

H&R Block's New Online `Drop-off' Service Revolutionizes Tax Preparation; It's Fast, Easy and a Tax Professional Does All the Work -- You Never Have to Leave the House

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KANSAS CITY, Mo.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 11, 2005--H&R Block (NYSE: HRB), America's tax expert for 50 years, today launches a new online product that will revolutionize tax preparation.

Available exclusively at hrblock.com, the new Online Drop-off service is ideal for busy taxpayers who want professional tax preparation, but who don't have the time to visit an office. Online Drop-off is a unique combination of online convenience and professional preparation, with the advantage of working with a trusted professional from H&R Block's nationwide network of tax professionals.

Facing tax law changes and increasing tax complexity, more and more taxpayers are seeking professional assistance -- the number of professionally prepared returns increased by about 4 million between 2002 and 2004, according to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Online Drop-off addresses this need by delivering full professional tax preparation via the Internet. The tax professional communicates with the client via email, chat or telephone until the tax return is complete.

Online Drop-off service is one of several new additions to www.hrblock.com, which today launches the Web's broadest range of tax products, services and free tools -- all designed to make tax preparation fast and easy, while helping the taxpayer get every possible credit and deduction.

"Our Web site is the ultimate tax-related destination because it offers a comprehensive range of products and services available to assist all taxpayers -- from the first-time user to a person with a highly complex return," said Kristin Gambill H&R Block's director of online tax products. "The site provides plenty of free tools and advice that make tax preparation quick, easy and accurate."

Just arrived - exclusive to hrblock.com:

- Premium States uncovers credits or deductions you didn't know existed, but could save you hundreds of dollars on your tax bill. Featuring videos and chat, e-mail or telephone consultations with live tax professionals, Premium States helps clients take advantage of obscure credits and deductions specific to their state. For example, New Yorkers will be alerted to the state's Earned Income Tax Credit, New York Household Credits and the New York City School Tax Credit.
- The Signature program provides validation for do-it-yourselfers who want to feel connected to their taxes and finances, but who also want a tax professional to ensure their returns are accurate and they have taken advantage of all possible credits and deductions. Signature clients complete a simple online interview to do their taxes, then send the return to a tax professional who checks for errors, signs and e-files the return to the IRS, thereby guaranteeing its accuracy and providing professional assistance in the event of an IRS audit.

BONUS: FREE Tax Forms Center and Resources at hrblock.com

In addition to the new online products, hrblock.com also features a tax forms center and FREE resources designed to help pen-and-paper taxpayers with their returns. Located under Advice and Learning on the hrblock.com home page, the Tax Forms Center helps do-it-yourself taxpayers select the appropriate tax forms and save money on their taxes by using the following tools and information:

- Smart Calculators - Budget, College, Retirement, Savings and Paycheck calculators answer the simplest to the most complex questions and also help users plan for the future by providing plainspoken and actionable advice.
- Educators & Planners - These tools explain financial issues and help users develop plans for budgeting, saving, managing credit, home-buying, paying for college, estate and retirement planning, and more.
- Life Events & Stages - A comprehensive list of life events shows users how a first job, first home, first child, and other key life events can change their taxes and finances.
- "Tax Planning 101" - A series of tools and information that offers users what they need to know about filing status and rates, dependents and family, important tax dates, and end-of-year tax tips.

"Our Web site delivers tax and financial expertise in plain English to help do-it-yourself taxpayers -- from those with the simplest to the most complex tax returns -- get the maximum refund while understanding their taxes and finances," Gambill said.

Only H&R Block combines the speed and convenience of technology with the experience and expertise that come with 50 years as America's premier tax company.

About H&R Block

H&R Block Inc. (NYSE: HRB)(www.hrblock.com) is a diversified company with subsidiaries that deliver tax services and financial advice, investment and mortgage services, and business accounting and consulting services. H&R Block empowers clients to make tax and financial decisions by providing a unique combination of tax services, financial information and advice, and related products and services. The company's mission is to help clients achieve their tax and financial objectives by serving as their tax and financial partner.

As the world's largest tax services company, in 2004 H&R Block served more than 21 million clients in the U.S. and 12 countries.

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