

# Estate Planning: Intuitive Estate Planner v.9

If you are in estate planning and are searching for a robust estate planning calculation program, Thomson West's Intuitive Estate Planner v.9 crushes its competition.

The program is divided into many helpful tabs. You can navigate through each set of tabs, which have a spreadsheet feel to them, and also generally track the federal estate tax return.

## Entering Client Information

You begin by indicating whether the client is single or married. The program offers a wonderful safeguard in presenting a citizenship query for each client or joint client, which dramatically can affect estate planning calculations because of the different exemptions applicable to noncitizens.

When entering client information, you can indicate up to three states to associate with a client or his or her assets for state estate or inheritance tax calculations. You continue through the "Client Data" tab by entering your client's family information. You can designate the relationship of each family member and add other beneficiaries, such as charitable organizations, under the "Other Heirs" tab. Under the

"Distributions" tab, you can define the basic distribution pattern to family members and other beneficiaries. You also can select equal distributions to all beneficiaries and denote

encompasses unique credits such as the foreign death tax credit and the previously taxed property credit. Other exciting aspects of this component of the program include a "State Adjustments" tab and an "Inheritance Tax" tab, which displays the calculation of state-level inheritance taxes for up to three states. The "Tax Choices" tab represents the final tab for entering primary client information. Here, you can choose how to allocate federal and state-level estate taxes, as well as entries regarding a client's generation skipping transfer tax planning under the "GST Tax" tab.

## Making Calculations

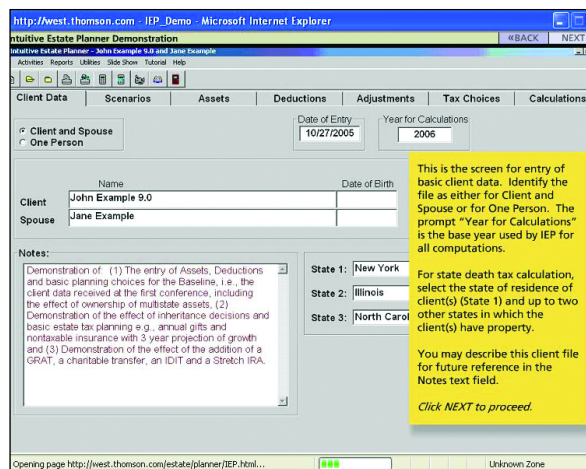
The aforementioned "Tax Analysis" tab generates the calculations for each client scenario. The output is intuitive, with assets, deductions, credits and the taxes payable listed in the appropriate order. You can summarize these numbers for viewing by clicking the "Condensed" tab.

The beneficiaries will be interested in the "Inheritance Analysis" tab. Like the "Tax Analysis" tab, the "Inheritance Analysis" tab shows what each beneficiary will receive after his or her payment of taxes is allocated and owed. The powerful aspect of this feature is the ability to illustrate how nontaxable transfers and certain advanced techniques can increase a beneficiary's share.

Charitable transfers also are shown if they are included in the planning scenario. New to the program are various features under the "Utilities" menu. For example, you quickly can calculate the federal estate or gift tax due using aggregate numbers, change the specifications for state estate and inheritance taxes, or enter a table for hypothetical federal estate tax rates and exemptions.

The Intuitive Estate Planner probably represents the most powerful estate planning calculation and illustration program on the market. Its power lies not in pure calculations; rather, it assembles a variety of techniques and a variety of plans. If your practice includes estate planning, you seriously should consider this program. **LOC**

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The Intuitive Estate Planner allows you to enter information for the client and spouse, and also for the client alone.

general legacies that should be assumed to grow until the surviving spouse's death. You even can define which beneficiaries should not bear any portion of the estate tax burden.

The program includes assumptions for future growth and financial needs. The "Estate Assumptions" tab sets the assumed growth rate for estate assets. The newer "Financial Assumptions" tab allows you to enter a variety of assumptions regarding a client's investment planning within the estate. These assumptions even include living expenses and the contemplation of Social Security benefits.

The "Scenarios" tab is central to the program's functionality. It defines each client scenario you create. By default, the first set of data you enter serves as the "baseline." If you want to change that scenario or add to the planning for a client, you can save a new scenario by a new name. You even can compare a variety of scenarios within the "Tax Analysis" tab under the "Calculations" tab. With the "Assets" tab, notice that each category of assets is divided according to their appropriate schedule within the federal estate tax return. The "Deductions" tab works exactly like the "Assets" tab. You enter expense, debt and loss information under this tab.

The "Adjustments" tab lets you indicate whether a client has made prior gifts, and

## Closing Argument

**Pros:** User-friendly graphical setup. It produces robust calculations. It can compare multiple techniques and scenarios. Excellent user guide.

**Cons:** Might be challenging for those not accustomed to using a spreadsheet-like program. More expensive than basic calculation programs.

**Verdict:** An excellent estate planning calculation and illustration program that can handle any technique or scenario intuitively.

## Intuitive Estate Planner v.9

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Price: \$895

Windows 2000/XP; 128MB  
RAM; 100MB hard disk  
space; CD-ROM drive.