

# The **4** TECHNOLOGY Best Money Managers

By Logan Kugler

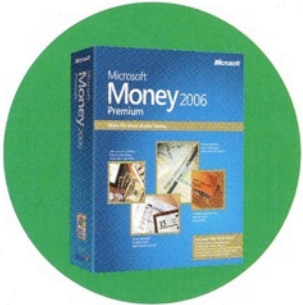
When it comes to keeping track of finances, most people still do it the old-fashioned way: no computer involved. But there are advantages to digitizing your financial records. First, with many software programs, tax deductions can be automatically calculated, adding up to big savings. Also, less paper pushing means more time. Plus, electronic setups are more accurate at showing where your money goes. Putting your finances into a computerized system gives you more control over your money and your time. Here's a look at the four best financial programs available today.



**Mvelopes Personal** Modeled on the “envelopes” system of budgeting used by previous generations, Mvelopes is an online budgeting service that can be accessed anywhere and any time you have an Internet connection. It works by linking to all of your financial accounts—everything from your checking and savings accounts to your credit cards—and automatically tracking those accounts in coordination with your preset budget for each spending “envelope.” By logging your transactions beside your yearly income, the service determines where you need to cut back and where you can spend more.



**Quicken Deluxe 2006** Known for its expansive bank of features, Quicken Deluxe 2006 is as good as it gets for the business-savvy individual seeking a program that will take care of everything: budgeting, taxes, investments, loans, expenses, and more. And because every aspect of the financial genre is integrated into one program, it makes it simple to manage each area and track your real-time net worth all at once. The program even makes preparing your taxes easy. (For the most comprehensive tax solution, however, look to TurboTax Premier.)



**Microsoft Money 2006** Like Quicken Deluxe, Microsoft Money takes care of everything from budgeting and investments to loans and expenses (excluding taxes). The 2006 release is an especially streamlined version. Whether you want to manage your 401(k), pay your phone bill, or even track your spending (in a similar way to Mvelopes), Microsoft Money 2006 can do it. It will even remind you when your bills are due through its built-in calendar. It's not as fast or reliable as Quicken, but it is easier to set up, and it's laid out in a way that is friendlier to the eye.



**TurboTax Premier** Programs like TurboTax make it so easy to file your taxes that it's hard to understand why anyone would do them any other way. Not only will it catch deductions you might have missed, but also your taxes may only take a mere hour or two to complete. That's because TurboTax handles everything from your yearly income tax to investments, rental property, 401(k)s, IRA contributions, and Schedule C income. What's more, TurboTax lets you file electronically and avoid those unpleasant late fees.