The attached article and survey were published in the December, 2006 CPA Technology Advisor Magazine. The article states that the results of the survey were strictly based on the total number of votes received; and that this method of doing the survey would naturally favor the companies with the largest user bases.

PC Software Accounting finished fourth in the Client Write-Up system balloting, very close in total votes to the number two and three firms. The top three finishers in this survey all have annual revenues in the multi billions and correspondingly, very large user bases for their products.

PC Software Accounting's user base is significantly smaller than any of these firms. This means that an extremely large percentage of PC Software users expended their time and effort to rate PC Software as the best Client Write-Up program in comparison to the number of users that did the same for any other company in the survey. PC Software did not have a special campaign to get their users to vote for them. As a matter of fact, we did not know about the survey until one of our competitors pointed out to us how well we did "against the billion dollar companies."

We think that it is quite reasonable to reach two conclusions from this survey:

- *Our users are very satisfied with our Client Write-Up product.*

- *Our users might very well be the most satisfied users of any Client Write-Up product on the market.*

We are confident that if you decide to use PC Software Accounting's "Client Write-Up for Windows" product you would be equally satisfied.

The Voters Have Spoken

By Isaac M. O'Bannon, Technology Editor

No, we're not talking about the mid-term elections from November, but rather the **2006 Readers' Choice Awards**. The awards offered those in and around the tax and accounting professions an opportunity to speak their mind by selecting their favorite programs, hardware and other resources from more than 25 categories.

From their favorite tax preparation program, the core of many tax and accounting practices, to other systems they use in their practice to service clients, as well as the programs they

favor their clients using in their businesses, the Readers' Choice Awards have proven to be an extremely popular outlet for professionals to have their opinions recorded. And there were a few surprises among the results.

While reviewing the results of the awards, keep in mind that this was not a scientific survey, but rather a method by which professionals could express their support for specific vendors or brands. Remember, too, that some vendors actively solicited their users' votes, and in the spirit of Chicago politics encouraged them to "Vote early, and often!" while others chose to remain above the fray and let the chips fall where they may. Both approaches are appropriate, and we suggest that readers keep in mind that these philosophical differences most probably impacted the voting. As the results show, some of the brands and companies have extremely loyal user bases that actively evangelize the systems they use. This occasionally resulted in products or services receiving a larger percentage of votes than their market share actually supports. But what a wonderful predicament! Keeping customers satisfied is crucial to any business, whether a professional tax or accounting firm, or a software company that makes the systems those professionals use. Actually keeping your customers *happy* to the point where they will actively promote your product … well, that's going above and beyond, and it deserves recognition.

The best example of a vendor "going above and beyond" is Drake Software, which won the tax preparation software category even though it holds less than 10 percent of the market. Even when competing with the giants, the company excels at maintaining happy and actively involved customers.

Also noteworthy is the rapid acceptance of new technologies — a trait not often attributed to tax and accounting professionals. Intuit's Tax Almanac.org, an online "wiki" for tax research, has quickly made a place among the other major research providers. Since the online portal is free, it is likely that professionals are using it as a supplemental resource along with a formal research system. In addition, the online professional payroll system offered by PayCycle has rapidly gained popularity.

Among other results, there is no longer any doubt that Intuit's Quick-Books dominates the small business market, and these results show that professional accountants are now embracing the system. While there are likely many reasons for this sea change in accountants' opinions over the past five years, chief among them is likely the continued development of the system to address the needs of accountants, as well as the verticalization of the product and its popularity with small business owners. That said, voters continue to prefer Sage Software's MAS and Accpac lines for their larger clients.

In areas not specific to tax and accounting professionals, voters overwhelmingly selected Dell as the brand of choice for computers and HP for printers and scanners.

On the lighter side (believe it or not, some tax and accounting professionals have a lighter side), it seems that many accounting and tax professionals fast during tax season, or at least can laugh about it now. Pizza, however, was the number one "late night tax season survival food," surprisingly followed by "healthier items." Hmmm. Not too surprisingly, voters selected coffee as their preferred caffeine source. Yes, caffeine still keeps the midnight oil burning during those late April nights.
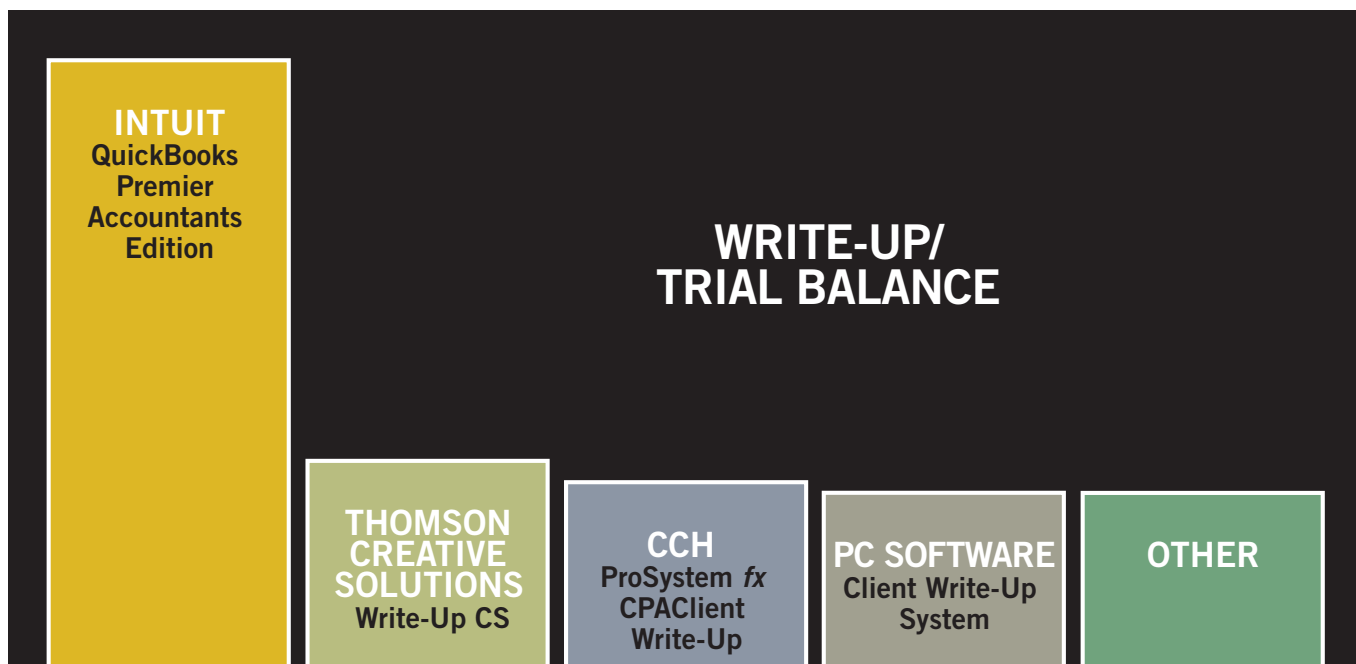
Most technology vendors care what their customers think about their products, and while the Readers' Choice Awards can provide a few fun facts, they primarily offer tax and accounting professionals the opportunity to acknowledge the technologies they find most valuable to them in their profession, whether it is a system they use for their clients or something their client uses that makes servicing them easier.

So thank you to all who voted in the **2006 Readers' Choice Awards**. ■

WRITE-UP/ TRIAL BALANCE

INTUIT QuickBooks Premier Accountants Edition

THOMSON CREATIVE SOLUTIONS Write-Up CS

CCH ProSystem *fx* CPAClient Write-Up

PC SOFTWARE Client Write-Up System

OTHER

Readers' Choice Results

1. Intuit — QuickBooks Premier Accountants Edition
2. Thomson Creative Solutions — Write-Up CS
3. CCH — ProSystem *fx* CPAClient Write-Up
4. **PC Software — Client Write-Up System**

Insight: Whoa, Nelly! QuickBooks took this category by an order of magnitude, clearly dominating the other products among the more than 50 percent of voters who cited a product in this category. Although this is not a scientific survey, these results should finalize the debate over whether the professional accounting community has accepted Intuit. This is certainly a sea change from about five years ago when the profession bemoaned QuickBooks as not appropriate for write-up. But through continued evolution of the product and building it out to core verticals as well as the addition of core features designed for accountants, QuickBooks has continued to proliferate throughout virtually all types of small businesses, and so it seems that many (if not most) accounting professionals are adopting QB at least for handling their QB clients.

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