



# Tax Technology Case Study

## Tabular Database Platform Enabling Next Generation Client Engagements

### Customer Benefits:

- Reduce software development costs associated with project creation and maintenance
- Increase responsiveness to clients by reducing tax preparation time and enabling secure sharing of business data leveraging Excel
- Increase efficiencies by reducing the time it takes to create and complete projects and realigning task complexity with resource skill sets
- Reduce risk to the firm by more tightly controlling business and tax rules, reducing errors, and tracking changes with built in audit trail at the cell level
- Increase timeliness of consolidating and reporting on key tax data across projects

### Problem Statement

Companies involved in the preparation of tax returns engage in thousands of projects each year for corporations, partnerships, and individuals.

The scale and complexity of these engagements when considered on a firm-wide basis pose significant challenges:

- The creation and management of tax engagement projects typically requires extensive programming creating a “developer-centric”, “one-off” tax planning environment—with static sheets and hard-coded rules
- Internal experts often rely on Excel to define the complex business rules and formulas, and update tax law changes, but it’s a challenge to maintain and distribute updates to the practice without programming and losing existing preparer work
- Excel does not possess a scalable and maintainable capability to tailor the workbook environment to a specific engagement’s

data needs, resulting in a one size fits all approach with massive workbooks that hampers usability and performance

- Reporting and consolidations are difficult to execute due to lack of easy access to preparer data
- Optimal use cases require “offline” work for both the internal experts and preparers, but current methods for version control, cell level audit trails, and “publish and subscribe” fall short

These challenges called for an innovative technology platform that takes current file sharing and relational database technologies to the next level.

### Solution

The Boardwalk Collaboration Platform (BCP) is a patented “positional” database platform which enables companies to rapidly create, maintain, and update business data within the familiar Excel environment while securely and reliably managing this business data across any number of desktop and other data environments.

This means:

- Client engagements are quickly and easily set up and maintained by business users, without programming
- Business rule and tax code changes can be managed by subject matter experts and propagated without losing preparer data
- Tax professionals are able to work “offline” but share & manage data and formulas at the cell level between engagement teams
- Project workbooks are dynamically sized to specific taxonomy needs creating an optimal user experience

By using BCP’s unique data management platform, tax firms can reduce risk and transform their tax planning operations by increasing internal controls, increasing responsiveness to clients, and optimally aligning task complexity with resource experience - all while maintaining the Excel user experience.

