H&R Block announces upfront, transparent prices for all tax prep

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- *Consumers can avoid surprises with H&R Block's upfront, transparent prices, based on their personal life situation*
- *H&R Block introduces Price Preview for online tax prep to provide price transparency from start to finish*
- *H&R Block also increasing the value it delivers for consumers through new products, better experiences and lower prices*

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Oct. 29, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- H&R Block (NYSE: HRB) will offer upfront, transparent prices starting in January for in person and online tax preparation. This represents an important shift in the tax industry, and a significant improvement in the experience for consumers. H&R Block clients can know the price before tax preparation begins, with price transparency from start to finish. No surprises. No hidden fees.

Across the assisted tax preparation category, pricing has traditionally been based on which of the hundreds of IRS tax forms or schedules needed to be completed or the amount of time required for tax preparation. Because the forms completed cannot be known until after the return was done, consumers have been in the dark on the price until the end. To provide upfront prices, H&R Block has mapped 4,000 potential tax forms, worksheets and calculations to approximately 25 items based on the consumer's personal situation to determine the price.

"We have spent the last year evaluating all parts of our business, with a specific focus on consumers and their feedback," said H&R Block president and CEO Jeff Jones. "Our work confirmed that taxes are already a source of anxiety for many consumers, and the tax industry has made it more stressful by not explaining the cost of the services until after the tax preparation was complete. H&R Block is proud to lead the industry by offering upfront, transparent prices, so consumers can avoid surprises and hidden fees."

H&R Block lowers prices for assisted tax consumers

In addition to introducing upfront, transparent prices, H&R Block is lowering prices for millions of its assisted tax preparation clients.

"As part of our commitment to create a better experience for consumers, I'm delighted that we are able to offer lower assisted tax prep prices to improve the value proposition for consumers. The price drops will be reflected in H&R Block's new upfront, transparent prices," said Jones.

How H&R Block's upfront, transparent prices work

Consumers seeking help in an H&R Block office have three simple steps to know the price before they begin. First, they can determine the base price that matches their personal situation, from one of five easy-to-understand categories:

- **Simple:** they have W-2 income only.
- **Complex Income:** they have income other than a W-2.
- **Student/Retired:** they paid student loans or tuition or received retirement income.
- **Family:** they have dependents.
- **Homeowner:** they paid mortgage interest.

Next, they can determine if they need to file any state returns.

Finally, they can include the price for any of the approximately 20 additional items such as credits, investments and business income, based on what happened in their life during the year. H&R Block estimates that the additional items will not apply to nearly half of its clients, meaning many clients will know their price in two simple steps.

"We listened to our frontline tax professionals who told us clients expect and deserve to know the price of services before they start," said Karen Orosco, senior vice president of H&R Block's retail business. "Our tax pros are passionate about finding ways to improve our service and provide us extremely valuable insights based on their firsthand experiences helping clients. I am excited we are responding to tax pro feedback by offering upfront, transparent prices in our tax offices this year."

H&R Block tax professionals can guide and answer any questions about a specific consumer's price before the service begins. In most H&R Block tax offices, the price for a federal return starts at $59, and each state return is $59. The additional items, with unique prices, are matched to the consumer's life situation.

Price Preview makes upfront H&R Block online prices transparent

H&R Block is also improving the way consumers interact with do-it-yourself (DIY) online tax preparation by making the price transparent throughout the process. DIY consumers have always had upfront access to a base price. However, historically, the

DIY tax category has not always provided transparency when items were added or changed as the consumer was completing the return. As a result, consumers did not always understand why their final price was different from the starting price.

This year, H&R Block is introducing Price Preview to provide transparency from start to finish, no surprises. “With H&R Block’s Price Preview, the price is upfront and transparent throughout the process, so that DIY consumers know of any changes as they happen,” said Heather Watts, senior vice president and general manager of H&R Block’s DIY tax business. “Given our award-winning product, our competitive DIY prices and now industry-leading Price Preview, we provide a superior experience over TurboTax and other DIY brands.”

H&R Block continues commitment to providing a better experience for consumers by offering more ways to help

In addition to its pricing changes, Jones said H&R Block is offering other consumer-centric innovations, including expanding the ways it provides help to consumers.

“Upfront, transparent prices across all methods of tax preparation is just one of many changes H&R Block is making to create a modern, innovative, consumer-focused experience,” said Jones. “Consumers also want the full spectrum of choices – from filing in an office to doing it yourself online to other options in between to get the help they need.”

The range of tax-filing options from H&R Block, in addition to traditional in-office assisted and DIY options, include:

- Tax Pro Go, which allows clients the convenience of having their taxes completed from start to finish by a tax pro, without ever stepping into an office.
- Tax Pro Review, which provides DIY filers the opportunity to have a tax expert review their documents and actual tax return, sign the return, and file it on their behalf, without coming into an office.
- Drop off, in which a client simply takes their documents to any H&R Block office, located within five miles of most Americans. An expert tax pro will prepare the work without the client having to be present and then let them know when their return is completed.

Consumers can get the personalized tax prep price from their local H&R Block office

Consumers can check out their local office to learn the price for tax preparation. H&R Block’s upfront, transparent prices are available at all company-owned offices and at participating franchise locations. More information on how H&R Block is transforming the tax experience for consumers is available at hrblock.com/transformation.

About H&R Block
H&R Block, Inc. (NYSE: HRB) is a global consumer tax services provider. Tax return preparation services are provided by professional tax preparers in approximately 12,000 company-owned and franchise retail tax offices worldwide, and through H&R Block tax software products for the DIY consumer. H&R Block also offers adjacent Tax Plus products and services. In fiscal 2018, H&R Block had annual revenues of over $3.1 billion with over 23 million tax returns prepared worldwide. For more information, visit the H&R Block Newsroom.

A photo accompanying this announcement is available at http://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/b091fedf-8e96-4d4c-bd71-747410f6b47c

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