



Document Workflows Built for Accounting Pros

Learn how you can deliver superior client experiences with Progress® ShareFile® software despite staffing shortages, security challenges and changing regulations

WHITEPAPER

According to the annual [Accounting Today Year Ahead survey](#), accountants are mostly optimistic about growth in 2025. But key challenges are keeping them up at night.

Most notably, firms of all sizes are grappling with **staffing shortages** and **shifting regulations**. Yet, as the industry continues to invest in more generative AI (GenAI) and digital tools, another threat grows: **cybercrime**. More sophisticated than ever, cybercriminals are targeting accounting firms for their vast access to personal and financial data.





As the accounting industry navigates new opportunities and challenges, **document workflow technology can help firms stay focused on revenue-driving activities.**

In the following pages, we'll illustrate how the ShareFile document workflow tool can offset the industry's biggest challenges. It can also help firms maximize client-driven ROI by modernizing the client experience.

Challenge 1: Staffing Shortages

Roughly [three-quarters of CPAs](#) are at or near retirement age, yet there isn't enough new talent to replace them.

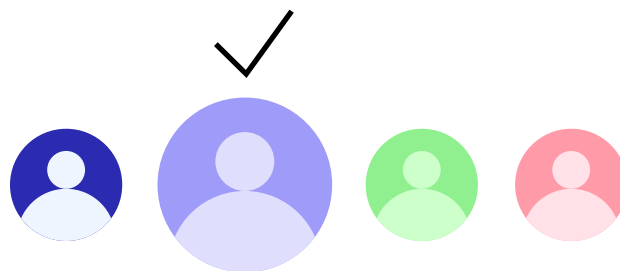
Enrollment in university accounting programs is also declining. From 2021 to 2023, more than [300,000 U.S. accountants and auditors](#)—across all career stages—left their jobs.

This talent shortage has hit smaller accounting firms the hardest. Many have scaled back service offerings as a result.

While firms explore hiring and retention strategies—such as higher pay and improved work-life balance—they can also turn to technology to maximize the impact of their existing teams.

According to the [annual survey](#), 20% of accountants spend their time on administrative tasks. **These can include things like:**

- Uploading, organizing or archiving financial documents and records
- Manually preparing invoices, statements and financial records
- Coordinating with clients and co-workers on deadlines
- Handling client phone calls and emails
- Preparing compliance documents and tracking deadlines
- Onboarding new clients and setting up their accounts



Eliminate admin work with time-saving automation

The ShareFile document workflow tool can help drive efficiency by automating manual tasks, reducing the burden on existing staff.



Templated agreements that can auto-fill client data

Speed up the agreement process with templated letters that can populate client data automatically. Build templated agreements in advance, tailored to a specific client or accounting service.



Digital PBC list collection

Completing provided-by-client lists is notoriously time-consuming. ShareFile software helps reduce confusion with a pre-built workflow. Upload your PBC list into ShareFile software, and clients can review, ask questions and upload files in one place. Accountants can also track progress and send reminders.



Built-in solutions to streamline your core services

Busy seasons are the most demanding time of the year. Instead of preparing services manually for each client, the ShareFile catalog of solutions is designed to help streamline and automate client services, like individual income tax returns. Complete services faster and build stronger client relationships with ready-to-go onboarding, workflow automation, templated information request forms and document request lists and more.



Streamlined integrations

Help reduce disruptions caused by frequent app switching. ShareFile products integrate with widely used accounting tools like QuickBooks, FreshBooks and Xero.

Challenge 2: Changing Regulations

Keeping up with changing regulations can be a significant challenge for accounting firms. Recently, Public Company Accounting Oversight—a regulatory body that oversees the auditing of public companies—[released new responsibilities for auditors](#), increasing the number of laws and regulations that auditors will consider.

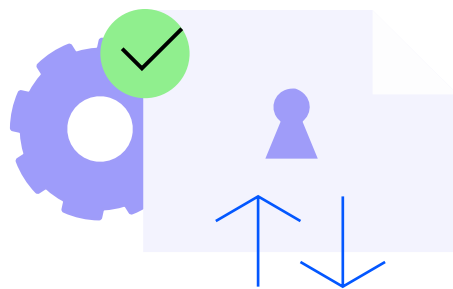
In response to these industry-specific regulations, accountants must devote time and energy to understanding the relevant impacts on their clients. The risks of noncompliance are serious: consequences can range from fines to legal action.

While regulatory changes are inevitable, a document workflow solution can help teams manage the resulting work more **efficiently and with less friction**.

While accountants predict that 20% of their time in 2025 will be spent on administrative tasks, they estimate that the majority of time—[40%](#)—will be spent on compliance.

Regulatory changes often result in additional work, including:

- Ongoing education on the change and its impact
- Adjusting accounting practices
- Reviewing and restating prior financial statements
- Changing how transactions and events are recorded
- Reporting and additional due diligence



Respond to regulatory changes faster with secure document management

How the ShareFile document workflow solution helps accountants move more efficiently.



Centralized document collaboration

ShareFile products bring clarity to the chaos of documents that accountants often face. It reduces the risk of working from outdated or incorrect financial records since everyone accesses the most current version.



Task tracking

Built-in task management helps accountants manage the resulting process or document changes needed after a regulatory change. Accountants can also set reminders for compliance deadlines and regulatory submissions.



Audit trails

Version control and audit trail features allow for a complete history of document changes. This feature is especially useful during regulatory audits, as accounts can see who made the changes and when.



Automated approval workflows

Consolidate approvals using ShareFile software to simplify and speed up decision-making. Route documents to the right people, track their status in real time and send reminders when needed.



Faster team collaboration

Co-editing capabilities allow teams to work on documents simultaneously, helping them respond to regulatory changes faster and with greater accuracy.



Data protection and compliance certifications

ShareFile software offers numerous security layers—like encryption and access controls—to help protect sensitive financial data against breaches. ShareFile software is SEC+FINRA eligible, AICPA SOC 2 certified and HIPAA eligible.

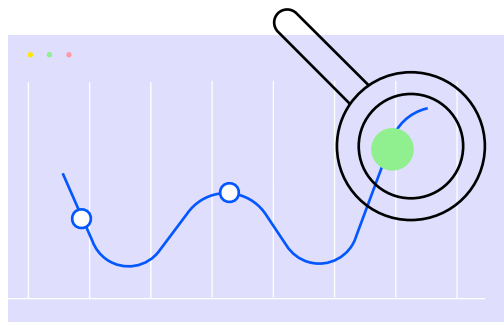
Challenge 3: Increasing Cyberthreats

Today's cybercriminals often operate with the coordination and tools of a modern enterprise. Just like any other business, they are also using the latest tech, like ChatGPT, to [craft and deploy attacks](#) that can be challenging to detect and respond to promptly.

The [Cyberthreat Defense Report](#) found that 95.7% of respondents in the financial industry have been victimized by cybercrime in the past year. Financial institutions are frequent targets due to the volume and sensitivity of the data they manage. And, like every industry, some employees may have varying levels of cybersecurity awareness.

The impact of a cyberattack can be significant, especially for smaller accounting firms with fewer IT resources. **Consequences can include:**

- Legal expenses and regulatory penalties
- Incident response costs
- Operational disruptions
- Loss of intellectual property
- Loss of client trust



Help Protect Data with Advanced Security Features

Robust security solutions serve law firms of all sizes. In addition to offering document management and workflows, ShareFile software comes with many security layers. **These layers support compliance efforts while remaining intuitive for accountants and clients.**



Email & file encryption

Send and receive large files more efficiently and with added encryption—there is no need for file compression or attachments.



Automated threat detection and remediation

Get notified of unusual account activity along with automated remediation steps that help protect your data—no manual action required.



AI-powered link share reminder

When creating a sharable link, ShareFile software analyzes the file for personal identifiable information and if detected, will recommend stronger protection options.



Custom link sharing permissions

Reduce the risk of exposing sensitive data with configurable, granular permissions. You can also create links with different types of permissions and expiration dates.

Challenge 4: ROI and the Client Experience

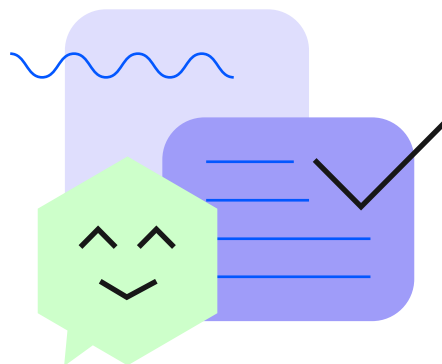
Studies suggest that organizations prioritizing client experience may see an [80% increase in revenue](#).

- Increasing client retention by just 5% has been associated with profit gains [anywhere from 25–95%](#)
- If they've had a positive experience, clients are [60–70% more likely to consider additional services](#)

However, going the extra mile for clients, especially during a talent shortage, is difficult for accounting firms. Document workflow technology can **help reduce manual effort through automation and client portals—delivering a more personalized client experience.**

Client-facing workflows often involve manual tasks that may fall to the accountant or the client. These may include tasks such as:

- Manually entering client data into forms
- **Requesting and receiving PBC (Prepared by Client) lists via email, guiding new clients through onboarding and portal setup. Handling out signed forms via mail, fax or in-person delivery**



Accounting workflows that support accounting pros and clients

ShareFile software helps accelerate back-end and client-facing workflows to support faster service delivery with improved accuracy.



Client portal

Provide clients with a dedicated space designed to support secure collaboration with accountants. The portal is where clients can review, upload or sign documents and exchange messages with their accountant.



Integrated e-signature

Clients can sign important documents inside the ShareFile client portal, helping reduce the need for file downloads or uploads.



Client onboarding workflow

Reduce the steps and complexity of onboarding clients with a streamlined, standardized process. Send engagement letters with integrated client data, request and collect signatures and set up a client portal for new clients—all in a few clicks.



Pre-filled forms

Instead of asking clients to fill out their information across numerous forms, ShareFile products can integrate with client data to auto-populate information. This saves time and helps reduce errors that could require rework.

Support Your Accounting Firm with ShareFile Software

ShareFile software offers tax and accounting pros a unified solution to streamline workflows, enhance client interaction and help protect data through robust features.

This solution can reduce reliance on multiple third-party tools, support teams in completing client engagements and expand their focus on advisory services.



Explore how you can improve your document workflows at [ShareFile.com](https://www.sharefile.com) today.

About Progress Software

[Progress Software](https://www.progress.com) (Nasdaq: PRGS) empowers organizations to achieve transformational success in the face of disruptive change. Our software enables our customers to develop, deploy and manage responsible AI-powered applications and digital experiences with agility and ease. Customers get a trusted provider in Progress, with the products, expertise and vision they need to succeed. Over 4 million developers and technologists at hundreds of thousands of enterprises depend on Progress. Learn more at www.progress.com

© 2025 Progress Software Corporation and/or its subsidiaries or affiliates.
All rights reserved. Rev 2025/08 | 1210832943270122

Worldwide Headquarters

Progress Software Corporation
15 Wayside Rd, Suite 400, Burlington, MA 01803, USA
Tel: +1-800-477-6473

 facebook.com/progresssw
 twitter.com/progresssw
 youtube.com/progresssw
 linkedin.com/company/progress-software
 [progress_sw_](https://instagram.com/progress_sw_)