

Honest Feedback of Essential Write-Up & Practice Management Software



**Write-Up &
Practice Management**

AccountantsWorld Accounting Relief _____	29
CCH ProSystem fx Practice Management _____	29
CCH ProSystem fx Write-Up _____	30
Intuit QuickBooks: Premier Accountant Edition 2007 _____	30
The Versatile Group CertiflexDimension Client Write-Up _____	31
Thomson Tax & Accounting Practice CS _____	31
Thomson Tax & Accounting Write-Up CS _____	32
UBCC Client Data Center _____	32

Essential Write-Up Packages Include Practice Management

Write-up packages now go past the basic accounting tasks and expand into other areas, including loan amortization and fixed management. These are efficiency areas that can provide a higher level of service to the client.

by Bruce Andersen, CPA, MBA, MS (Tax)

The write-up package is where accountants and bookkeepers “live” in their accounting practices. It is the single most important software package that the accountant uses year-round.

For the most traditional bookkeeping, the client brings in check stubs, hand written sales journals and bank statements. The bookkeeper in the accountant’s office enters all of that information and reconciles the bank accounts. The accountant reviews that information and produces financial statements. All of this comes from the write-up package.

More progressive clients who have an accounting software program in their office rely on a backup of the data to be sent to the accountant’s office. No data entry should be required, but usually bank statements are reconciled and financial statements are produced.

If the client has an accounting software program, there may be other ways for the accountant to tie into it. The accountant may connect through the Internet and transport the file to the accountant’s office. Or, the accountant may even work remotely on the client’s file.

There are other situations where the client’s accounting software may be a larger package. In this case, the accountant can obtain an Export File from the client and import this information into the accountant’s software so that financial statements can be generated.

Write-up packages now go past the basic accounting tasks and expand into other areas, including loan amortization and fixed asset management. These are efficiency areas that can provide a higher level of service to the client.

Payroll is a big part of the accounting cycle. Payroll, of course, comes in many, many “flavors.” As a result, the write-up package must be flexible enough to accommodate this variety. Payroll may be processed from within the write-up package or, at a minimum, must be automatically integrated into the write-up package.

On a year-end basis, the write-up package should pass data into the accountant’s tax program. This feature saves precious time at the end of the year.

In my office, we are generalists and support clients on a variety of systems, both accounting and payroll. As a result, we are faced with literally every situation noted above. We have standardized on one accounting software product that allows us to have different levels of bookkeeping staff begin the accounting work and be able to pass the work on to other staff members to continue or complete the jobs. Most importantly, all work is accomplished from one package.

Many times, the selection of the write-up package is dependent on four areas: staffing in the accountant’s office, type of clients, range of services offered and connectivity to the tax processing software.

Be careful in your selection. Write-up software has a big cost to change and the selection made will usually stay for many years.

Online System Enables Expedient Review, Analysis

A fully customizable interface enables each client to see a variation of the same program.

With Accounting Relief, accountants and clients work collaboratively on the same web-based system. The accountant gives each client specific permission to record transactions and perform bookkeeping functions – steps designed to limit the possibility of client errors. When the accountant logs in, all the transactional data is already in place for the staff to complete its review and analysis.

Benefits and Features

- Reduces the potential for clients to make errors, ends software updates, prevents data loss and eliminates file transfers.
- Anywhere, anytime access offers the potential to broaden the employee base for accounting firms.
- A fully customizable interface enables each client to see a variation of the same program, making it easier for clients to do their work while strengthening the accountant client relationship.

What Users Say

“Accounting Relief is the future!” says **Thomas Carrigan** of Whittemore, Carrigan LLC in Tampa, Fla. Five years from retirement, he brought Accounting Relief into the firm “Initially, I was a little concerned that my clients wouldn’t want their information on the Internet, but security has not been an issue.”

Elbert T. Chester, a CPA in Briarwood, N.Y., has clients in different states doing their own data entry. “The other day, it took us only 20 minutes to teach a new client how to enter the checks and deposits, and to navigate the Accounting Relief online system.” His clients cut checks and make entries in their general ledger from anywhere. “The only negative is you have to have Internet access, but who doesn’t have it these days, especially in business?”

Summary

At its core, Accounting Relief offers a comprehensive write-up, trial balance and financial reporting system with modules for entering transactions and performing bookkeeping for clients.

AccountantsWorld
accountantsworld.com
888-999-1366

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Time to advance your practice.

View Summaries Through Real-Time Decision Making

With this secure system, users can simplify referral and prospect tracking.

CCH’s ProSystem *fx* Practice Management expands a user’s ability to effectively manage projects, employees, marketing, data and integration. Using Microsoft .NET technology, Practice Management helps strategically manage every aspect of a business, including time and expense entry, and billing and invoicing.

Benefits and Features

- Practice Management integrates with ProSystem *fx* Tax, General Ledger and Payroll, and synchronizes with Microsoft Outlook.
- Through a secure system, users can simplify referral and prospect tracking; CPE tracking; generation of mass emails, labels and letters; and strategic decision-making.

What Users Say

“We ran all 200 employees through a full day of onsite training,” says **William Kraut**, partner-in-charge of Professional Practice at Amper, Politziner & Mattia with offices throughout New York and New Jersey. What does he like about the software? “It is very easy to review the files remotely, it lets you leave notes on the pages and the security is great.” Although he finds the program’s synchronizing process annoying, Kraut says, “ProSystem is very mobile; we work in the field and ProSystem *fx* definitely helps our strategic plan.”

When Malden, Mass.-based Rucci, Bardaro & Barrett, PC, CPAs, converted to ProSystem from another software, **Paula Lever** says the transition went well. “The reporting system is much better and the system is easy to use. When we first began, training was good, but you don’t know what you need help with until you begin using it. At the first of the year, I sometimes had to wait for technical support to call me back. Now, I get somebody right on the phone when I call.” issue.”

Summary

Among other capabilities, ProSystem *fx* Practice Management offers real-time decision-making features to view firm summaries without having to leave the Time Entry window.

CCH
tax.cchgroup.com
800-739-9998

CCH
a Wolters Kluwer business

New Module Customizes and Formats Financials

After-the-fact payroll and more than 250 federal and state forms are provided at no additional cost.

CCH's ProSystem fx Write-Up helps firms provide high-quality, profitable write-up services by incorporating functions to help manage day-to-day client operations, with additional features that make it easy to provide expanded services to clients.

Benefits and Features

- After-the-fact payroll and more than 250 federal and state forms are provided at no additional cost. New forms are continually being added to meet filing requirements for state income tax and unemployment insurance reporting.
- The newly added custom financial statements module (included) allows users to customize and format financials exactly the way they want to present them.

What Users Say

"**Michael P. Fischer**, a CPA in Simi Valley, Calif., has been in public practice for 30 years. "I've used lots of different write-up packages, and even remember when we hand posted ledgers in blue and red ink." His objective was to work with one suite of software to "get the products to talk to each other." A big plus to CCH was its pricing structure. "It was reasonable because we were already involved with CCH – and, you don't pay for support because it's included with the software. CCH support is awesome."

"ProSystem streamlines the business processes from the working papers to the corporate tax return," says **Maureen Berrios**, president of Berrios & Associates, Inc., in New York City. She thinks that a software's simplicity is important to accounting, tax and bookkeeping firms. "Even though self-tutorials are pretty good and CCH also offers web training, ProSystem is not a complicated system." Berrios has used ProSystem fx Write-Up since it came on the market, but admits there is room for improvement. "The reporting is not that good, yet."

Summary

ProSystem fx Write-Up is useful for many basic tasks, such as bank reconciliations, check writing and more.

CCH

tax.cchgroup.com
800-739-9998



All-in-One System Easily Converts Data

File sharing features control the exchange, review and adjustment of prior period accounting records.

QuickBooks: Premier Accountant Edition 2007 is an all-in-one bookkeeping, write-up, and financial reporting solution. It contains, and is compatible with, all QuickBooks 2007 accounting software, including Simple Start, Pro, Premier and Premier industry-specific editions. Accountants can exchange accounting records with their clients, and access all the screens and features in QuickBooks.

With the free, downloadable QuickBooks Conversion Tool, users who run MS Office Accounting 2007, Peachtree 2001-2007 or Microsoft SBA 2006 can convert their data into QuickBooks Premier. QuickBooks also offers multiple user functionality, allowing up to five users to work on the program at the same time. All users have access to the same updated data, and the program offers the flexibility to add the number of users needed.

Benefits and Features

- Registers and journals are designed for rapid data entry.
- File sharing features, such as Accountant's Copy, enable accountants to collect, review and adjust prior-period records. Clients can continue to work in the current period, but are blocked from the prior period in which the accountant is working.

What Users Say

"**Hudson Etienne** of Tax DRx in Roselle Park, N.J., serves mostly 1040 clients. "However, we have 50 to 70 small business clients and are planning to grow our business in that direction. As a result, I'm planning to use QuickBooks." The company's transition from another, antiquated software went smoothly. "The transition primarily occurred because 95 percent of our clients were already using QuickBooks." Etienne recommends accountants take advantage of Intuit's ProAdvisor Program. "It gives you access to unlimited technical support, extended service hours and other perks that are definitely worth the expense."

Summary

QuickBooks: Premier Accountant Edition has the tools and file sharing capabilities needed to complete write-up, reporting, trial balance and payroll.

Intuit

accountant.intuit.com
888-236-9501



“Smart-Learn” System Boosts Data Entry Speed

Users can easily customize and print reports in a number of styles and formats.

CertiflexDimension Client Write-up is augmented with state-of-the-art features especially suited to the accounting environment. Client Write-Up records and collates after-the-fact transactional data for a diverse array of clients. This allows the user to easily customize and print reports in a number of styles and formats.

Benefits and Features

- A collection of perceptive question/answer setup wizards cuts the time required to add new clients to only a few minutes.
- Write-Up offers online, single-click access to any account detail, with concurrent balance and source document tracking to quickly and easily identify trends and inconsistencies.

What Users Say

“The security is phenomenal between modules,” says **Larry Coleman, CPA**, of Coleman & Associates, S.C., in Amery, Wis. “You can create multiple levels of security for multiple employees. For example, you can give someone complete control of AR and ‘read only’ in payroll.” Other features he appreciates include the ability to display multiple journal entries on one page in a batch mode. “If you are just a bookkeeper, the safeguards are there that won’t allow you to make mistakes.”

“Certiflex is an integral part of our practice,” says **Robert Powell, CPA**, of Powell, Hays & Company, LLC, in Sevierville, Tenn. “We like the speed of batch entry, as well as the ability to look at reports and fix findings before we update.” He has used Certiflex for more than 20 years. “I may be a little partial. Over the years, I’ve had some input to the company.” Powell encourages his clients to use the software. “We can actually import transactions. It eliminates a lot of keying for the larger clients.”

Summary

With CertiflexDimension Write-Up, virtually everything in the database is available with a mouse click. An integral, fully indexed electronic file cabinet offers paperless office support.

The Versatile Group
www.clientwrite-up.com
800-237-8435



Dashboards Offer Real-Time View of Key Information

Closely monitor all client activity, including phone calls, email messages, billing, projects and deadlines.

Practice CS brings advanced technology to a firm’s individual workflow processes to provide a completely customizable practice management system. With real-time functionality, Practice CS makes it easy to get an up-to-the-minute look at staff workflow, client status or firm information – all at a glance.

Benefits and Features

- Customizable digital dashboards manage the day-to-day details of a business from one convenient location.
- Quickly record time and expenses, and create customized invoices and statements.
- Track firm projects and tasks from the desktop for complete control of workflow processes.
- Closely monitor all client activity, including phone calls, email messages, billings, projects and deadlines.
- Integrates with the CS Professional Suite and Microsoft Outlook.
- With the Project Management module, users can monitor and manage every detail of a firm’s projects and tasks in real time, while staying fully informed and in control.
- Through the Client Management module, firms can logically organize, store and access all client interactions in a single location for quick and efficient review – by anyone on the staff, at any time needed.

What Users Say

“I spent a lot of time getting Practice CS set up the way I wanted,” says **Darren Root**, president of Root & Associates in Bloomington, Ind. “Depending on your skills, a consultant can help make the process go faster, but my time was well spent.” From his computer, he monitors the dashboards he’s created. “I can see who is in the office as well as what’s happening today in billing, accounts receivable and unfinished projects, without printing reports.”

Summary

Practice CS handles many of the day-to-day tasks involved in organizing and streamlining a business to enhance cash flow, decrease write-offs, improve staff productivity and maximize revenue.

Thomson Tax & Accounting
www.CS.Thomson.com
800-968-8900



Multiple Clients Served Through Integration Options

An unlimited number of clients may be maintained and an unlimited number of transactions may be recorded.

With its flexible design and extensive features, Write-Up CS provides customized accounting services that efficiently meet the needs of a firm's diverse and demanding clients, while offering value-added analytical services that help to grow a practice.

Benefits and Features

- Users can generate high-quality reports and financial statements using built-in sample templates that may be modified for specific client needs.
- The system also enables users to custom design reports for presentation-quality financials with full-color graphs.
- The Payroll Compliance module offers complete after-the-fact payroll processing.
- An unlimited number of clients may be maintained and an unlimited number of transactions may be recorded.

What Users Say

Shirlene Small is managing director of Emerging Business Solutions Group LLC, a Chicago firm that serves many sectors. "There is not one thing I haven't been able to do with Write-Up CS yet," she says. Small has added other CS Professional Suite software as well. "In UltraTax CS you can press a button and basically the client's return is done. It's a huge time saver."

Eight people use Write-Up CS at Alfermann, Gray & Co., CPAs LLC, a group of small business accounting advisors in Rolla, Mo. At the firm, **Felecia Dixon** trains new staff on Write-Up CS. "We have procedures manuals we have written and master sheets employees can modify; the software is very easy to use." The firm also takes full advantage of the integration with Client Bookkeeping Solution. "We are very passionate about the software. It just keeps improving."

Summary

Write-Up CS is designed specifically for accountants who serve multiple clients – those with diverse statement and report formatting requirements. Integration with other software in the CS Professional Suite allows data entered in one program to be immediately available in others.

Thomson Tax & Accounting

www.CS.Thomson.com

800-968-8900



Interface Customized for Menu-driven Efficiencies

This system features fast keystroke, efficient "heads-down" entry methods.

The Client Data Center from UBCC is a complete write-up solution for accounting offices of all sizes. The real-time environment requires no updates to run a report, and the system supports simultaneous text and GUI user interfaces.

Benefits and Features

- This system features fast keystroke, efficient "heads-down" entry methods.
- UBCC supports a wide variety of electronic imports and exports, including QuickBooks data files.

What Users Say

Bryan Flynn of Flynn Accounting Resources, Inc., in Colorado Springs, has used UBCC for 18 years. "They are big enough to have great software and small enough to know me by name." He's heard others say they don't offer payroll services because it is too hard. "With UBCC, the software integrates payroll with the general ledger. Not only is the process simple; payroll is an extra revenue stream for us."

"We have remote users in different parts of the country," says **George Gray, CPA**, owner of Compucount, Inc., in Randolph, Vt. "While UBCC isn't the easiest to learn, you can familiarize yourself with time-saving shortcuts. The interface can be customized to be more menu-driven for users who prefer that."

"UBCC is very fast and efficient," says **Ria Botzler**, founder of Checks & Doublechecks in Albuquerque, N.M. "Software is one of the most important decisions – and the engine that drives our businesses. How productive does it allow us to be? I can run a payroll in 60 seconds." Portability is also important to her. A UBCC file "zips down really tight. Most of the files can be emailed from within UBCC."

Summary

With Client Data Center, Live Payroll, AR, AP, Fixed Asset and Loan Amortization features may be added to fit the specific needs of any office.

UBCC

www.ubcc.com

800-827-8610

