Volume Five • Number One

THOMSON
TAX & ACCOUNTING™

Solutions

Success Strategies for Users of CS Professional Suite Software

THE ANSWER IS myPay Solutions

Thomson Tax & Accounting payroll service frees family firm to focus on higher level services.

Jason Lawhorn, CPA
Lawhorn & Associates, PLLC
Knoxville, Tennessee
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Solutions

In This Issue

COVER: *Jason Lawhorn, CPA, is Operations Principal of Lawhorn & Associates, the firm started by his father Jeffrey in 1979. They have big plans for the future, and myPay Solutions is helping them achieve their goals. (Photos by David Wolff.)*

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Same Focus, New Name

Our Transition to Thomson Tax & Accounting

Since our beginning, Creative Solutions has remained focused on delivering the broadest line of integrated software and services to the accounting profession, using the most advanced technologies available.

You may have noticed that we are in the midst of a new branding strategy. Creative Solutions, a Thomson company since 1997, is joining RIA, PPC, GoSystem Tax, GoFileRoom, InSource, and Fast-Tax to form Thomson Tax & Accounting. Actually, we have operated as Thomson Tax & Accounting for some time. We have now chosen to adopt Thomson Tax & Accounting as our public name.

When you consider the combined offerings of Creative Solutions, RIA, PPC, GoSystem, and GoFileRoom, Thomson Tax & Accounting offers the accounting profession a more comprehensive line of integrated software, services, research, and guidance than is available from any other company. However, since we were operating as separate businesses, many people didn't realize that we were all Thomson. Many of you have undoubtedly noticed the increased integration between CS Professional Suite products and RIA and PPC information products. By uniting these strong individual product lines under a single business brand of Thomson Tax & Accounting, we will strengthen our ability to provide you with total end-to-end workflow solutions.

As a part of our re-branding, it is important to also note that Creative Solutions' offerings are part of our Professional Software & Services business, along with GoSystem Tax and GoFileRoom. This business strives to provide software and service solutions for professional accountants in accounting, tax, and bookkeeping services.

"Although our name is changing, the focus of our business is not. From a customer standpoint, it is business as usual."

Although our name is changing, the focus of our business is not. From a customer standpoint, it is business as usual. You will continue to receive the same quality products and services that you have come to rely on from Creative Solutions. The same development team is continuing to work on CS products. You will continue to speak with the same support professionals and the same sales representatives will continue to call upon you. While nothing is changing with the way we design, support, and sell your CS products and services, our new identity of Thomson Tax & Accounting will help reinforce that these products and services are just part of a more comprehensive solution.

I know many of you have been on this journey with us since our beginning. We truly value your loyalty and will continue to provide you with the highest possible level of service as Thomson Tax & Accounting.

Jonathan A. Baron
President, Professional Software & Services, Thomson Tax & Accounting

INTRODUCING THE CLIENT MANAGEMENT MODULE FOR PRACTICE CS

New for 2007, the Client Management module for Practice CS enables you to record every detail of client interactions. With the most up-to-date information at your fingertips, you can effectively monitor client activity and logically store and access all client interactions in a single location for quick and efficient review.

The Client Management module allows you to:

- Customize your view of client and contact data
- Examine contact relationships, including standalone contacts such as lawyers, bankers, etc.
- Analyze performance and efficiency of client service
- Record notes of every client interaction
- Access a Rolodex-like contact list
- Perform two-way synchronization of contact information with Outlook
- Automatically track billable time on phone calls
- Record and track prospects won/loss information
- Track how new clients are referred to your firm
- Generate reports grouped by referral source
- View interactions by client, contact or staff
- Record phone messages and access them on the staff dashboard
- Print reports of all historical client and contact activity
- Seamlessly import client notes from your CS Professional Suite Accounting software

The Client Management module is intuitive, easy to use, and an integrated component of Practice CS. Take advantage of these new features right away with a minimal learning curve. For more information, contact an Account Representative by phone at (800) 968-8900 or via email at CS.Sales@Thomson.com.

MY ACCOUNT UPDATES

The My Account section of the Thomson Tax & Accounting website—a customized area where you can check the status of an order, renew your products, and update contact information—has been redesigned to make it easier for you to navigate and get to the areas you need. The redesign was based on requests we've received from you and from ongoing analysis of website statistics and data.

Because of your recommendations, we have added a new navigation menu with links at the top of the page for fast access to the sections and tools you use most. We've also developed new icons, placed just below the navigation menu, to quickly link you to the most popular sections of My Account.

You also told us that you want an easier way to determine your Account ID number and the contact information attached to the account. Now when you log in, your Account ID and firm address will show prominently on one side of the screen. In addition, there is now a Private Communication Center (PCC)—a private area of My Account where you can review a proposal from your representative or exchange conversion data in a secure environment.

No matter what section of My Account you use most, we think you will now find it more convenient than ever. And keep those suggestions coming—we make every effort to continually improve our service to you.

2D BAR CODING ON W-2S ADDS VALUE FOR ULTRATAX/1040 USERS

The technology to scan bar codes on Form K1 and accept the data into UltraTax CS has helped many of our users increase their productivity by eliminating manual data entry. Our new 2D bar coding technology for W-2 and 1099 forms offers UltraTax CS users even more data-entry time savings, as well as a 100% accuracy rate.

In 2006, Thomson Tax & Accounting released new technology that enables CS Professional Suite Accounting software to generate scanner-readable 2D bar codes on W-2 and 1099 forms. Also released was the technology for UltraTax CS software to accept the scanned data. This technology offers tremendous time savings for users with 1040 clients, because now users have the capability to scan W-2s and 1099s that were created in Write-Up CS or Payroll CS by other tax professionals, and then accept the data into UltraTax CS. In addition to time saved by eliminating manual data entry, clients will also enjoy the 100% accuracy rate guaranteed by total digital data capture.

Thomson Tax & Accounting has offered to share the technology for generating W-2 bar codes with any interested software or payroll vendor. Widespread use could tremendously impact productivity across the profession. Bar coding is another example of our commitment to develop advanced technology that helps our users be as efficient as possible.

SYNCHRONIZE YOUR VIRTUAL OFFICE CS OUTLOOK ACCOUNT WITH YOUR BLACKBERRY

In response to suggestions submitted by many users, Virtual Office CS now supports BlackBerry synchronization. You can check your desktop email, calendar, contacts, tasks, and notes wherever you are. Receive email attachments and reply to email via your Blackberry*. Any updates you make will show as "replied-to" in Microsoft Outlook, just as if you had been on your PC.

For a monthly fee you can get started today. From your NetFirm CS administrator site, simply add permissions for each applicable staff person. (BlackBerry devices and monthly service provider fees are not included.)

Note to other handheld users: We also expect to support the synchronization of other devices, such as Treos, sometime in the second half of 2007.

**Microsoft Exchange must be enabled and a primary email address entered.*

ALOHA! JOIN US ON HAWAII'S BIG ISLAND FOR OUR 2007 USERS' CONFERENCE

Register Early and Save

The 27th Annual Creative Solutions Users' Conference takes place November 7-10, 2007, at the Hilton Waikoloa Village in Waikoloa, Hawaii. Register now and receive up to $150 in discounts, plus free financing with our "50% Now, 50% Later" promotion.

Improve your firm's productivity while having fun in the sun. Choose from more than 60 workshops—including CS Professional Suite training, a variety of practice management and technology sessions, keynote addresses by nationally recognized speakers, and more.

Register Early and Save up to $150

For the third year, the registration fee remains $995. In addition, we offer discounts for early registrants:

- **EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT—** Register by August 31 to SAVE $50
- **PREVIOUS ATTENDEE DISCOUNT—** SAVE $50 (if you attended our 2006 Users' Conference)
- **ADDITIONAL FIRM ATTENDEES—** SAVE $50
- **"50% NOW, 50% LATER"—** Register by August 31 to use this FREE financing option (pay 50% when registering and the balance by October 4)

Online Registration Begins Mid-June 2007

Go to CS.Thomson.com/UC in mid-June for more information, including a program with workshop descriptions and schedules. You can also register and request a printed program by calling Customer Service at (800) 968-0600, press 1, then 5.

Book Your Room Now

Special room rates at the Hilton Waikoloa Village are available November 2-15, 2007, and are subject to availability. For additional details, or to book your room, go to CS.Thomson.com/UC and click the travel information link.

PAPERLESS PROCESSING WITH REMOTE PAYMENT AUTHORIZATION

If you use Client Bookkeeping Solution (CBS) Accounts Payable to write and process vendor payments for your clients, taking advantage of the Remote Payment Authorization feature is a convenient, paperless option. For your clients, the Remote Payment Authorization service simplifies the entire vendor payment process, because you write the checks for them. The client has responsibility for prioritizing which vendors are paid and when, and can override payments and payment amounts as necessary (for example, paying less than a total bill if a dispute is involved). Clients also have control over their cash flow without having to learn a new system. Even better, Remote Payment Authorization supports a completely paperless process for your clients—all they need is an Internet connection and a NetClient CS portal via your website.

With Remote Payment Authorization, you can upload checkbook balances to your client's portal so they can keep track of their cash flow. You can also eliminate the time spent on guesswork by communicating clearly with your client using electronic notes—no more repeated contacts to the client to determine which open payables to process.

For more information on Remote Payment Authorization, contact your Account Representative at (800) 968-8900.

FILECABINET CS OFFERS SCANNED IMAGE MANAGEMENT

You can now increase your efficiency during processing by managing your scanned images with the new Image Groups Dialog in FileCabinet CS. This new enhancement offers a variety of organizational features that make managing your images fast and easy—so they are organized just the way you like them and ready when you need them.

Using the Image Groups Dialog, you can quickly assign names to pages as you scan them by selecting from standard naming buttons, or you can customize the buttons to create your own names. To make organization even easier, you can view the image in a preview pane before you assign a name to it. You can also scan additional pages into the image group, copy in pages that were previously scanned and saved to the hard drive, reassign pages, delete pages, change the sequence of pages, sort the pages alphabetically, enter keywords for easier searching, add text annotations, and more.

Adding to the comprehensive image scanning features already in FileCabinet CS, scanned image management is a great time saver that can further streamline your workflow. The new Image Groups Dialog

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LOYAL TO ULTRATAX CS

Edwin J. Murphy Inc. uses UltraTax CS to prepare about 2,000 tax returns a year—some business, mostly individual. "I turned down an H&R Block franchise because I wouldn't be able to use UltraTax CS," Ed Murphy says. "There's no way I would switch, because the program is so complete."

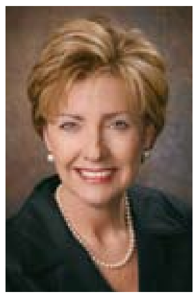
"It's a complex, comprehensive program, and you need to learn everything you can to take advantage of its power," says Ed, who switched from Tax Relief five years ago and credits Thomson Tax & Accounting for an excellent conversion. He has used UltraTax CS for the 2003 through the 2006 tax years. "I take every class that I can. As a tax preparer, you could say I might once have been slightly above average, if that. Once I started following the techniques of Thomson Tax & Accounting and taking their classes, I improved tremendously. It's easier for me to do 2,000 returns today than it was to do 900 five years ago."

"There's no way I would switch, because the program is so complete."

When he talks about UltraTax CS, he thinks of it as inseparable from FileCabinet CS, which has become an integral part of his tax preparation process. "It's just incredible," he says. "My filing system is much easier to use than it used to be." He figures he's saving about $25,000 a year in labor costs, while spending a fraction of that. "I can't say enough about the people at Thomson Tax & Accounting," he concludes. *—Ed Murphy, Edwin J. Murphy Inc., Rocky Point, New York*

SEAMLESS INTEGRATION TO THE RESCUE

Marcia Wright practices accounting with her husband and several associates. They're located in Hattiesburg, Mississippi—an area that, while not bearing the direct brunt of Hurricane Katrina, suffered a great deal of damage. Wright CPA Group suffered roof damage and their air conditioning unit blew right off the side of the building and down the street. At home, the Wrights had a pine tree spear through their roof. But their data was safely backed up and they didn't lose any of it. They were closed for a week and then were helping their clients—only eight of whom suffered no damage—fill out SBA forms and reconstruct their financial data.



"We're so pleased with the company, especially the training."

— Marcia Wright

With the recovery work, the economy is booming, there's plenty of work, and as Marcia says, "If you're not making money now, it's because you're lazy"—a word nobody has ever used to describe Marcia Wright.

She and her husband have been in practice for more than 20 years. They have about 1,000 corporate and individual tax clients, including professors at the University of Southern Mississippi (Brett Favre's alma mater). Like almost everybody in Hattiesburg, Marcia has met Favre.

They started using CS Professional Suite software for write-up, and they've never looked back. They soon added UltraTax CS—"it just made sense because of the integration." They're a CS Professional Suite shop, and in addition to Write-Up CS and UltraTax CS, they're using FileCabinet CS, Practice CS, Payroll CS, and Client CS.

"We're so pleased with the company, especially the training," says Wright. "It makes all the difference. We regularly attend the training seminars in Jackson. It's really worth it." In addition, Wright says they make frequent use of Thomson Tax & Accounting telephone support.

She is enthusiastic about the seamless integration of UltraTax CS with other CS Professional Suite software, which saves time and simplifies workflow. Beginning with the 2005 tax year, they began scanning documents into FileCabinet CS. They're getting ready to let go of paper copies altogether. After the 2008 tax year they hope to be totally paperless, and to get rid of the physical file cabinets.

In addition to the efficiencies in workflow, she marvels at the financial efficiencies that have already resulted from using FileCabinet CS. "I've really noticed a big difference," says Wright. You wouldn't believe how much we've saved on toner and paper since we started using FileCabinet CS!"

"An old friend of mine is using Write-Up CS. I tell him he should start using UltraTax CS. After all, he's already got his trial balance. Everything imports seamlessly." So far, he hasn't switched, but she'll keep working on him. She understands his reluctance and jokes, "We're accountants. We really don't like change."

Of course, she's living proof that's not true for all accountants. Not only is she not threatened by change, she thrives on it. *—Marcia Wright, Wright CPA Group, PLLC, Hattiesburg, Mississippi*

PAPERLESS WORKFLOW SAVES TIME

At Whittaker & Company, "they are strategic business advisors and certified public accountants." There are five people on the team, and they are growing. They have about 250 individual clients and about 100 corporate clients.

"In the last year we have moved entirely to the Thomson Tax & Accounting products. We have embraced Engagement CS and set-up paperless engagements for all projects except individual tax returns," says Dan Whittaker. "As a result of moving to a paperless environment, we have standardized workflow and file organization for each type of engagement. Even though this set-up process was time consuming, we saw benefits within the first few months. By going paperless, we have been able to save about 35% of the time required in many engagements." *—Dan Whittaker, CPA, Whittaker & Company, Seal Beach, California*

DAVID WOLFF PHOTOS

Jeffrey Lawhorn, who founded Lawhorn & Associates in 1979, is flanked by sons Josh, left, the marketing manager, and Jason, right, the operations principal.

THE ANSWER IS myPay Solutions

Thomson Tax & Accounting payroll service frees family firm to focus on higher level services.

It only took Jason Lawhorn a few seconds to respond to a question about what sets Lawhorn & Associates, P.L.L.C. apart from the competition. The answer is outstanding service and is one of several reasons why the Knoxville, Tennessee, CPA firm started using myPay Solutions (MPS).

"There's money to be made in payroll," he says, "but there has to be volume and a dedicated staff, otherwise the margins aren't that great. There are higher margin areas where we can provide a greater level of services to clients other than payroll."

> **"There are higher margin areas where we can provide a greater level of services to clients other than payroll."**

MPS is part of Thomson Tax & Accounting, and is an outsource point for accounting firms to use to prepare payroll. It offers a substantially higher level of service than most firms are prepared to offer, as well as maximum flexibility. Clients can log onto a portal over the Internet and pay according to the method they've chosen—remote payroll check printing or direct deposit. Clients can even issue debit cards for employees who don't have bank accounts. And, every employee has their own portal. They can log on any time and see their latest paycheck or other year-to-date information. At the end of the year, W-2s are put in the portal and can be printed by employees.

Lawhorn & Associates was founded in 1979 by Jason's father, Jeffrey, and has been at its current location since 1997. The firm has about 1,500 clients, mostly smaller businesses with revenues of less than $50 million a year. All payroll clients use MPS.

"We were charging a fee," Lawhorn says, "but MPS runs from $500 to $800 less. For every client we refer to MPS, we receive a 10 percent revenue share. This service frees up our staff to do higher level work. Payroll has to get done regardless of whatever else is going on, so if we're all out of the office it's not an issue. We're making more profit in other areas and are still getting 10 percent of payroll revenue. This is pure profit that will increase as companies grow; it's not a static revenue stream, but a dynamic one."

Build client relationships

Best of all, Lawhorn says MPS supports the accountant-client relationship. He's heard other CPAs say, "If you're doing a client's payroll, you've got the client."

He explains, "I understand payroll is a basic compliance issue, but clients need services well beyond compliance. That's what they should expect, and it's something most CPA firms are not able to give them because, like their clients, they are buried in compliance. We're trying to make sure that doesn't happen to us, and we can offer the expert services they're looking for—tax planning, industry analysis, peer financial analysis. We're developing new reporting

Lawhorn & Associates is a great believer in training and education. At right, the firm conducts one of its three yearly all-associate roundtables. Above, Jason poses with a cutout of a Hawaiian dancer that is part of an incentive promotion to decide which ten associates go to this year's Creative Solutions Users' Conference (see page 4).

that goes well beyond a client getting an income statement and a balance sheet each month. A lot of firms are not interested in educating their clients about that 'black box' of accounting. Not being buried in compliance allows us to do that. We can share with the client. It makes them better business people, and in doing that we build loyalty."

New marketing approach

The firm is taking a new approach by offering clients value-based price agreements and urging them to use individual web portals. The agreements are basically a menu of services. At the bottom line, clients pick and choose the level of service they want. Lawhorn says both moves resulted in minimal client attrition.

"It's all about delivery of information, and our method is via the portal," he explains. "This year we're taking the biggest step ever with portals. Every client gets one for free; it's a part of their package unless they opt out. When clients come to pick up their tax returns, instead of getting a paper copy they get one sheet with instructions on how to access their portal."

The portals have been accepted very well.

"Clients have all their information at their fingertips," Lawhorn says, "and they can be anywhere—work, home, or at the beach in Hawaii. As long as they have an Internet connection they can get their tax returns or financial statements. If they want to give us their wills and insurance papers we have a cyber folio service to house those documents. They can also aggregate their bank accounts within their portal. They can have a stock ticker if there are certain stocks they watch. The portals are a mini financial center for clients. We hear all the time that clients have a team of financial planners, attorneys, and CPAs, but whoever owns the client portal is the one who will have the closest relationship with that client—period. It's becoming a more common technology across professions."

Lawhorn admits some accounting firms are reluctant to use value pricing, portals, and even MPS because they think they're leaving money on the table and their clients won't like it. He says just the opposite is true.

"In fact, you're making sure you aren't leaving any money on the table," he adds. "Once a firm is integrated using the CS Professional Suite, they can no longer charge by the hour unless their fees are very high. We describe the value of what we're providing and build clients according to that value. We let the client pick their level of service and define exactly what they're going to pay instead of giving them a huge bill at the end of the year. It makes a big difference and all our clients have been extremely happy with it. They've been very happy with MPS, and we've been very happy with it. Overall, the level of service we provide to clients exceeds the standard CPA firm."

"We want to become a national firm for small businesses. One of the great things about Thomson Tax & Accounting and Virtual Office CS is the scalability, which is unlimited."

Roundtable meetings

On the day we visited Lawhorn, the firm was conducting one of three yearly roundtables. All 17 associates attend the session, which can last more than one day, to share their goals for themselves and the firm for the next 90 days.

"We have an open culture, everyone is very forward thinking," he says. "We share our firm's vision and internal numbers, and have been able to generate a level of excitement that keeps us moving in the right direction."

For the future, Lawhorn is looking to acquire or merge with other accounting firms.

"We want to become a national firm for small businesses," he says. "One of the great things about Thomson Tax & Accounting and Virtual Office CS is the scalability, which is unlimited. When we open another location or merge with an accounting firm, all of our software is there. We just have to provide training on how we do things."

UltraTax CS TO THE RESCUE

DAVID WOLFF PHOTOS

Thomson Tax & Accounting solves firm's worst nightmare

This has to be a CPA's worst nightmare. It's the middle of tax season and the firm's software is not performing. Quick fixes don't work, and the only solution is to change the entire system.

Fortunately for Thomas E. Spivey, CPA, PA, the software he chose was UltraTax CS.

"We weren't getting anywhere with our old software," Spivey says. "By the time we got an issue resolved, the problem reoccurred because there was another update to another form. We had the same problem again. I felt we were better off to start fresh rather than continue to work with something old where nothing was getting resolved. We got bold, moved in a new direction, and just did it."

Spivey opened his Durham, North Carolina, practice in 1989. Today he has 250 tax clients and about 50 business clients in several markets, as well as some nonprofit organizations.

Five full-time associates concentrate on audit services, compilation and client write-up, consulting services, and tax services, aided by a full-time administrative assistant and a part-time administrative assistant.

"We provide a personal touch," Spivey says. "We pride ourselves on being available when a client needs us. If we see there are additional things that need to be done, we bring these issues to their attention and implement those services to make sure they are better off in managing their business operation."

Technology driven

As the firm grew, Spivey wanted accounting software to be fully integrated so he could use technology to minimize staff. He chose a company that claimed to have those capabilities.

"I had used them the previous tax year and everything seemed to work fine," he says. "I had some concerns about their trial balance software, which we use for audits.

And, the program we used in the nonprofit arena didn't do what they said it would do. Nevertheless, because of the price I decided to stick with it."

Going into tax season last year, the staff had problems updating forms.

"All of a sudden I had a fiasco," Spivey says, "a major problem that went on for more than 2 1/2 weeks. I was constantly on the phone with technical people trying to get forms updated. Spivey finally decided enough was enough. He had conversations with Thomson Tax & Accounting, who had been trying to get him to switch software for more than one year. Instead of going back to his old software, which he had been using for 12 years, Spivey switched to UltraTax CS in March of tax season.

"UltraTax CS had a lot in common with my old software," he says. "When I saw that I felt comfortable I could manage this. I decided to cut off the problems and told the staff we were going to start operating based on new software. We used Thomson Tax & Accounting technical support instead of doing a lot of training. The technical support department was excellent, so we just used them."

UltraTax CS is automatic

In Spivey's words, UltraTax CS is "automatic."

"With the old software, we had to do a lot of things manually to get it to process completely," he explains. "With UltraTax CS, some of these processes are automated, and this helps reduce errors of omission. UltraTax CS does it the way it's supposed to be done. The main reason I switched to the CS Professional Suite was the integration with all the other software I'm getting, which includes Trial Balance CS for audits and Engagement CS for reporting. We're moving to a paperless environment, and with the document management capabilities of FileCabinet CS, most of our files are stored electronically. Each year we're getting more and more digital. It's more convenient and saves time. We don't even print tax returns for the office."

Spivey cites yet another advantage of the CS Professional Suite. He uses RIA for tax research.

"I think RIA is a top-notch organization, and I like their analysis," he says. "Through UltraTax CS there is a link to RIA Checkpoint® where I can get their analysis of individual line items on specific forms. The explanations are easy to understand, and I have more analysis than just the instructions on the form, which is important to me."

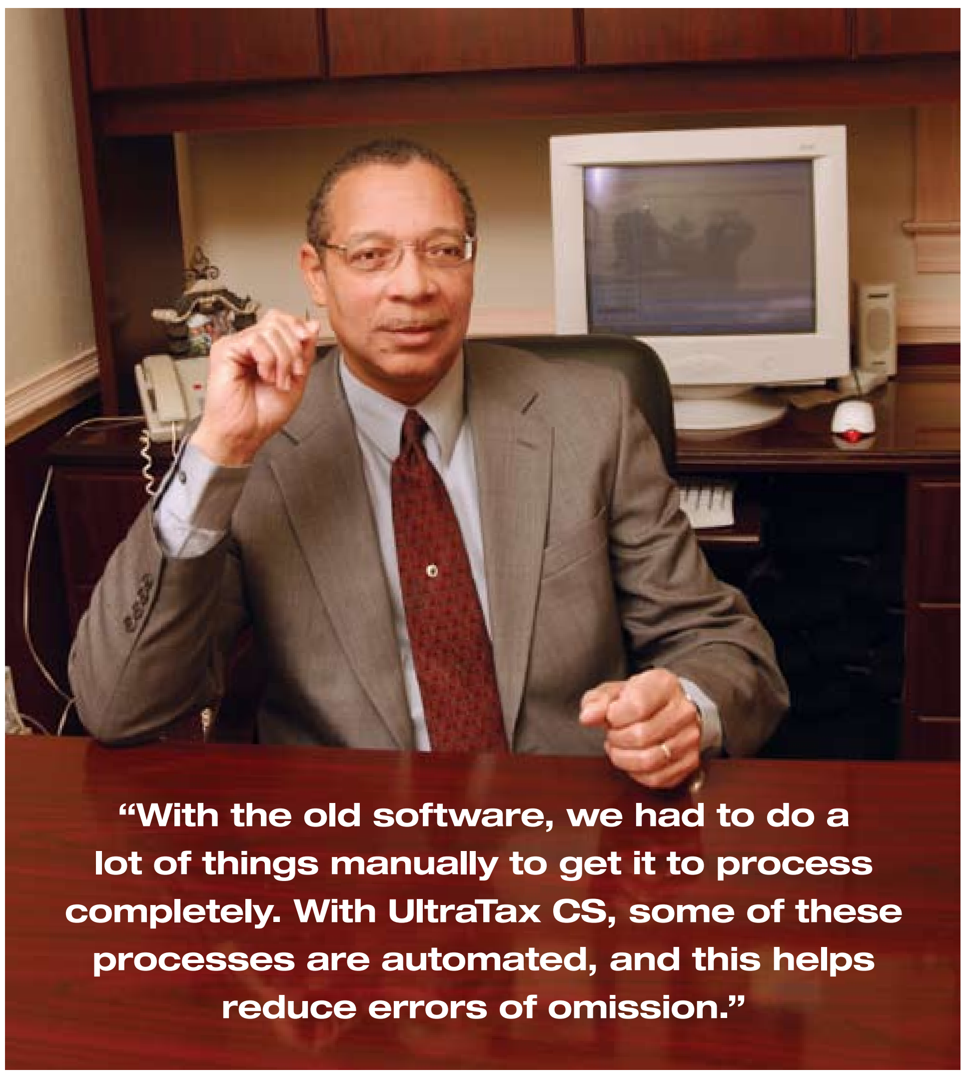
UltraTax CS also offers several advantages to clients. They can use the Internet to access their portals on Spivey's website to take advantage of more services.

"We send the Web Organizer so they can update their data themselves," he says. "We also return their completed returns through the same web portal. Some clients really like this, especially the ones who are out of state. The response time is a lot quicker. I prefer the personal touch, but I need the ability to be able to use technology to satisfy clients who don't need face-to-face interaction."

A little help from his friends

Becoming a CPA was not Spivey's life-long ambition. A self-described North Carolina farm boy, he studied to be a machinist and took a job with IBM when they moved to Durham.

Thomas Spivey, CPA, originally started his tax practice as a sideline while working at IBM. Today he has 250 tax clients and about 50 business clients.



"My buddies were going to school at night," he says. "I liked the idea, and because they were in school, I started going to school. They were in accounting, so I decided to take some courses, and I liked it. It took me six years to get my degree; that's what got me started."

In 1974 Spivey joined IBM's controller organization as a travel expense accountant. He then moved to financial planner and manager of payroll and accounts payable. He started a tax service as a sideline, completing his CPA requirements in 1988.

"When I started on my own," he says, "a former CPA helped me set up my processes, and that got me going. It's important to talk to someone who's been there to find out the issues they've run into and some of the things you should be considering. I know CPAs who opened a shop and couldn't get clients. It takes time.

"I live by the principles of loving your neighbor and doing what you're supposed to do, having ethics about yourself. If you put those principles together and have some care for people, you'll have a much better and more successful life."

Thomas Spivey and his staff: Standing, from left: Christina Stroud, Thomas Spivey and Korea Stephenson. Seated, from left: Sharon Harris, Evelyn Spivey and Manasa Cooper.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

represents another advance in technology to help our customers be as productive as possible.

WEB SERVICES SURPASSES MORE THAN 100,000 PORTAL CUSTOMERS!

Today, more than 100,000 Thomson Tax & Accounting customers are taking advantage of advanced portal technology to offer their clients convenient online services. Through secure private portals, our customers are offering their clients such services as 24/7 access to financial documents, account aggregation, and remote payroll entry— to name only a few. Portal customers include those using one or more services from our complete line of web-based offerings, including:

NetClient CS

- A full-service portal system, complete with such services as document management, file exchange, and account aggregation.

NetStaff CS

- A private portal service designed for a firm's professional staff, where staff can access software and other tools required to perform daily tasks.

UltraTax/1040 Portals

- A service for annual 1040 clients, offering secure portals where clients can access and view a history of their 1040 returns and complete their web organizers.

Web Employee

- A portal service for the employees of the accountant's clients that enables employees to conveniently view personal payroll information online.

The 100,00 mark represents a significant milestone for Thomson Tax & Accounting. Over the past year, we have experienced a 50% increase in portal usage, which is a clear indication that the accounting profession is starting to accept and adopt advanced Internet technologies.

Many of our customers have stated that portals enable them to offer their customers the ultimate convenience of online services. The result is that the accountant's clients are happier, and the firm benefits from increased productivity.

For more information on Thomson Tax & Accounting products and services, please contact a CS Account Representative at (800) 968-8900.

ULTRATAX CS

Q: How do I print a blank form without opening or adding a client?

A: To print a blank form for any return:
1. Choose Blank Forms / Input Screens from the Utilities menu in UltraTax CS.
2. In the Blank Forms / Input Screens dialog, click the Forms option.
3. From the Product drop-down list, select the desired federal or state return, then click the Options button.
4. Mark the checkboxes for the forms you want to print and click OK.
5. Click the Print button in the Blank Forms / Input Screens dialog to print the selected forms.

Q: How can I use Data Mining to generate letters for my 1040 clients that I put on extension to remind them to schedule an appointment this summer?

A: To generate reminder letters:
1. Choose Utilities / Data Mining.
2. Select 1040 Individual from the drop-down list.
3. Click the Continue (Step 2) button.
4. Click the Letters tab and select the Individual Extension Letter.
5. Click the Continue (Step 3) button.
6. In the Searches dialog, select the "All 4868 Extension clients" search and click the Continue (Step 4) button.

Using Data Mining, UltraTax CS will search your client database for all clients who were put on extension.

7. Once the search has completed, click the Continue (Step 5) button.
8. In Step 5 of the process, you can preview, print, or even email the letters that were generated for each client.

WEB SERVICES

Q. How do I include annotations with documents transmitted from FileCabinet CS to NetClient CS Document Presentation folders?

A. To include annotations on these documents:
1. In the FileCabinet CS folders window, expand the drawer containing the documents you want to transmit to NetClient CS, and click the {NetClient CS} folder in that drawer.

Note: If the drawer does not contain a {NetClient CS} folder, right click the drawer name, choose Drawer Properties, and mark the Designate this drawer as a contributor to NetClient CS checkbox.

2. Mark the "Display annotations on documents transmitted to NetClient CS portals" checkbox in the Watch window on the right.
3. Upload the documents to NetClient CS by choosing File / NetClient CS, selecting the appropriate drawer, and clicking the Connect button.

Q: What printers are supported for users who run Client Bookkeeping Solution® (CBS) ASP in Virtual Office CS?

A: All printers that are native to Windows 2003 Terminal Server are supported for CBS ASP. For a list of printers, visit our Knowledgebase at CS.Thomson.com and search for article K24825151. If your printer is not included in the list, please test print functionality from within CBS ASP. Although we support the Citrix Universal print driver (which is compatible with most printers), we recommend that you test any printer that is not included in the list.

PRACTICE CS

Q: How can I drill down on reports to see more detailed information?

A: Most reports in Practice CS enable you to drill down into detailed information. For example, when previewing the Billing Worksheet report, you can go directly to a staff member's sheet entry in Time and Expense Entry by clicking the staff ID. You can then click the Back button on the toolbar to return to the Billing Worksheet report. Similarly, the Accounts Receivable Ledger report allows you to drill down to an invoice. By clicking the invoice number, you can view the Detail Billing screen for that invoice.

Q: How can I record additional data that is not automatically tracked in Practice CS?

A: Custom fields are a great way to enter and maintain information that Practice CS does not track by default. Custom fields appear in their own tabs on the Offices, Staff, Activities, and Clients setup screens, and can be set up as text or numeric fields, dates, lists, staff lists, or checkboxes.

For instance, you can set up Client custom fields to enter credit card numbers, passwords, and even birthdays for your clients. The items from list or staff list custom fields can be used as sort options for reports.

FIXED ASSETS CS

Q: How do I import data from a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet into Fixed Assest CS?

A: You can easily import client data from a spreadsheet into Fixed Assets CS. (For details on each of the following steps, see the

"Importing asset data from an Excel spreadsheet" topic in the Fixed Assets CS help.)

1. Open the client, and choose Utilities / Import Asset Data / Excel spreadsheet.
2. Browse to the appropriate spreadsheet.
3. Click the "Create a new field mapping" option or (if you've already defined the mapping for this spreadsheet) click the "Use a previously defined mapping" option, and then click Next to map the asset data from the spreadsheet columns to the appropriate fields in Fixed Assets CS.
4. After you set up or verify the field mapping, omit from the spreadsheet all rows that do not contain asset data and then verify that the data in the spreadsheet is valid.
5. After you have addressed all invalid data, click the Import button.

Q: How do I include an image of an asset in Fixed Assets CS?

A: To store an image of an asset in the client's record in Fixed Assets CS:

1. Open the client in Fixed Assets CS and double-click the appropriate asset in the Asset List window.
2. In the Asset Detail dialog, click the Image tab and click the Acquire button.
3. Highlight the source from which you will get the image. You can acquire the image from a TWAIN device from the current computer, copy it from an existing file, or select it from the Image Library.

FILECABINET CS

Q: How can I combine pages of multiple documents into a single file?

A:

1. Choose File / Print, click the FileCabinet CS option in the Print where group box, and verify that the "Combine printed items into one document" option is selected.
2. Click the + sign next to each desired document to select specific pages from that document, then use the Move Up and Move Down buttons to modify the order of the pages.

Note: To include pages of an embedded object (any document imported through the Object menu), you first need to print a static copy of the document into FileCabinet CS. To do so, highlight the embedded object and choose File / Print Static Copy.

3. Click the To Cabinet button to store in FileCabinet CS this new document made up of the selected pages from multiple documents.

Q: How can I add a banner page to a PDF for clients?

A: If you have a multiple-page document that you want to send to a client via email, you may want to include a banner page to help your client navigate through the document. A banner page is like a table of contents that provides links to subsequent pages in the document. To add one to an existing FileCabinet CS document before emailing the document:

1. In the Folders window, select the drawer that contains the document you want to email to your client.
2. Choose File / Send to / Email Recipient and select the documents you want to send.
3. Mark the "Include banner page" checkbox, and (if necessary) click the Modify / View Banner button to set presentation and text options for the banner page.

Note: You can set banner page options on a global basis so that they apply to all users (rather than to the current user only) by choosing Setup / System Configuration / Banner tab.

4. When you are ready to send the PDF to your client, click OK in the Send to Email Recipient dialog.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS CS

Q: After I create a group of reports for my client, I like to print them to FileCabinet CS for future reference. I've noticed that the reports are sent as separate print jobs. Is there a way to send a group of reports to FileCabinet CS from Financial Analysis CS?

A: Yes. Choose Setup / System Configuration in Financial Analysis CS. In the System tab of the System Configuration dialog, mark the checkbox to staple documents when sending to FileCabinet CS. This enables you to send a selected group of reports to FileCabinet CS and view it as a single file.

Q: Can I add an image to a Financial Analysis CS report?

A: Yes. Use these steps to insert an image in your financial report.

1. Open the report in the Setup / Reports screen (Report Designer), and choose Insert / Image.
2. Click the Select Image button in the Insert Image dialog, and navigate to the image you want to insert.
3. Select the image and click Open. Note that the Insert Image dialog provides a thumbnail preview of the image.
4. Select the appropriate image properties to lock the aspect ratio or to center the image horizontally and/or vertically, and click OK. (If you decide to remove the image later, simply right-click the image in the Design grid and choose Cut.)

WRITE-UP CS

Q: What is the easiest way to become familiar with Bank Reconciliation?

A: You and your staff can become familiar with bank reconciliation processes in Write-Up CS very quickly by using the Bank Reconciliation Sample Client (CSBAN01), which enables you to perform a complete reconciliation. The program also includes a bank reconciliation walkthrough guide (PDF) that explains all of the options and commands that are available, and it offers guidelines such as when to advance to the next statement during a bank reconciliation. To open that walkthrough in the Adobe® Reader,® search on Bank Reconciliation WalkThrough (PDF) from the index of the program's help browser.

Q: When I use the Transactions window in Write-Up CS to enter vendor checks for my clients, is there a way to mark certain checks as 1099 items so I don't have to enter adjustments at the end of the year?

A: If you will need to prepare a 1099 at year end for the vendor, you can set up a standard check in the vendor record that includes the 1099 item as well as the GL account number, transaction description, and check amount. On the Distributions tab of the Setup / Vendors window, open the vendor record, click the Edit button, and then fill in as many (or as few) of the standard check items as you need to on the Distributions tab.

Note: If you need to record just a single check for a vendor, it may be faster to record the 1099 item directly on the check. In the Transactions window, choose Edit / Options, mark the "Enter 1099 items for checks" checkbox, and click OK to return to the Transactions window. You will now see a 1099 Item column in the data-entry grid on the Checks and Deposits tab.

CLIENT BOOKKEEPING SOLUTION

Q: How can I save time on the client data export/ retrieval process?

A: You can save time by using the "Export via the Internet" option. This helpful integration option enables your CBS clients to export their data to a secure Thomson Tax & Accounting server. You can then easily retrieve data from the server at any time rather than having to transfer data via email messages, CDs, or USB drives, all of which are less reliable and less secure. The setup is simple:

1. Mark the "Export via Internet" checkbox in the CheckWriter tab of the Setup / Miscellaneous Information dialog in Accountant's Assistant. You may also mark the option to include a client backup with the exported data.
2. Generate an accountant's transfer file that includes CheckWriter miscellaneous information for the client to import into CBS. This will activate the option within the client's CBS program.

The next time your client exports data from CBS, the program will display a message asking if the client would like to email the export information to the accountant. (Instruct the client to select "Yes" if you want to receive an email notification.) After you have received confirmation from your client that the export file is available on our server, you can retrieve the file into Accountant's Assistant by choosing Tasks / Retrieve.

Q: How often should I back up my custom layouts?

A: If you use custom layouts in CBS (for invoices, statements, or checks), we recommend that you back them up on at least a semi-annual basis. You need to do this as a separate procedure for each CBS company database that uses custom layouts. To do so, choose File / Backup / Layouts and enter the name of the backup file for the layouts.

PAYROLL CS

Q: Can Payroll CS round withholding values to the nearest dollar amount?

A: Yes. Payroll CS can round withholdings, SDI, and SUI to the nearest dollar amount. To set this up for a selected client, choose File / Client Properties, click the Calculating Payroll tab, mark the applicable checkboxes in the Whole Dollar Rounding group box, and click OK to save your changes.

Q: Why doesn't my payroll journal entry (P89) match my Payroll Journal report?

A: To determine why your entry does not match your Payroll Journal report, print a Journal Entry Report from the Print Reports dialog and check to see if the total on this report equals the payroll journal entry. In the Payroll Check Entry window, press PAGE UP to open the last check entered and then press F3 and choose the GL Account Diagnostics command. Verify the descriptions and the account numbers. Repeat this process for each check. If the account number assigned to a payroll item is incorrect or missing, make the correction in the Setup / Employees window.

TRIAL BALANCE CS

Q: What is the best way to set up Trial Balance CS for a non-profit or governmental client?

A: The best method to use for setting up Trial Balance CS for non-profit or governmental work is to use the Location / Department setup that's available in Trial Balance CS or Write-Up CS. For example, by having a location serve as a fund group and a department serve as the fund, you can post journal entries to individual funds. From there, you can set up reports and financial statements for government-wide or fund-by-fund reporting. For an example of this type of client, open the CSNON02 – Nonprofit Sample Client #2.

Q: Can I create a Consolidated Trial Balance report in Trial Balance CS?

A: Yes. After consolidating the client's trial balance using the Account Balances Only option, you can run the consolidated trial balance using the Trial Balance Worksheet report. This enables you to create a report with a separate column for the subsidiaries, along with columns to represent your total and final balances.

ENGAGEMENT CS

Q: When making an adjusting journal entry, I have to exit the engagement workspace and open the client in Trial Balance CS. With large clients, this is fairly time consuming. Is there a better way?

A: Yes. When working in Engagement CS, you can enter adjusting journal entries without leaving the engagement workspace. Choose Tasks / Journal Entries from the Engagement CS menu bar.

Q: Sometimes when I check out engagement documents, the staff member sees the checked-out file and the program indicates that it's receiving the documents, but no workpapers appear for that staff member. What's going on?

A: Either of two conditions can cause that situation:

- The workpapers have not yet been assigned to the staff member in the Master Client Data (MCD).
- The staff IDs in the Local Client Data (LCD) are not consistent with the MCD. To remedy this, undo the checkout in the MCD. Choose Edit / Undo multiple checkouts, select and reassign the workpapers to the correct staff member, and then complete the checkout. (We recommend that you run a laptop setup from the network, or back up the global system file and restore it in the LCD to ensure that staff IDs are consistent between the MCD and LCD.)

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