

# Write-up Software Selection Tips from Practitioners



## Write-Up

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**K**nowing your clients' write-up needs is half the battle, but finding the right software solution is no small feat. This month, we take a look at Write-Up software designed to help practitioners streamline the interaction between clients and accountants. Learn if a product is right for you by reading the following testimonials from vendors and accountants.

**Terry Grueters** with PC Software said, "We have conversion programs for more than 40 different systems, a great interface to QuickBooks and many other outstanding interfaces. The combination of these capabilities provides our accounting firms with the best in output for their clients, while greatly increasing the accounting firm's productivity and bottom line."

**Barbara Butterfield** of Hargrave & Freeman, P.C., Jonesboro, Ga., said, "Our firm has been using Windows Client Write-up by PC Software since 1997. The software is a vital tool in our organization; it even bridges to our tax software and from QuickBooks, which is a great time-saving feature."

**Nick Schrakamp**, CPA, champions Certiflex Dimension Client Write-up by The Versatile Group as "a good alternative to QuickBooks when there is a large volume of entries to be made."

**Jack Racy** of The Versatile Group said, "Our goal for Certiflex Dimension Client Write-up is to provide the practicing accountants with a software tool to easily and quickly record their clients' data." Users can later "retrieve it and present it in a meaningful way relevant to a diverse client base."

UBCC President and Founder **Ken Garen** said, "One principle benefit of Client Data Center to our clients is the incredible speed of use; the maximum amount of work can be done in a minimum amount of time. Clients can move from Windows to Linux and the keystrokes are the same, the data is the same and the program is the same."

**Brian Flynn**, president, Flynn Accounting Resources, Inc., said, "UBCC helps our firm increase efficiency and improves client service in terms of setting realistic expectations and projecting profitability. I would definitely recommend UBCC software to any firm looking for one comprehensive 'go-to' program that can meet all critical accounting needs."

The CCH ProSystem fx CPAclient Write-Up. Accountants benefit from streamlined and accelerated data entry, including increased efficiencies in after-the-fact payroll through automatic updates to employee statistics, expanded capabilities for financial statement presentation to clients and quick and efficient payroll reports."

**Stephen Knight**, CPA, uses CPAclient Write-Up in his North Carolina practice. "It is superior to anything out there. My clients also use and like it. The Client Checkbook feature is one example. This electronic checkbook allows clients to write their checks without posting to a general ledger. In turn, we import the information over the Internet. It saves significant data entry time and allows us to correct any accounting errors, such as office equipment incorrectly coded to office supplies."

QuickBooks dramatically improved its product for 2006. **Christiane Hile**, senior marketing manager, QuickBooks Accountant Edition, said, "With all-in-one bookkeeping, write-up and financial reporting tools—plus compatibility with clients' QuickBooks software—Accountant Edition puts accountants in the best position to support the small business market. It contains all the QuickBooks software editions so accountants can 'toggle' to the same screens their clients see . . . no matter what edition they're on."

**Sonia Cheatwood**, Sonia's Consulting Services, Natchitoches, La., pointed out this QuickBooks feature. "I love the Working Trial Balance; you can drill-down for detail all in one place. The column for adjustments allows you to see what adjustments you have made so you know which adjustments you still need to make."

ABC Tax and Accounting Group calls its Accounting Relief Pro "the first-ever accountant-centric accounting system with a simple formula—more control for accountants, less data entry and fewer client errors. This fully integrated solution includes a write-up and trial balance system along with a customizable client bookkeeping module. Accounting Relief Pro lets accountants minimize data entry and virtually eliminate frustrating client errors."

**Roger Williams**, sole practitioner/owner of Roger Williams EA & Associates, researched a number of products before selecting Accounting Relief. "We were looking for an online product that was easy for both us and clients to operate. This helps clients implement onsite bookkeeping functions and helps us correctly implement the accounting and report functions. We save time because we are not trying to reinterpret or correct what clients input."

—By Alysia McDonald and Lisa Hodson

# Accounting Relief Pro Allows Collaborative Accountant/Client Work



By Alysia McDonald

**A**ccounting Relief Pro by AccountantsWorld is a well-designed, straightforward write-up program that solves some very real issues for accountants working in the trenches. This program is designed to eliminate client use of incompatible off-the-shelf accounting packages in order to standardize input, streamline functions between accountants and clients, and protect against inefficiencies and mistakes in the overall process.

## Features

Accounting Relief Pro is a secure online accounting system providing a general ledger (G/L) for clients and comprehensive functionality for accountants. The accountant is able to set up the entire system for his or her clients and customize it for each one, yet allowing client access to the system only where it makes sense. Because Accounting Relief Pro is Internet-based, accountants and clients can work together any time from any PC.

The easy online sign-in takes you to the Activity Center where an overview screen shows customer, accounts payable, financial summary, sales comparisons, cash balance and more. The Center even offers a convenient “reminders” section in the lower right corner where the user can add business reminders and dates. A click on Show Map takes you to an icon-driven flow chart showing the entire range of program functions, including writing checks, conducting transactions, paying bills, and working vendors and bank accounts.

This icon-driven navigation system is very helpful because it guides the user through all functions in the proper sequence. Each entry screen requires validation so that clients must complete all necessary entries.

For example, the “Write Check” icon moves you to a full menu, including writing and printing checks, working with deposit slips, conducting a bank reconciliation, transferring funds, and working with the check register. The system allows frequently used vendors to be added to a pull-down list. When you select the vendor, the system automatically puts in the correct expense account for the check. Once a check is written,



the amount is automatically deducted from the balance, which shows continuously while in this function. The system also readily handles credit card transactions.

In the Write-Up function, two years of data are always open. The general and adjusting journals include recurring and reversing entries. The year-end close is fairly simple because the program performs all calculations with limited user input. The standard reports include trial balance, G/L, transactions and adjustments. There is also a standard exception report

*Accounting Relief Pro is a secure online accounting system providing a general ledger (G/L) for clients.*

for identifying issues and problems. Accountants may search client information using period, account, customer, vendor or other criteria.

Financial Statements can report up to four years of history. The reports are highly customizable and easy to handle; users may select summary mode

or detail.

The G/L is highly intuitive and integrated, with fully supported modules for AR and AP, including transaction and aging reports. A single click can retrieve customers, products and vendors for invoicing.

The Resource Center (a file cabinet icon along the top menu) provides diverse practice tools, such as set-up guide, audit letters, engagement letters and review letters. The Resource Center also offers a handy tutorial for accountants with a brief video to explain the system to clients. Help is easily searchable by contents, index or by word.

Accounting Relief Pro will import account and trial balance information from QuickBooks and Peachtree, and accounts, vendors, customers, products and beginning balance from Microsoft Excel. In addition, state sales tax calculations can be transferred to AccountantsWorld’s Sales Tax Online system for supported states. Finally, trial balances are exportable to a variety of tax programs.

## Summary

Accounting Relief Pro is a well-designed, highly intuitive program. Professionals wishing to streamline operations and control how clients input data should definitely evaluate it for their practice. ☺

**AccountantsWorld**

[www.accountantsworld.com](http://www.accountantsworld.com)

888-999-1366

# Easy Customization Aids Reporting for Complex Clients

By Alysia McDonald

**P**roSystem *fx* CPAclient Write-Up is part of the financial services software family by CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business. Targeted specifically to accountants in public practice, this highly customizable product is designed for quick and easy data entry. CPAclient Write-Up combines general ledger (G/L), after-the-fact payroll, check entry and financial statements/reports to handle complex client needs. The product arrives via CD, with updates also on CD.



As your client grows, the software automatically adds new account segments, another time-saving feature.

The GAAP-required statements are all provided, including consolidated, departmental, comparatives, budgeted, cash flow and trends. The supporting schedules for income statements and balance sheets are part of the financial statement offerings. Write-Up also allows the user to control the presentation of each statement, so each client can have underlines, dollar signs and other features in ways that make sense for them.

*Custom reports and set-up provide flexibility and functionality.*

A handy feature is the ability to examine original journal entries in any account balance from numerous areas in the software, such as journal entry, check entry, financial statements or even set-up for the chart of accounts.

This saves time when you are working on deadline or with complex information.

The after-the-fact payroll tracking and reporting is easy to learn and understand for employee and vendor information. Users simply enter check detail into the check register. The system performs updates automatically. W2s, 1099s, quarterly payroll reports, and efilings for Forms 940 and 941 are included. An accountant does not have to perform a client's payroll in order to produce these reports.

Another handy feature is the on-screen working trial balance. Within this module, users can manually enter adjustments on the screen and hit save. The change is updated throughout the whole system.

A feature that could be overlooked is the Day Sheet Journal Entry. This useful module allows daily entries of sales, sales tax and cash receipts, creating a daily update useful to accountant and client. "Utilities" is also helpful, offering a quick look at chart of accounts, employee history or year-end close.

## Summary

This program provides turnkey operations and all required templates, with a strong customization feature very useful for complex clients. ☺

CCH, a Wolters Kluwer business  
www.cchgroup.com  
800-739-9998

## Features

The ability to integrate with third-party software is particularly vital for accountants; accordingly, CCH offers integration with several G/L products: Peachtree by Sage, Sage MAS90, QuickBooks and Quicken. In addition to integrating with CCH products, Write-Up also offers tax information export to Prosystem *fx* Tax, Proseries Tax and Lacerte, as well as integration with the SAGE FAS fixed asset product.

CPAclient Write-Up opens to an easy-to-understand home page, with all reports and functions easy to locate. Client Set-Up provides several options, including real-time posting or post-processing (batch processing), important for more complex clients due to the audit trail it creates.

The software is readily customizable, especially in the financial statements. The program comes with complete templates, but a few clicks allow the user to add, delete, create or modify a diverse list of processes and functions. The system offers up to four years as current, with infinite history. The dollar balance for each account displays during the financial statement setup, and the user can easily click to drill down into any balance.

A particularly useful feature is "Quick Looks Inquiry," an overview look at employees, vendors, taxes, account inquiry and more, with drill-down detail available from the screen. With Quick Looks, users do not have to generate reports in order to find useful information.

Chart of Accounts is also easy to use with three setup options: roll into a standard industry, such as restaurant; customer templates; or manual entry. Here, the user also can customize periods by month, quarter or 52/53 week year. If

# Toggle Feature Allows Accountant to Switch to Business Owner Edition



By Alysia McDonald

**Q**uickBooks: Premier Accountant Edition 2006 merits its “dramatically new and improved” rating. The new version is faster, sleeker and more intuitive, beginning with a streamlined configuration process for your business. Specifically, this version reduces the number of screens by 75 percent.

## Features

The Learning Center, another improvement, pops up when you open the software. “What’s New” helps identify improvements and changes. Various options allow you to select short training videos, from “Understanding the Basics” to “Inventory,” to a new-user welcome tutorial.

Seasoned users will immediately notice the new home page—a graphic of key tasks and how they are related on one page, all presented in a clickable flow-chart schematic. With this single page, you don’t have to hunt through complicated menus to find key activities, and the page is customized to your business based how you answer set-up questions.

The home page greatly simplifies QuickBooks. The main screen is divided into sections by Vendors, Customers and Employees which are also accessible by the menu across the top of the screen. Simply click on a function to access all information about customers, vendors and employees. Then, view and edit information, such as open invoices, unpaid bills, paychecks and more.

Using the customer list as an example, double-click on a name to find a pop-up with complete detail about that client, including payment information and helpful notes. A note icon also appears on the summary page. Help functions on this pop-up include “type a question” and a pull-down called “How Do I.” Or, use the Help button.

Home page icons also take you directly to complete company information. For example, Chart of Accounts allows you to review checking account information, cash expenditures, savings, accounts receivable and inventory assets. The banking section allows you to quickly record deposits, reconcile accounts, write checks and review the register. There is even an online



banking option.

Audit Trail improvements dramatically improved the software. QuickBooks no longer slows down as you add users and data; the old database format is replaced with the SQL database, enabling users and more data with no compromise in software speed. In addition, Audit Trail now remains permanently “on;” in prior versions, increased file size slowed the program, which turned off Audit Trail to conserve space and speed. The updated software eliminates this issue and now maintains all

*Audit Trail now remains permanently “on.”*

details of who, when and what.

This tool offers excellent access to screens and reports, with speedy data entry, data review and drill-down to correct data. Basically, you quickly enter data and immediately receive high

quality reports. QuickBooks integrates Lacerte and ProSeries tax software, and supports diverse small businesses that use QuickBooks in their practices. It also offers conversion from other products, including Quicken and Peachtree.

The Employee Center facilitates total employee information, such as new employees, personnel and payroll. From one screen, locate and manage all employee and payroll history. This is a real time-saver.

The toggle feature saves time by allowing the accountant to switch from this edition to the QuickBooks version used by the business owner to view information as the client sees it.

Inventory management has undergone a major renovation. Key workflow tasks are automated for product-based businesses, including manufacturers, distributors and wholesalers, with pending orders in one view. After order-filling decisions are made, you can immediately print pick lists and packing slips. The “Available-to-Promise” feature reports exact inventory on hand, where it is committed, when it is needed and what is on order. This feature helps a company make decisions on delivery dates or shift inventory tagged for later delivery.

## Summary

The numerous timesaving features are great enhancements to an already, well-developed software. ☺

## Intuit

[www.accountant.intuit.com](http://www.accountant.intuit.com)  
888-236-9501

# New Companies Can be Cloned From Existing Companies

By Lisa Hodson

**C**lient Write-up for Windows from PC Software Accounting, Inc., provides a powerful, intuitive solution for accounting firms who seek to increase productivity and meet their clients' reporting needs. The Microsoft (MS) Windows-based program includes a fully functional Flexible Report Writer that allows you to customize a variety of reports—print what you want, when you want. Combine this flexibility with the option to clone existing clients and use standard reports, and Client Write-up for Windows just might be the right choice to meet your write-up needs.

## Features

The program runs on a Pentium or later processor with a minimum of 128 MB of RAM and MS Windows 98, 2000 or XP. Laser and ink jet printers are supported. The program is largely mouse-driven and uses drop-down menus and icons to facilitate navigation, which this user didn't mind. Other end users accustomed to using the keyboard may find this cumbersome at first. Initial setup was smooth and intuitive of what most accounting professionals expect. Once setup is complete, data entry and reporting are quick and easy.

New companies can be cloned from existing companies. Data is modified using the mouse and drop-down menus. During the chart of accounts setup, account types and report formatting codes are entered and stored. Report formatting is also cloned from one company to another. To facilitate initial setup, when converting from other systems, the program has more than 40 conversion routines to allow data to be converted from other DOS or MS Windows write-up/payroll systems. Interface routines are also available to import data from the most commonly used accounting packages, such as QuickBooks.

Although information is accessible through keystroke combinations, data entry is mouse-driven using drop-down lists from the main menu. Different transaction types, such as journal entries and payroll, are accessed on individual screens. These screens contain navigation tabs to perform the necessary func-




tions. There is also a high speed data entry screen that allows entries of all transaction types with little or no mouse use.

The program comes complete with a standard trial balance, general ledger and financial statements. With additional setup, you can create dynamic disclaimer letter templates that are automatically updated when you make changes to the client database. In addition, the program supports after-the-fact payroll. Meeting federal reporting requirements is easy because the system produces the W-2, 1099 and 941 forms as well as W-3s, 1096s, 940s and 943s. Almost all state unemployment reports are automatically generated by the system, which also includes a generic state unemployment report for states not automatically generated. Many state withholding reports are also available.

Using the standard financial reports requires little or no setup, which may be all most companies need. However, some users may find the flexible report writing option to their liking because it helps them meet the specialized needs of their clients. Using this feature requires some pre-planning for headings, column formats and totals. When you add or change an account on the chart of accounts, you must also update the flexible reports. Other system-provided options generate charts and graphs that produce quality visual references for your clients who want at-a-glance information.

Not all Help features were implemented in the version reviewed, but the program comes complete with a comprehensive user manual that provides step-by-step instructions. This helps new users get up and running quickly. Also included with the program is a training CD to learn the basics, as well as how to use the main options of the system.

## Summary

The price of the system is \$1,195 for a single user, \$1,295 for up to five users and \$1,395 for six or more users. The prices include integrated after-the-fact payroll and bank reconciliation capabilities, as well as Tax and QuickBooks interface modules. Twelve months of toll-free telephone is included with the package. 

**PC Software Accounting, Inc.**

[www.pcsai.com](http://www.pcsai.com)

800-237-9234

# Speed and User-Defined Functionality Save Significant Time



By Alysia McDonald

**U**BCC Client Data Center is designed for raw speed of operation. It performs well in terms of speed and stability due to real-time processing, mainframe-style data storage and the ability to run on 600 different platforms with no reliance on any particular operating system.

## Features

The product has a very elegant, straightforward design. In fact, it is easy to underestimate the product's power because it looks so basic; however, the software, in fact, offers very sophisticated functionality. A QuickStart Guide accompanies the initial software CD; updates arrive via Internet. This guide proved invaluable in quickly learning the system. UBCC can customize a starter set of software with financial statements provided by the client. This speeds the training process because users see their own data.

Client Data Center includes General Ledger Write-up, Trial Balance, a full Financials module, Bank Reconciliation and After-the-Fact Payroll processing. Live Payroll, Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Fixed Asset Management, Loan Amortization and more also can be included.

UBCC promotes its user-defined functionality. Each operator can select the screen style, font and color preferred. Some users can be in full Microsoft (MS) Windows graphical user interface, while others in the same office can select pure text. All users can be in the same client at the same time. Users easily customize function keys and can choose implied decimal or not.

The menu style provides quick keystrokes; simply enter the first letters of your choice, such as "FS" for financial statement. The program then goes directly to that function.

The powerful payroll function allows you to import employee time from MS Excel, a CSV file or almost any time clock system. The operator may then proof and print. With batch queuing, you pre-set reports needed by each client one time, and the system automatically prints going forward. The system allows laser-generated MICR check printing on blank stock with standard toner, eliminating the need for expensive magnetic toner.



The software handles all 50 states (including unemployment reporting), the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

It is easy to add new accounts to the chart of accounts. Information flows automatically throughout the system, eliminating time-consuming entry work. The account class table prevents mistakes when setting up new account codes.


In Check Entry, the program remembers the last check number. When you enter information, the software automatically wraps the current month and year around the date. For companies with lots of data entry, this means significantly fewer keystrokes and improved productivity. Check Entry also allows a single check to be distributed among several accounts. For example, one restaurant check could be distributed among food, beverage and supplies. At the general ledger level, these sub-accounts are automatically put into the bank reconciliation for real-time bank reconciliation. Deposits can be segregated the same way.

*UBCC offers five-year live financial statements, debits, credits and budget, with unlimited history.*


A clever pencil function makes it very easy to recover from mistakes by clearing items before they are made permanent. This ability is not available in all software.

Because of the open architecture, changes and outside interface are very easy. For example, to change to a new bank, the user simply reconfigures to the new bank criteria. Information is automatically updated, and you merely save the settings for the next use. The system does not require any complicated conversions.

UBCC offers five-year live financial statements, debits, credits and budget, with unlimited history. All data files are fully portable, with no special program needed. The program can accommodate seven different paper trays, from report paper, letterhead, white copy paper and other formats. There are 800 different print programs in all.

**Summary**  
Client Data Center is flexible, scalable and built for companies requiring Data speed in the accounting functions. 

## Summary

Client Data Center is flexible, scalable and built for companies requiring Data speed in the accounting functions. 

## UBCC

www.ubcc.com  
800-827-8610

# CertiflexDimension's "Smart Learn" Feature Anticipates Your Entry Needs

By Lisa Hodson

If you want maximum output with minimal effort, consider CertiflexDimension Client Write-up by The Versatile Group. The program offers a comprehensive, solid write-up solution that meets the reporting and data-entry needs of medium- to large-size firms.

## Features

Software-savvy professionals will find the opening screen anticipating their needs. Whether you want to select the most often used applications or use the folder shortcuts for installed programs (write-up, payroll and bank reconciliation, the Menu Navigator panel customizes your user experience. For each program, data-entry and maintenance functions are listed for easy access. The most often-used functions can be added to the menu favorites for quick access. The Menu Browser lets you search journal entries and transactions to locate just what you need. The Current Company panel displays the active client in the center of the screen. To open another company, simply click the folder icon in the Company box to display a list of valid clients. This time-saving feature lets you move effortlessly between clients.

Applications open in new windows and allow you to move quickly and easily among the active sessions. All open applications are also listed in the Active Session panel on the opening screen. With a simple double-click of the mouse, you can toggle among the open applications.

Data entry couldn't be easier. To enter transactions, use the ever-present shortcuts in the Menu Navigator panel or click Transactions from the main menu. You will want to turn on the "Smart Learn" feature, which anticipates your next entry by completing the Description and Account fields for you after the first couple of entries. The online help manuals included with the package are accessed by pressing F1 or clicking Help from the main menu.

General Ledger, After-the-Fact Payroll and Bank Reconciliation are included in the package. The company also offers additional modules for Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Job Costing, Order Entry and Inventory Management that let



you grow with your clients. Practitioners also can allow clients to enter transactions onsite using a Remote Entry system. Once entered, you can transfer the data to the main system at anytime.

The Write-up program offers the flexibility to record data, distribute vendor payments among multiple accounts and consolidate multiple companies. After-the-Fact Payroll automatically calculates FICA and Medicare amounts to ensure accuracy of the withholding amounts.

*Graphing capabilities offer the choice to present financial information that is visually pleasing and easy to understand at a glance.*

More than 400 standard reports, 40 industry financial reports and the ability to create up to 99 standard reports per client are provided with the system. To customize your reporting experience and meet your clients' needs, you can modify the existing reports or create new ones.

Also included is the ability to group accounts, which enhances the reporting options. Graphing capabilities offer the choice to present financial information that is visually pleasing and easy to understand at a glance. The standard payroll information returns, including 940s, 941s and W-2s, are included, as are vendor reporting and year-end 1099s.

The program comes complete with a comprehensive online help system indicative of users' documentation needs. User guides are presented in PDF. The company offers online support through its website and directly from the program itself—there is no need to exit the application. Onsite training is available for customers who require additional or specialized training. New customers receive a limited number of free support and one-year of free updates to ensure the program is installed and functioning properly.

## Summary

The basic CertiflexDimension system is available for \$995. Additional modules are available for purchase as needed. New users may experience a high learning curve, but additional training and planning can go a long way to ease the transition. ☺

## The Versatile Group, Inc.

[www.clientwrite-up.com](http://www.clientwrite-up.com)  
800-Certiflex