

Honest Feedback from Real Users of Document Management Software



Document Management

ArkWorks
ArkWorks _____ 33

Cabinet NG
CNG-SAFE _____ 33

Drake Software
Drake _____ 34

CCH
ProSystem fx Document _____ 34

Doc.It Corp.
Doc. It Suite _____ 35

Intuit
Lacerte DMS _____ 35

Personable
SourceLink 4.1 _____ 36

Thomson Tax & Accounting
GoFileRoom _____ 36

Document Management Emphasizes Workflow and Process

Documents can be stored at little cost and retrieved quickly to provide immediate benefit to practitioners and clients

Workflow Comes First

Storage is only a small part of document management. That documents are archived does matter, but having digital—or even paper—copies of documents is meaningless if you cannot find them. That’s why the document management systems that we have reviewed this year emphasize workflow and process. Workflow management combines the need to retain documents with the reasons for doing so, and what results is an environment in which documents can be stored at little cost and retrieved quickly to provide immediate benefit to practitioners and clients. Workflow is the business imperative wrapped around particular files.

Stay Secure, Even Outside the Office

With identity theft, phishing scams and various other breaches on the rise, security is front of mind to all practitioners, regardless of specialization. It comes as no surprise that document management software vendors are emphasizing features such as Secure Socket Layer (SSL) encryption, especially given the emphasis on remote use. If employees are going to connect from home or on the road, they need to be confident that they aren’t sharing sensitive client data with the rest of the World Wide Web. A geographically distributed staff necessarily leads to more security gaps. The solutions currently on the market, though, are doing their best to keep the “bad guys” out of your archives.

An Integrated Office

At its simplest, document management entails nothing more than a digital “bucket” into which files are dumped. Of course, this doesn’t deliver much value to practitioners or clients. The other end of the spectrum involves a fully integrated document management environment, in which the repository integrates with tax and accounting systems to reduce errors, streamline operations and ultimately improve service to clients. The systems to which a document management solution connects are almost as important as the core functionality of the document management software itself. Without a reliable pipeline that is easy to configure, document management becomes a manual process, and any potential productivity gains are squandered.

It is easy to lose track of how a document management solution can benefit the office. Too often, the focus drifts from business efficiency and practitioner accuracy to compliance, with federal and state regulations dominating how you use your software. While you can’t ignore the regulatory bodies, you shouldn’t ignore the needs of your business. Balance compliance obligations with the operational advantages you expect from a document management solution. In the end, you will find that even compliance can deliver a return on investment.

One-Stop Archive/ Retrieval System Performs in Seconds

“The software is so user friendly that my 14-year-old son mastered converting files as part of a school project.”

ArkWorks is a digital filing and archival system, and although it is tightly integrated with TaxWorks and 1040Works tax software, it can be used with any software program. Instead of filing and retrieving paper documents from multiple file cabinets, ArkWorks lets you file, search, and retrieve documents from your computer – all within a matter of seconds.

Benefits and Features

- Integrates with TaxWorks and 1040Works tax software.
- Imports paper documents with a TWAIN-compliant scanner (a standard for linking applications and image acquisition-devices).

What Users Say

“We were one of the first firms to buy the software,” says **Bob Perkins** of Perkins & Long in Thomasville Ga. “After the first year when we told ArkWorks how ‘it ought to be,’ the company added features, such as centrally scanned documents, to improve their utility to firms with more than one partner.” With two offices, client documents from either office can be scanned into the ArkWorks system. “If someone in Moultrie has time to work on a return, he can start keying it in, even if it’s a Thomasville client.”

“We just started using ArkWorks this past tax season,” says **Kim Cutler**, office manager at DEL Taxes and Accounting in Machesney Park, Ill. The office had an older network, a new computer and several other complicating factors. “It wasn’t working well. When I had all those problems, I had two ArkWorks’ guys working with me. We spent hours on the phone. They went above and beyond. The software is so user friendly that my 14-year-old son mastered converting files as part of a school project.”

Summary

With ArkWorks, users can easily add paper documents to a scanner, as well as store Microsoft Word, Excel or other files, check them out, edit them in their native application, save them and return them to ArkWorks.

ArkWorks

www.ark-works.com

800-706-8261



Document Management Part of Work Process

“My entire file room is at my fingertips. I can find anything I want in an instant.”

Cabinet NG’s CNG-SAFE automated file management stops paper at the source, helping increase accountability and boost productivity. Document management is part of the work process, not a filing afterthought.

Benefits and Features

- CNG-SAFE integrates accounting packages, including QuickBooks.
- Built-in workflow features allow a practice to convert its existing paper-based document review and approval procedures into an automatic, traceable electronic process.

What Users Say

“It’s a huge benefit to business!” says **Peri Ann Aptaker**, director of Tax Services for Kahn, Litwin, Renza & Co., Ltd., where productivity has increased at the Rhode Island CPA and business-consulting firm. “We can share work between the Newport and Providence offices or work from home. I don’t know how we lived without it.” Aptaker’s firm has used CNG-SAFE since 2003. “To make a smooth transition to paperless, she says to “Sit down and document the procedures you have in place in a paper world and try to think, in advance, how it will work in a paperless world.”

Donald R. Mess, owner of an accountancy corporation that bears his name in Woodland Hills, Calif., went through a CNG-SAFE demo and jumped in with both feet – in February. “I thought, if it doesn’t work, or we’re just stumbling all over it, we’ll wait until after tax season. However, we did a few returns and we never looked back. My entire file room is at my fingertips. I can find anything I want in an instant, and I haven’t even touched all the things it can do, yet.”

Summary

CNG-SAFE is compatible with other applications straight out-of-the-box. Users will continue to work with documents in their native format and applications, consolidate pertinent documents from different applications in a single folder, and preserve openness to future capabilities.

Cabinet NG

www.cabinetng.com

800-621-6501



Direct Efile Eliminates Third-Party Processors

“We make a return as correct as humanly possible, and anything we can do better and help our clients, we give a thumbs up.”

More than 23,000 customers use Drake Software, with 4,000 first-time purchasers in 2006. Drake processed over 7 million federally accepted returns and more than 6 million state returns in tax year 2006.

Benefits and Features

- Security file transmissions can be sent encrypted if using the HTTPS filing method, and Drake always encrypts transmission files sent to the IRS.
- There are no “per return” transmission fees or third-party efilers. Everything required to efile individual and business returns, both federal and state, is included.

What Users Say

“Clients want to get their refunds very fast,” says **Muhammed Kareem**, a tax accountant for Heritage Tax Service in Forrestville, Md. “Efiling is very fast and efficient. You have time to do more with clients.” Training himself with the Drake Manual and CD, Kareem feels the software is straightforward. “I find it very easy to use and have no complaints. I rate tech support at 100 percent – 10 out of 10. You call them and you don’t have to talk to voice prompts.”

“Whenever you are going into something new you kind of cringe,” admits **Kim Hardin**, an EA at Controguerra & Associates in Columbus, Ohio. To transition from the software she used for 21 years, Hardin attended a training session taught by Warren Drake. “Drake has so much more we need to learn to use. We make a return as correct as humanly possible, and anything we can do better and help our clients, we give a thumbs up. So much is available that is already inclusive. We’re not paying modular pricing.”

Summary

Drake continues to meet its goals of customer satisfaction and product improvement by encouraging open customer feedback, listening closely to evaluations from industry authorities, and backing the product with a knowledgeable, innovative programming and support team.

Drake Software
www.drakesoftware.com
800-890-9500



Paperless Process Help Meet Regulations

“Storing documents electronically was a paradigm shift; we use ProSystem fx Document to flush out the remaining pockets of paper.”

CH’s ProSystem fx Document manages the full range of documents found in an accounting practice – from tax returns and client correspondence to employee records and email – reducing the costs associated with creating and storing paper documents and resulting in an environment where employees work together more efficiently.

Providing instant access to client files from any location, any time, ProSystem fx Document helps increase efficiency and deliver better service to their clients.

Benefits and Features

- Record management allows detailed indexing of every file stored for easy retrieval and control of the appropriate retention periods for automatic destruction upon expiration.
- A unique feature of Document is its content management that manages applications, such as ProSystem fx Fixed Assets and QuickBooks, without the concern of broken links due to versioning issues.
- New in 2007, Document is tightly integrated with Microsoft Outlook to manage incoming and outgoing emails, and, in turn, the exchange server to better comply with regulations. The files stored in Document also can be accessed from Outlook and sent directly in emails as attachments.

What Users Say

“Storing documents electronically was a paradigm shift,” says **Larry Pirkle**, a member of Warren, Averett, Kimbrough & Marino, LLC, in Birmingham, Ala. “I think the big hurdle was transitioning from 100 percent paper. With three offices in Alabama, we use ProSystem fx Document to flush out the remaining pockets of paper. The system allows you to manage document lifecycles and everything has a date.”

Summary

ProSystem fx Document provides the risk mitigation needed for document storage and retention. Sarbanes-Oxley and other regulatory compliance rules have changed the way professionals do business, Document helps meet those new standards, all in the background of the user’s day-to-day work.

CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business
www.tax.cchgroup.com
888-224-7377



Organizes Documents Into Logical Folders for Easy Browsing

"Doc.It provides project planning, configuration support, training, and after-sales support."

Doc.It's fully integrated suite of solutions includes Archive, Binder, Workflow Manager, and Web Portal. Doc.It offers a low-risk 90-day renewable contract providing ongoing software support and all software updates.

Benefits and Features

- Doc.It Archive organizes all published documents into a secure and searchable PDF library to ensure compliance.
- Doc.It Binder organizes all work-in-progress documents.
- Doc.It Workflow Manager helps track engagements and keeps staff organized.
- Doc.It Web Portal enables you to securely share documents with clients through your website.

What Users Say

"Patience, patience, patience," says **Steven L. DeBlicck**, Manager of Information Systems at Sansiveri, Kimball & McNamee, L.L.P. "When you go to document management, you have to find something that fits your culture. That everyone will use. You might even have to change the way you do business." SKM, with offices in Newport, Providence and Westerly, R.I.

Until 2005, **Johnson Jacobson Wilcox**, CPAs and Consultants in Las Vegas, Nev. stored documents using the Windows folder system. "Doc.It still resembles the folder structure of a computer, enhancing it a little bit. CPAs really like to drill down," says Matthew J. Rudolph, IT Manager. "It's intuitive and simple and it works." And Doc.It met another of his criteria, "It didn't rely on buying new hardware." He took some time developing policies for naming conventions and, "working through the complicated infrastructure of getting set up."

Summary

Doc.It's philosophy differentiates their software built around the way that accountants have chosen to work for decades. Unlike most other DM products, Doc.It Suite organizes documents into logical folders for easy browsing, the same way that FxEngagement, Caseware, and most other engagement centric products do.

Doc.It Suite by Doc.It Corporation

www.doc-it.net
888-693-6248



Electronic Storage Manages Documents From Most Sources

"Anything that helps us get information faster and removes any bottleneck lends itself to being cost effective."

Lacerte Document Management System (DMS) helps reduce operating costs, improve service and protect accounting firms from risk. Through DMS, accountants can store client files electronically and access them instantly right from their PC.

Benefits and Features

- Built-in seamless integration with all Lacerte add-on solutions, including Tax Planner, E-organizer, Source Doc Auto Entry and Trial Balance Utility.
- Lacerte DMS offers password protection and file access controls to dramatically reduce risk.
- Built-in backup tools allow customers to maintain up-to-date copies of their entire database offsite.

What Users Say

"I'm a longtime user of Lacerte Tax," says **Tom Pickel**, a partner at Pickel & Bruckner, LLC, CPA, in Salina, Kan. With Lacerte's tax program already in place, Pickel says the program gave his company a leg up when it decided to head toward the paperless office. "The biggest problem in time always seems to be with myself or my partner, so anything that helps us get information faster and removes any bottleneck lends itself to being cost effective. I'm getting spoiled now by having this stuff at my fingertips. What better way to impress your client than with your knowledge about their stuff?"

"I think the biggest challenge is the human part of going paperless and getting used to not touching paper and looking at a computer monitor instead," says **Mike Schreiber**, a tax partner at Leaf & Cole, LLP, a San Diego firm that has used Lacerte since 1988 and added DMS when it was introduced.

Summary

Lacerte DMS stores any type of client information, including tax returns, letters and even handwritten notes. This system manages documents from most any source, including Microsoft Office applications.

Lacerte

www.lacertesoftware.com
800-765-7777



Folders Aligned with QuickBooks Transactions

“Documents can be scanned directly into SourceLink via the QuickBooks interface.”

Personable provides two solutions in the document management space: SourceLink Standard Edition and SourceLink Management Edition. The most attractive feature is the ability to access documents directly from within the QuickBooks transaction entry screen. Documents are stored by established document types in Windows folders.

SourceLink Management Edition is designed to provide workflow automation in terms of electronic routing of documents for review and approval. Users can establish rules that will trigger the routing of documents. An email notice will be sent that requests an electronic approval and may include automated routing for a second level of review.

Benefits and Features

- Access from within QuickBooks transaction entry screen.
- Workflow automation by routing electronic documents for review and approval.
- Free web training and technical support.
- Attractive pricing, consistent with QuickBooks.

What Users Say

Pat Carson, Founder of Carson & Crew, in San Jose, Calif. says “Training to actually use the product truly takes about 5 minutes.” She cautions, “Once the set-up is done.” Setting up on a non-Personable ASP caused some frustration. “Personable tech support was Johnny-on-the-Spot. Our ASP would stumble. It took about three weeks.” Carson says, “I like to be able to call up a PDF of a bill I’m looking at inside QuickBooks.”

“SourceLink allows my clients to have an easy to manage and affordable paperless office solution for their company. All of their documents are available to them at the click of a button,” says **Jonyce Bullock**, Manager at Squire & Company, PC in Orem, Utah. “There is no need to go outside of the program [QuickBooks]. It adds menus and links right inside the program for a seamless interface,” Bullock reports.

Summary

The SourceLink solution is designed specifically as a QuickBooks add-on. The integration between QuickBooks and SourceLink is virtually seamless and offers the ability to access documents linked to specific transactions. Scanned images and electronic files can be attached to QuickBooks transaction records. SourceLink is compatible with all versions of QuickBooks from 2004 to 2007.

SourceLink 4.1 by Personable

www.personable.com
800-688-4281



Interface Standardizes Paperless Processes

“The biggest challenge was getting people to understand they didn’t have to print things off on paper.”

GoFileRoom is an integrated document management, workflow and scanning solution that enables firms to efficiently manage and secure documents at every step of the workflow process.

Benefits and Features

- An intuitive interface drives user adoption and facilitates a short learning curve.
- GoFileRoom integrates with core tax and accounting applications.

What Users Say

“The transition to a less-paper office was not as painful as anybody thought,” says **John Wyson**, a corporate tax partner at Haskell & White LLP, in Irvine, Calif., where all 45 of the firm’s 45 tax professionals are up and running on the software. “The biggest challenge was adopting a new way of finding documents. It’s not the same concept of directories and sub-directories. GoFileRoom depends on coding documents with keywords. If someone miscalled something, you are out of luck. However, the obvious benefit is that you are not generating paper.”

“When Katrina hit, we had a backup system for our data files housed on our own network, but the impact of Katrina was so broad it impacted all three of our offices,” says **Ted Mason**, president and managing partner of LaPorte Sehrt Romig Hand. “Utilities were down in some areas for two weeks and we lost the ability to retrieve information.”

After two years, Mason is pleased, “From an efficiency standpoint, we can easily shift tax work around to handle workload crunches. The biggest challenge was getting people to understand they didn’t have to print things off on paper – getting them comfortable and familiar in working with electronic files was key.”

Summary

GoFileRoom combines comprehensive document management features with sophisticated workflow functionality and the power of the Internet to provide firms with a single tool to streamline workflow processes.

Thomson Tax & Accounting

www.go.thomson.com/gofileroom
800-968-8900



DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT COMPARISON CHART

| | TaxWorks ArkWorks | Cabinet NG, Inc. CNG-SAFE | CCH, a Wolters Kluwer Business ProSystem fx Document | Drake Software Drake | Doc.it Doc.it Suite | Intuit Lacerte | Personable SourceLink 4.1 | Thomson Tax and Accounting GoFileRoom |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|--|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Accessible filing system | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Streamlined work flow process | No | Yes | Yes | N/A | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Easy to use interface with easy implementation | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Electronically file returns | No | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Customize the configuration and layout of document home page | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | N/A | Yes |
| Readily access many functions of document | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Ability to store, import and embed documents of various formats in an organized manner | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust security abilities to specify document authorities/limitations | Yes | Yes | Yes | N/A | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Ability to control scan process from start to finish inside the program | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Create own filing structure or integrate to create a predefined file structure | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Print tax returns in PDF format directly into the client's folder | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Can be integrated with Client Write Up | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | N/A | Yes |
| Integrated solution in accounting software like QuickBooks | | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Drag and drop e-mails directly from Microsoft Outlook® into client folders | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Ability to easily locate, view, print, email and fax documents or portions of documents | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Organizes documents by client, year and type of form | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Allows user to customize document storage organization | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Automatically backs up all documents to media chosen by user | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| Offers a network version so documents can be viewed and edited by anyone with proper authorization | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Allows users to save tax returns to client folders as PDF | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Scan portion of the program recognizes common W-2 and 1099 forms and automatically saves them to client's folder | No | No | No | No | Yes | No | N/A | Yes |