

A very special thanks to Rich, Lesley, and Nancy of the Intuit Accountant Team for taking a few moments of their time to talk about what they feel are the most important changes with the release of QuickBooks 2006, improvements made to the ProAdvisor Program, and what they would like to see happen in the future. Here's what they had to say:

What are you most excited about with the release of 2006?

QuickBooks 2006 is possibly our biggest release to date. We've made significant strides in making QuickBooks easier to use for small business users, and added functionality for product-based and enterprise businesses.

What do you feel are the 5 best enhancements in the QuickBooks Product Line for 2006? What is your favorite and why?

- 1) Navigation Improvements through the Simplified Home Page and Customer/Vendor Centers. QuickBooks users can get to the information they need easier and faster.
- 2) Inventory management functionality. Better tools for product-based businesses.
- 3) New industry-standard SQL database. Faster performance and scalability for Enterprise level customers.
- 4) Always-on Audit Trail. Minimizes risk of fraud, and enables accountants to find and fix errors more easily.
- 5) Easier Set-Up, both for QuickBooks software, as well as QuickBooks Payroll.

How do you feel these enhancements will benefit ProAdvisors and ultimately the end user?

The #1 reason why ProAdvisors recommend QuickBooks is because it is an easy-to-use program that cuts down on the time needed to train and trouble-shoot for their clients. This enables ProAdvisors to focus on providing higher-level services such as financial analysis and business consulting for their clients. The ease-of-use improvements in QuickBooks 2006 will help ProAdvisors do the work they want to do, and aid their clients in working with the software more confidently.

QuickBooks 2006 also makes it easier for the 230,000 accountants that use QuickBooks to work with their clients. Typically, accountants receive a client data file, and must compare it to the previous version to understand what has changed. QuickBooks 2006 simplifies accountants' work with a new "always-on" audit trail, which helps accountants quickly detect client errors and track changes. This saves accountants time and makes accuracy easy.

QuickBooks: Accountant Edition 2006 simplifies accountants' ability to answer clients' questions with a new Toggle feature. This new feature lets accountants instantly switch their view from QuickBooks: Accountant Edition to other QuickBooks versions: so with just a click, accountants can see the screen their clients see. This is especially valuable when accountants are supporting clients over the telephone.

In your opinion, what were the best enhancements to the ProAdvisor Program for 2006 (Membership benefits)?

There are a number of well-received changes to the ProAdvisor program this year. They include:

- 1) Unlimited tech support (up from 5 incidents) by a dedicated team of US-based reps who only answer calls from accountants.
- 2) Certification on QuickBooks 2006 available earlier to coincide with the launch of QuickBooks 2006 (now available).
- 3) Improved resources, including QuickBooks 2006 Reference Guide in hard copy (formerly in PDF), and QuickBooks 2006 Training Guide in CD (formerly in PDF).
- 4) Product/Service Discounts
 - a. QB Pro changed from 15% to 20% off.

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- b. Supplies discount changed from 10% to 20% via binder insert.
- 5) Reduced program membership pricing for new members: from \$549 to \$449.

What was Intuit's best marketing programs for building Advisor awareness to end users?

This year, we have invested heavily in promoting ProAdvisors to QuickBooks end users. This is a win-win for both groups: ProAdvisors welcome the additional business, and end users are more successful and confident in using QuickBooks.

- 1) High visibility on QuickBooks.com, specifically on the Support and Help webpage's
- 2) In-product links to the ProAdvisor Referral database
- 3) Visibility on QuickBooks In-box materials
- 4) Setting up ProAdvisors in retail stores to give presentations to end users
- 5) Facilitating connection of ProAdvisors to end users through the community groups: quickbooksgroups.com
- 6) Visibility on newsletters that get sent to new QuickBooks users

Please give us some traits that you feel will help Advisors to create lasting relationships with their clients.

We feel that there are a number of ways we help ProAdvisors create stronger relationships with their clients:

- 1) Making QuickBooks easier for ProAdvisors and clients to work together will save both parties time, and allow ProAdvisors to focus on advising their clients on how to run their business.
- 2) Building accountant-specific tools into QuickBooks will also enable ProAdvisors to work with their clients more efficiently. Examples include a Financial Statement Designer, and a Working Trial Balance built into QuickBooks: Premier Accountant Edition.
- 3) Giving ProAdvisors the tools to provide great support to their clients: We provide ProAdvisors with the software, support, training, and resources so that they are well equipped to advise and support their clients.

What would you like to see happen for the 2007 ProAdvisor Program?

We're currently in the process of deciding how to improve the ProAdvisor program even further, to meet the needs of the different types of accountants who join the program.