entire CBS program, you maintain control because you choose the clients who you feel should have this capability and make it available to them at your discretion. Because clients are using the same account groups that you use to produce statements in Write-Up CS, you control the way data is presented, and clients get a more accurate snapshot of their interim cash flow position.

The standardized financial statements that clients can produce include Trial Balances, Balance Sheets, Income Statements, and Cash Flow Statements. Clients can select what they want to see from several options, such as balance periods (for example, current year only, current year vs. prior year, and

current period), percentages, individual departments, and more. You can also set up the client statements to indicate that they are interim and have not been audited by an accountant.

For more information on how Client Bookkeeping Solution and the CBS Financial Statements module can save time and increase productivity for you and your clients, call a Creative Solutions Account Representative at (800) 968-8900 or complete the enclosed reply card.

## Practice CS receives top reviews

Practice CS has been out less than a year and is already recognized as one of the most advanced practice management systems for accounting professionals. While most users have only been using the product a few months, we've received extremely positive feedback about the new digital dashboard design and comprehensive time and billing features.

Trade publications also have a lot to say about Practice CS. In the May 2 issue of *Accounting Today*, one reviewer wrote, "To say that Practice CS is revolutionary doesn't do justice to its excellent architecture or its ability to redefine practice management from the ground up." Practice CS was also featured in the August issue of *Accounting Technology*, where they wrote "The smartly designed dashboards go a long way toward making nearly any firm productive."

While we're thrilled with the initial comments we've received on Practice CS, we understand that our customers are anxiously awaiting new features and we're looking forward to releasing robust new modules as they become available. We are working diligently on the Project Management and Customer Management modules. Both modules are planned for release in 2006.



*Practice CS uses advanced, customizable "digital dashboards" to present real-time information about your firm, your clients, and your staff. The firm dashboard shown here displays firm financial and operational data.*

## Web Employee – 24/7 convenience for your payroll clients' employees

---

In 2004, we released Web Employee as a stand-alone web portal option that enabled Payroll CS users to offer the employees of their payroll clients online access to electronic copies of their payroll information. With this year's enhancements to Web Employee, employees gained access to additional payroll information including paycheck stubs, W-2s, and W-4s. They can even enter their current time and edit their W-4s directly online. Employees access their payroll information from their accountant's website via personal, private, and secure portals.

Web Employee represents another step in our advanced payroll offering, and the final step in a completely paperless payroll process. Web Employee is a particularly useful feature for clients who have direct deposit because they no longer require printed check stubs. Instead, employees simply view their payroll checks and related payroll information online and can print them out when needed.

With tools like Web Employee and NetClient CS, you can offer your clients the service and convenience that used to be available only through larger payroll service bureaus. To learn more about Web Employee, please call an Account Representative at (800) 968-8900 or check the box on the enclosed reply card.

## With XactPay, improve client cash flow through pay-as-you-go workers' compensation

---

As an added feature to your payroll services, Creative Solutions has teamed up with one of the nation's largest and most respected insurance companies, The Hartford, to provide XactPay—a hassle-free approach to workers' compensation. With XactPay, your clients pay premiums one payroll at a time, giving them maximum control of their workers' compensation costs while improving their cash flow.

With Hartford's XactPay, clients can pay for workers' compensation insurance in small amounts at each pay run spaced over the year. Of particular benefit to small business owners, this eliminates the need to commit a large sum of money up front and enables them to use the money for other needs or to earn interest. XactPay also offers an additional revenue opportunity for your firm, because your firm receives 3.5% of the insurance premium and \$25 for each lead quoted by The Hartford.

With XactPay Workers' Compensation premium payment plan, your clients benefit from a premium based on actual payroll, no down payment (except expense constant and flat assessments), no finance or billing fees, minimized audit adjustment, and automatic premium deductions. There's no more estimating or guesswork.

In addition, the XactPay program maintains all workers'

compensation class codes, eliminating the possibility of misclassifying employees. And users of Payroll CS and XactPay have access to a dedicated service center and their claims service line, which is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

For more information on how XactPay and Payroll CS can increase your payroll business and help your clients, call a Creative Solutions Account Representative at (800) 968-8900 or complete the enclosed reply card.

## Welcome Accountware customers!

---

In April, Creative Solutions announced the purchase of the Accountware software line. We are very excited to welcome Accountware customers to the Creative Solutions family and hope that you are well on your way to a successful transition to UltraTax CS. To assist with your UltraTax CS evaluation and transition, we've included helpful information, especially for Accountware users, on our website, including letters from Creative Solutions and Accountware, an Accountware to UltraTax CS Transition Guide, and more. To access this information, please visit: <http://www.CreativeSolutions.Thomson.com/Accountware/>.

We also offer a free Accountware to UltraTax CS Tele-Training class. This comprehensive three-hour class is designed to ensure that you have all the information you need to get up and running with your new software well before tax season. Please see our website for the latest training information and availability.

If there's anything we can do to assist you with your evaluation of UltraTax CS, please contact an Accountware to UltraTax CS Transition Specialist at (800) 226-5800.

## Engagement CS: seamlessly integrated with PPC's e-Practice Aids

---

As you know, we've often collaborated with our Thomson sister companies to integrate their tools into our software to help you run your practices more effectively. One of the first products in which we applied this extended integration was Engagement CS. The seamless integration between Engagement CS and PPC's e-Practice Aids has provided a comprehensive and paperless engagement system to handle every aspect of your engagements.

Client information is automatically populated into your PPC practice aids providing a level of integration available only from PPC and Creative Solutions. In every update since its original launch, we've enhanced and extended that integration in Engagement CS to make it easier for you to manage your engagement processes efficiently and profitably.

*Continued on page 12*

**Squire & Company, PC**  
Orem, Utah

**Total FTE's:** 56  
**Individual returns:** 2,800  
**Business returns:** 2,400

**Integrated software from Creative Solutions has helped revenue growth outpace staff growth at this Orem, Utah, accounting firm.**

## WINNING WITH INTEGRATED SOFTWARE

The managing partner of Squire & Company, PC, certified public accountants and business consultants, has been involved in the technology of accounting software since the early days of the profession's computer revolution. "We were processing tax returns in-house as early as anyone," says Tim Larsen, CPA, CITP, the first individual in Utah to receive the AICPA's Certified Information Technology Professional designation.

In 1982, shortly after graduating with a Masters of Accountancy degree from Brigham Young University, Larsen joined Squire & Company, which was co-founded by Joe Squire and his father in 1973. Gross revenue in 1973 was \$250,000. It grew to \$6.3 million in 2004 and is expected to reach \$6.9 million this year. With a mix of personal, business, and government accounts, the firm's average annual revenue growth has been 14 percent—one year reaching as high as 28 percent.

### Growing with technology

"We've been early adopters," says Larsen, attributing a good deal of Squire & Company's efficient growth to technology. "We've leveraged the technology aspect very well," he says. "There was one seven-year period in which our revenues doubled. When we looked at full-time equivalent employees at the end of that period, we had exactly the same number we had at the beginning. Technology is what made that possible."

Larsen has been involved with PCs since 1985. "I was given the responsibility because I had a real passion for it, and when we got our first PCs, I was put in charge of those. I've been the one responsible for all of our internal networking and use of computer hardware



*Left to right: Brandon Allfrey, Kristi Christiansen, Cindy Henry and managing partner Tim Larsen. Allfrey is the firm's champion on UltraTax CS and the use of Engagement CS to document tax returns. Christiansen is a payroll specialist and uses Payroll CS and FileCabinet CS, as well as the client portals to interact with payroll customers. Henry is the director of Payroll and Accounting Services, and she oversees the write-up and payroll functions.*

and software, although we later added a full-time IT person in 1998. I've seen technology as a way to enhance my ability to be a CPA from the very beginning."

His passion for technology has also been recognized by his peers. He served on the 2001 AICPA committee that designed the Certified Information Technology Professional program.

### Creative Solutions integration catalyzes software switch

The firm started looking at Creative Solutions software in 1998 when they were having issues with the software they

were using for time and billing. In 2000, they started the switch over to Creative Solutions software with Creative Solutions Practice. "We had used Lacerte Tax from 1997 through 2002, but we became more and more intrigued by Creative Solutions' approach to integration," says Larsen. "We contacted other users, and what tipped the scale was the integration."

In 2003, they made the switch to UltraTax CS, Engagement CS, and FileCabinet CS. "It was a major transition—approaching the same tasks, but from a different viewpoint. Creative Solutions was very helpful," says Larsen. "We brought them out for four days of in-house training—two days for UltraTax CS, and two days for Engagement CS. It was a new architecture that took some time to learn, but the support was there and by last year people were comfortable."

Larsen finds the greatest impact of integration in the data sharing of UltraTax CS and other Creative Solutions software. "We have different people doing different types of work, accessing different information at different times. I'm sure there's a savings in time. It's hard to quantify, but I'm convinced it's real," he says.

### Toward a paperless office

"We've been reducing paper for some time," says Larsen. "We began scanning documents in 2000, even before we purchased FileCabinet CS." They began with their own system for organizing the scanned files. "We did it the crude way at first, with individual yearly folders for each client." The process was enhanced with the purchase of two high-tech copiers that scanned directly to PDF.



**“I’ve seen technology as a way to enhance my ability to be a CPA from the very beginning.”**

*Squire & Company managing partner Tim Larsen leverages his technology with dual monitors, which can be used either to display multiple programs at the same time or to open different screens*

*within the same program (See article on page 8). Here, Larsen is shown running two different programs: UltraTax CS on the left and FileCabinet CS on the right.*

“FileCabinet CS is the ultimate solution for us,” says Larsen. Basically everything having to do with a client is scanned into the system and available to everyone over the network. “We’ve also been moving our old paper files into FileCabinet CS when we have time.”

Another aspect of the road to a paperless office is the implementation of NetClient CS portals for payroll and bookkeeping clients. “Our goal is to convert all 300 payroll clients to NetClient CS portals. And for clients who want to keep their own books but want us to maintain their general ledger, we recommend Client Bookkeeping Solution.”

The firm is also a leader in filing electronic returns with the IRS. “Last year the IRS gave us an ‘Exemplary ERO’ award for e-filing more business tax returns than any other provider in the nation.”

### **Importance of training**

“I read somewhere that most users don’t use more than 20 percent of their software,” says Larsen. “We challenge our people to go outside the box and break outside their normal routine.”

A committee of partners oversees a training program totaling 80 hours a year, half of it internal and half outside. The inside training is conducted by staff who have mastered a particular program. They also use the complete range of Creative Solutions training options: online training, regional classes and—of course—the annual Users’ Conference in the fall.

“We make sure we always send a number of people to the annual conference,” says Larsen. “It’s the best resource, because you’ve got everybody there and get a hands-on look at all the software.”

### **Working with Creative Solutions**

“One of the great things about our relationship with Creative Solutions is their responsiveness,” says Larsen.

“We communicate back and forth with Creative Solutions tech support a good deal. Our people are encouraged to check online help first, but not to spend much time there,” he says. “If they can’t find what they need right away, we encourage them to call tech support, which is excellent and well worth the fee. And when our people have ideas for enhancements they’d like to see, we pass their ideas back to Creative Solutions. And they respond.”

“Creative Solutions is a stable company that always is moving forward and enhancing its products,” Larsen concludes. “We need good tools. The tools Creative Solutions has been providing are the best ones available.”

## DUAL MONITORS

### Two are way better than one!

*By now you must have heard the buzz about dual monitors, but will they really save you time? According to Microsoft®, using dual monitors can actually increase your productivity by 25-50%. After testing them ourselves and getting feedback from dozens of Creative Solutions customers, we've found that dual monitors are definitely a tremendous timesaver—especially when used with CS Professional Suite software. Here are just some of the reasons why:*

You can easily multi-task because you can have multiple programs open simultaneously and view them together, rather than having to Alt+Tab to switch back and forth. For example, when working on a tax return, you can have the prior year return open in FileCabinet CS on one screen and enter data for the current-year return in UltraTax CS on the other. It also speeds

the review process and other tasks because you can have spreadsheets and other documents open while composing client letters or researching information on the Internet.

Dual monitors allow you to see more of the program you're working in, so you don't have to scroll up and down, or side to side to see the entire page. This is especially helpful when working in spreadsheet programs because you can display the entire sheet across the two monitors. Or, if you're using UltraTax CS to prepare tax returns, you can use one monitor for the input screen, and one for the form view, so you can monitor changes to the form as you're entering data.

You can reduce clutter on your desk. Even though you're adding a monitor, you're gaining so much work space you'd





be surprised how much less paper you need. For example, maybe you received an email from a client that you need to refer to as you're working on a file. With dual monitors, you can have the email open on one screen, and the file open on the other, rather than referring to the printed email. Many of our users keep FileCabinet CS open on one monitor at all times for fast access to stored files as they're working on other tasks.

Dual monitors are extremely easy to set up. Most everyone we've talked with said the setup is virtually hassle-free and that they couldn't believe they didn't move to dual monitors sooner. Some are even opting for three, four, or as many as five monitors for greater productivity gains!



## MYPAY SOLUTIONS

### Introducing a new way to offer service-bureau payroll.

In a recent survey of accounting firms, we asked accountants how they preferred to handle their clients' payroll services.

30% preferred to have clients handle their own payroll

38% preferred to process payroll for their clients

32% preferred to refer their clients to a service bureau

Until now, Creative Solutions offered solutions for two of the three categories: CBS PayCheck software for accountants who wanted to give their clients the ability to process their own payroll, and Payroll CS payroll processing software for accountants who wanted to process their clients' payroll for them.

We're pleased to introduce myPay Solutions (MPS) as a third alternative when you prefer to outsource payroll processing. Taking advantage of the speed and convenience of Internet technology, MPS provides timely, personal, and comprehensive online payroll processing for your clients, while promoting the accountant-client relationship.

In addition to basic reporting, worksheets, and checks, MPS offers such advanced features as a dedicated payroll specialist for every firm, revenue sharing, workers' compensation insurance, and no hidden charges. It can process payroll for virtually any business with 1-100 employees, and is easily customized so you and your clients get all the features you need.

Clients benefit from easy online payroll data entry and valuable add-on services such as direct deposit and a tax-filing service. All of the clients' employees can view checks, W-2s, and W-4s online, 24/7, at their convenience. They can also improve cash flow with the ability to pay workers' compensation insurance each payroll period instead of in a lump sum up front.

Firms also benefit by giving their clients a trusted, secure partner to handle all the complexities of their payroll processing. The complementary journal entries seamlessly import into Write-Up CS, while the firm's payroll processing and product support are absolutely free. Firms can also enjoy a revenue sharing opportunity, earning 10% of the payroll processing revenues for clients they refer to myPay Solutions. For more information about myPay Solutions, visit [myPaySolutions.com](http://myPaySolutions.com) or contact your Creative Solutions Account Representative at (800) 968-8900.

*Mission control: If two are better than one, why stop there? Vince Sirianni of Daly, Sirianni & Co., CPAs. LLP, Victor, New York, with enough monitors to launch a space shuttle.*

TaxHelp911.com  
Wyandotte, Michigan

**Creative Solutions software is key to the future for a Michigan accountant offering online, paperless, face-to-face service.**

## The Shape of the Future?

Don Burniac wants to liberate accountants (and, for that matter, their clients) from the constraints of bricks and mortar. His vision is to connect minds and visuals through the Internet, using computers and video technology to supplant the interaction that used to require people coming together in urban centers and cities. As the Wyandotte, Michigan accountant puts it, "I liken computers and the Internet to binoculars for our brains."

Don has watched technology steadily erode the ties between specific office locations and equipment. He has no doubt that this trend will continue, and that soon he'll be able to carry his practice anywhere in a shirt pocket. Until then, he has positioned himself in the forefront by eliminating many of the constraints of space and time with an innovative practice he calls TaxHelp911.com.

Many accountants have started using technology to eliminate the need for frequent face-to-face meetings with clients and their paperwork. Burniac has taken this to another level. He and his staff not only provide tax preparation and small business accounting services to clients live, over the phone and the Internet—but they do so while continuing to provide the kind of face-time that clients find reassuring. And along the way, he has gotten rid of a heck of a lot of paper.

Clients log on to TaxHelp911.com and are able to see live, streaming video of their tax preparers while they talk to them on the phone and exchange documents over the Internet almost instantaneously. It's a one-way video connection that affords the client the privacy to work with their accountant, even while they're in their bathrobes.

And while the tax preparers may be in TaxHelp911.com's central Tax Support Office Hub, they might as well be at home, or even a thousand miles away—anywhere they can get a high-speed connection with their laptop.

"It's face-to-face, desk-to-desk, from anywhere. For clients, geographic market area choice restrictions are eliminated. The only thing they can't do is shake hands, but they can get a smile," says Burniac. "For tax preparers, they no

**"The core of our existence is really Creative Solutions. We just wrap this website technology right around that core."**

longer have to leave their costly homes empty while traveling to another costly office to make their living. An added benefit is that office overhead can begin to be squeezed out of pricing in today's competitive market."

### Laying the groundwork

His practice wasn't always so high tech. It began as a family tax and bookkeeping practice started by his grandfather in 1934. In 1971, Burniac's father made him an offer he couldn't refuse—if he brought in 50 new clients in a year, his father would buy him a new car.

"A male just turning 20 will do anything for a new car," says Burniac. "Little did I know what that would lead to. When I started, we had 350 income tax clients and 73 monthly bookkeeping



*Clients of TaxHelp911.com can see Don Burniac, above, or any of his tax preparers, live, in streaming video while talking to him on the phone. Burniac could be in his office or a 1,000 miles away, running his Creative Solutions software through Virtual Office CS from his laptop computer.*



clients. By the time I was finished and decided to exhale a number of years later, we had 8,500 tax clients and 500 monthly bookkeeping clients.”

Don helped his father computerize to handle the volume, convincing him to invest \$100,000 in a Burroughs mini-computer system in 1977. “Nine months later the CPU burned up. I swore off computers forever.” Instead, they devoted themselves to developing a highly efficient manual system for handling all the clients they had—elements of which Burniac still uses for tracking work flow to this day.

A few years later, Burniac took another look at PC-based accounting software. “Creative Solutions approached us, and we said we would run their software against our manual system. We whipped them for three years in a row, like Paul Bunyan with his axe versus the chainsaw. But the fourth year they came back and beat us. They proved themselves, and we went with the best technology and embraced it.”

### **Making it happen**

Like any innovator, Don Burniac made several attempts to realize his vision before all the pieces came together. The first step was in the mid-1990s, when he experimented with using the Picture-Tel system to communicate remotely with clients. “It was basically a teleconferencing system. Clients had to come to the office, and we beamed in. The trouble was, the system was complex, expensive, and required dedicated ISDN lines. Even so, we did about 300 remote, live tax interviews. That was our pioneering phase.”

The next breakthrough in achieving his vision was Creative Solutions’ introduction of its Virtual Office CS software. “That’s what made it all possible,” says Burniac. They could access all their software and client data remotely, enabling staff to work from anywhere. “And it all came together when we embraced web technology. That’s when TaxHelp911.com was born.”

*Clients are also liberated from the constraints of geography. They can get their face time with Burniac or his colleagues from home, in the office, or even on the road—anyplace where they can get a phone connection and highspeed computer access.*

There was one final wrinkle to be worked out. It turns out that they overinvested in web technology at the outset, with two-way VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) web cameras and phones on both ends. They came to realize that this was needlessly complicated and expensive—the web phones tended to loop and echo, and getting clients on video was a hassle.

You might call their current setup a “high tech/low tech” system—it uses Internet technology, but only for the TaxHelp911.com website with streaming video from a low-cost web cam. Audio is delivered over conventional phone lines. “Regular phones are much more flexible, and clients are relieved not to have to have a camera on their end.”

### **Putting it all together**

“The core of our existence is really Creative Solutions. We just wrap this website technology right around that core. Now it all exists in cyberspace and the integration and data sharing of software like Creative Solutions accounting products and FileCabinet CS with UltraTax CS means that everything interlinks seamlessly,” says Burniac.

“The software integration and largely paperless workflow are especially important. You don’t want to run around tracking down paper files while you’re live, on camera with your client,” he adds.

“I’ve spent a lot of time with Creative Solutions tech support. They’ve been very helpful, and they really listen to users’ needs. I encourage all users to spend time with them and tell them what they need.”

Burniac is eager to share with other accountants what he has learned about using the web to escape the expense of bricks and mortar. He’s easy to find. Just go to TaxHelp911.com.



**“As your technology partner, we are committed to our mission of providing you with the most productive software and services available in the profession.”**

*Continued from page 2...*

and will not address any issues that might arise with it. At that time, it will be nearly six years since Windows 98 became a legacy operating system. While we are confident that the vast majority of our users are enjoying the benefits of more advanced operating systems, such as Windows XP, we understand that many of you keep older computers around for temporary and seasonal help. We want to give you as much advance notice of this change as possible.

I truly believe that we are on the threshold of an exciting new era in the tax and accounting profession. The adoption of the Internet is changing the way accountants provide services. Clients are thrilled with more convenient service, while accounting firms are lowering their labor investment. While we are still early in the adoption process, I am pleased that we already have more than 1,000 firms that are serving their clients through NetClient CS portals.

For a glimpse of some of the new products and enhancements that apply these new technologies, I encourage you to join us at our 25th Annual Users' Conference, November 2-5, 2005, in Scottsdale, Arizona. You will have the opportunity to experience many of our new products firsthand. In this issue of *Solutions*, we're pleased to share several great user stories that exemplify the future of our profession. And as always, we've included dozens of ideas and tips that you can implement right now to jump start your productivity.

Jonathan A. Baron  
Executive Vice President, Accounting Market, Thomson Tax and Accounting  
President and CEO, Thomson/Creative Solutions

## NEWSLINE

*Continued from page 5*

Now, from within the Engagement CS workspace, with a click of the mouse, you can access PPC's e-Tools Suite, which includes e-Practice Aids and e-Workpapers. You can even edit PPC documents and see the changes immediately within Engagement CS.

You also have access to PPC guidance along with advanced research resources from RIA and Warren, Gorham & Lamont via RIA's Checkpoint, the industry-leading online research platform. And for your tax engagements, you can access

PPC's tax deskbooks and planning guidance, along with tax resources from RIA—all via RIA's Checkpoint.

The direct collaboration between these systems can save you countless hours.

Integration between systems also allows for completely paperless engagements—and the savings that come along with them. The unique file management system in Engagement CS, combined with a direct link to PPC content, enables you to conduct your entire engagement in one central location.

Throughout the entire engagement, working documents can be accessed instantly; you can create review notes and finalize information without ever leaving the workspace or printing a single sheet of paper.

For more information about Engagement CS, please contact an Account Representative at (800) 968-8900 or complete the enclosed reply card.

## ULTRATAX CS

### Q: Is there a quick way to print an invoice without printing the entire return?

**A:** Yes. You can preview the invoice by right-clicking in any input screen and choosing Preview Invoice from the context menu. To print the invoice from the preview, click the Print All or Print One Page button in the upper-left corner of the Preview window.

### Q: Can I batch print quarterly estimate reminder letters to send to my clients?

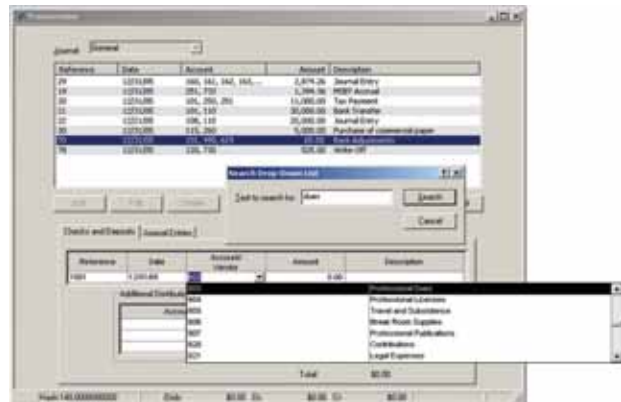
**A:** Yes. Using Data Mining, you can run a query to find which clients owe estimated payments and send them a letter. To start Data Mining, choose Utilities / Data Mining. Select the **1040 Individual** database and click the Continue (Step 2) button. In the Letters tab, double-click the **Estimate Reminder Letter** with the appropriate quarter to select that letter, and then click the Continue (Step 3) button. In the search field, select **All 1040-ES** with the same quarter you selected for the letter in Step 2, and then click the Continue (Step 4) button. Data Mining now lists the clients who have passed or failed the search. Click the Continue (Step 5) button. In Step 5, you can choose to print the estimate reminder letters for all clients that have a calculated estimated payment for the selected quarter. If you have entered an email address within UltraTax CS, you can choose to email the letter to the client.

### Q: How do I complete both Form 1040X, Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return, and the corresponding state return in UltraTax CS?

**A:** Verify that the information on Form 1040 is the information that should be used as the originally reported information. Next, calculate the original tax return by printing or previewing the return. On Screen Amend, in the General folder, enter X in the Transfer original information field, and then enter the appropriate information in the Explanation of changes field. Next, switch to the state return, and in the State Amend screen (Screen **XXAmnd**, where **XX** is the state postal code) also mark the Transfer original information field. Make the necessary changes for the amended return to the active client data.

### Q: How do I add a tax election that is not in UltraTax CS?

**A:** To add a tax election, choose Setup / 1040 Individual. In the 1040 Product Information dialog window, click the Tax Elections button, then click the New button and enter a document name. Click OK and a word processing window will open. Enter the desired text for the tax election and then save the return. To select the election for a particular client, open Screen Letter in the General folder and then select the document name that you entered for the new election. Note that this procedure is identical for any entity selected via the Setup menu.



Use the CTRL+L shortcut keys to search for matching text within any drop-down list in the Write-Up CS transactions screen.

## WRITE-UP CS

### Q: How can I speed up account selection during transaction data entry?

**A:** Place the cursor in the Account field and press CTRL+L to open the Search Drop-Down List dialog. Enter all or part of the account description and click the Search button. If the first selection is not what you wanted, press CTRL+R to continue searching for the next match.

### Q: During transaction data entry, when I select an account number on the Checks and Deposits tab and then move to the next field, the account number does not stay selected.

**A:** This is typically the result of having an account number that matches a vendor ID, causing the program not to know which is being referenced. To resolve this issue, open the Transaction Options dialog and change the vendor information setting to reference the vendor description instead of the vendor ID. To do this, choose Edit / Options and unmark the "Use Vendor ID to autofill" checkbox.

### Q: During transaction data entry, a column seems to disappear when moving from the account field into the amount field. How can I prevent that?

**A:** To return the column widths to their default settings, choose Edit / Options, click the Columns tab in the Transaction Options dialog, and click the Restore Defaults button.

## PAYROLL CS

### Q: My taxes are being calculated incorrectly for a payroll check. How can I view the tax calculation within Payroll CS to see what is happening and, if incorrect, how can I make the appropriate changes?

**A:** You can view tax calculations for the payroll check by following these steps:

1. Open the Payroll Check Entry window and select the check.
2. Choose Edit / Payroll Tax Calculation Diagnostics.

(You can also open the Edit menu by pressing F3 on your keyboard).

3. Select the specific tax from the Withholding Item drop-down list.
4. Make sure that the current and YTD taxable wages are correct.

If the taxable wages are off due to a specific pay item:

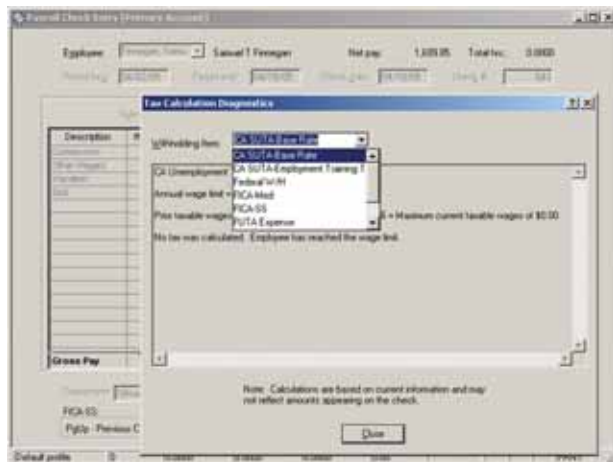
1. Choose Setup / System Configuration / Pay Items.
2. Highlight the appropriate pay item in the list and click the Edit button.
3. On the Tax Treatment tab, change the tax treatment for correct taxability.

If the taxable wages are off due to a specific deduction item:

1. Choose Setup / System Configuration / Deduction Items.
2. Highlight the appropriate deduction item in the list and click the Edit button.
3. On the Tax Treatment tab, be sure the checkboxes are marked appropriately (marked for after-tax deductions or unmarked for pre-tax deductions).

If the taxable wages appear to be correct, we suggest checking the tax tables for the employee's state and making sure the employee is set up appropriately.

1. Choose Setup / System Configuration / Payroll Tax Information / State.
2. Highlight the employee's state.
3. View the information on all tabs, and also click the Tables button on the General tab and verify the numbers being used in the tax tables.
4. From the CSA main window, choose Setup / Employees and verify that the employee setup corresponds with the tax tables you just viewed.



To verify a payroll tax calculation in Payroll CS, open the Payroll Tax Calculation Diagnostics dialog and select the type of tax from the drop-down list in the Withholding Item field.

## CLIENT BOOKKEEPING SOLUTION (CBS)

### Q. Is there a way to delete multiple checks at one time?

**A:** Starting with CBS version 2005.2.0, you can use the Void / Delete Checks dialog to delete multiple checks at one time. Point to Void / Delete Checks on the Tasks menu and then select the checkbook to work with. In the Void / Delete Checks dialog, select Delete from the drop-down list in the Action field, select the checks to delete, and then click the Void / Delete button.

### Q. How do I delete a transaction from a CBS checkbook?

**A:** Simply highlight the transaction in the checkbook data-entry window and choose Edit / Void / Delete Checkbook Item. If the transaction has already been exported, the program creates a reversing transaction in the appropriate CBS checkbook and exports the reversal to the accountant during the next export.

## ENGAGEMENT CS

### Q. Is there a way to automatically clear tickmarks, workpaper references, or procedure-completed signoffs in an Excel workpaper when rolling forward an engagement?

**A:** Yes, by using the Clear During Roll Forward command from the Engagement CS pull-down menu in Excel. Use this command in the cells you want to clear when the workpaper is rolled forward into next year's engagement. The content of a cell turns green to indicate that it has been flagged to be cleared.

## FIXED ASSETS CS

### Q: Is there a way to quickly reassign multiple assets to a particular association, without having to access each asset?

**A:** Yes. To reassign multiple assets at once, choose Edit / Reassign Assets. In the Reassign Assets dialog, move all of the assets that you wish to reassign to the pane on the right. In the Reassign to group box, select the Category and Value associations to be assigned to the selected assets, and then click the Reassign button. After you click Reassign, you will be prompted to reassign additional assets; click either Yes or No.

**Q: Can I compare an asset's prior depreciation with the amount that Fixed Assets CS calculates?**

**A:** Yes. While modifying an asset, you can right-click a treatment column or choose Tasks from the menu bar and select Prior Depreciation Comparison. If the Amount on File and Computed Amount differ, you can choose to use the Computed Amount for the selected treatment or for all treatments.

---

## TRIAL BALANCE CS

**Q: How can I round year-to-date Report-basis account balances?**

**A:** Choose Utilities / Create Rounding Journal Entry, specify the appropriate rounding accounts for assets, liabilities, income statement, and retained earnings. This creates a reclassifying Report-basis journal entry that rounds balances to the nearest whole dollar for financial statements and workpapers.

---

## FINANCIAL ANALYSIS CS

**Q: How can I import financial data into the Industries screen of Financial Analysis CS?**

**A:** If you are a subscriber to the Risk Management Association database (accessible from within Financial Analysis CS), you can retrieve relevant industry data for benchmark comparisons with your client data. From the Setup / Industries screen, click the "Request RMA Annual Statement Studies Data" button on the Financial Analysis CS toolbar, or choose Edit / Request RMA Annual Statement Studies Data to automatically retrieve industry data into Financial Analysis CS. If you are not yet a subscriber to RMA industry data, contact your Creative Solutions Account Representative at (800) 968-8900 to learn more about this feature.

**Q: In Financial Analysis CS, can I select a default basis to be used in the program?**

**A:** Yes, you can specify a default basis from the Setup / System Configuration dialog. This basis becomes the default selection when working with financial data and reports. The default does not overwrite a basis that has previously been selected in the program. For example, a basis previously specified in the Financial Data tab of the Setup / Clients screen is not overwritten.

**Q: I want to make sure my balances in the Financial Data tab of the Setup / Clients screen do not change. Is this possible?**

**A:** Yes, you can lock the cells so they cannot be edited or overwritten during a transfer. Highlight a cell, row, or col-

umn and click the Lock Data button on the toolbar to lock the data. Locked cells are displayed in yellow.

---

## FILECABINET CS

**Q: Is there a way to open Microsoft Word's Print dialog when I am editing an embedded Word document? When I choose File / Print, the FileCabinet CS Print dialog opens.**

**A:** Yes, press CTRL+P to open Word's Print dialog.

**Q: Is there a way to open Excel's Print dialog when I am editing an embedded Excel spreadsheet?**

**A:** Yes, choose View / Header and Footer, and click the Print button to open Excel's Print dialog.

---

## WEB SERVICES

**Q. I have a new firewall. What do I need to do to work with Creative Solutions Web Services applications?**

**A:** Open TCP ports 80, 443, and 1492 to allow both incoming and outbound traffic. Please see your firewall documentation for information on opening TCP ports.

**Q. I have files I want to make available to my portal clients year round. How can I do this?**

**A:** Use the permanent folder feature in File Exchange. To create a permanent File Exchange folder, log in as the NetFirm CS administrator, click the NetClient CS tab, and then click the **File Exchange** navigation link. Enter the name of the new folder in the **New Folder** field, mark the **Permanent Folder** checkbox, and click the Create button.

**Q. How many stocks can I track using the Stock Quotes ticker?**

**A:** You can monitor up to 20 stocks.

---

## CREATIVE SOLUTIONS PRACTICE

**Q: If our firm changed billing rates mid-month and we want to have the rates effective as of the beginning of the month, do we have to delete and re-enter all of our WIP?**

**A:** No. Once you've changed the billing rates in the Staff master file, you can recalculate the WIP as of any date you choose. Simply choose Util / Recalculate WIP and enter the date from which you want to recalculate the WIP.

## CS Professional Suite

Client CS™

Engagement CS™

FileCabinet CS™

Financial Analysis CS™

Fixed Assets CS™

NetClient CS™

Payroll CS™

Planner CS™

Practice CS™

Trial Balance CS™

UltraTax CS™

Virtual Office CS™

Web Builder CS™

Write-Up CS™

## Users' Conference 2005 – Scottsdale...Here We Come!

For this year's 25th Annual Users' Conference taking place November 2-5, 2005, we are leaving behind the historic and effusive spirit of San Antonio, Texas, site of last year's conference. This year we will venture into the beautiful haven of the Sonoran Desert, in the heart of Scottsdale, Arizona.

We're just putting finishing touches on this year's conference, which features nationally acclaimed keynote speakers, an intensive workshop schedule serving up a wide variety of course options, opportunities to relax with your colleagues in a non-competitive environment, an array of new products, services, and enhancements—all working to give you valuable insight into making your firm your most profitable investment.

"There is a lot to tell and even more to learn this year," stated Jon Baron, President and CEO of Creative Solutions. "This conference will be packed to the gills with new and helpful information on how to improve efficiencies in workflow processes to boost productivity and elevate profits. It's the year our users won't want to miss."

### Powerful keynote speakers

Jon will kick off the conference with a keynote that focuses on how to make your firm your most profitable investment. Central to the theme of his keynote will be his demonstration of the power of



integration, zero-time data entry, the paperless office, and advancing your firm with innovative online services as well as numerous other technical advances.

During lunch on Thursday, Bert W. Dumars, Director of Electronic Tax Administration for the IRS, will share a comprehensive view of the IRS's strategic priorities for interacting with IRS customers electronically in any communications with the IRS.

Concluding the conference on Saturday, veteran television host and human resources expert Ross Shafer will share his knowledge in his keynote, "Nobody Moved Your Cheese," where he will discuss taking responsibility for success and building lifelong customer relationships. Ross is sure to engage and inspire with lightning quick wit and experience.

### Easy registration via phone or website

With access to more than 60 intensive workshops, popular round-table discussion



groups, a pre-conference golf outing and Casino Night on Friday, attendees will have a memorable conference. Users who register by October 10, 2005, save \$50 on registration. Registration is available now via our website at [CreativeSolutions.Thomson.com](http://CreativeSolutions.Thomson.com). Other discounts for previous attendance and for multiple registrations are available. Just click the Users' Conference link from our homepage. You can also register by phone by contacting a Customer Service Representative at (800) 968-0600.

[CreativeSolutions.Thomson.com](http://CreativeSolutions.Thomson.com)

(800) 968-8900

THOMSON  
CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

PRSR STD  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Lebanon Jct., KY  
Permit #246



# request for information

Please provide me with more information on (check all that apply):

## **Accounting**

- Write-Up CS
- Trial Balance CS
- Engagement CS
- Financial Analysis CS
- Payroll Solution
  - Web Employee
  - Xact Pay Workers' Compensation

## **Client Accounting**

- Client Bookkeeping Solution
  - CBS Financial Statements
  - CBS Direct Deposit

## **Tax & Fixed Assets**

- UltraTax
- UltraTax/1040 Portals

## **Document Management**

- FileCabinet CS

## **Web Services**

- NetClient CS
- Web Builder CS
- Virtual Office CS

## **Practice Management**

- Practice CS

## **Other**

---

---

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PLACE LABEL HERE

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

(The mailing label can be taken from the back page of Solutions)





**NO POSTAGE  
NECESSARY IF  
MAILED IN THE  
UNITED STATES**

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 12 DEXTER MI

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY THE ADDRESSEE

**CREATIVE SOLUTIONS  
7322 NEWMAN BOULEVARD  
DEXTER, MI 48130-9957**

