

GROWING YOUR FIRM BY MANAGING YOUR

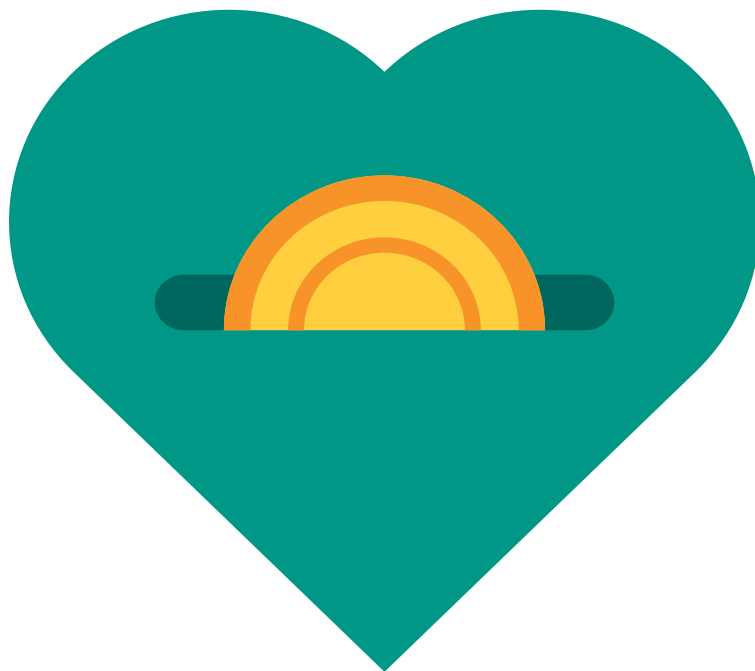


The Next Generation of Leadership

Why You Should Consider Having More Than One Website

NSA Poll Results: Do You Accept Credit Cards?

Accounting News and Updates



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**THE NEXT
GENERATION OF
LEADERSHIP**



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**GROWING YOUR FIRM
BY MANAGING YOUR
BRAND**



PAGE 12

**WHY YOU SHOULD
CONSIDER HAVING
MORE THAN ONE
WEBSITE**



Main Street Practitioner

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By Harlan Rose



Our NSA year is off to a good start. The first Board Meeting was held at Downtown Disney, Orlando in early October. Many “new faces” came to this meeting as your newly elected governors and officers. The appointed Administrative Chairs, who also gave their reports and planning ideas. Let me rephrase “new faces”—these active and dedicated NSA members are not new faces but they are serving in new NSA leadership positions.

The Education Committee met in Minneapolis in October to discuss and plan for your member education needs, for webinars, and the 2013 annual meeting CPE.

District I (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, and VT), II (DE, NJ, NY, PA, and PR), III (DC, MD, VA, and WV), and IV (FL, GA, NC, and SC) Governors held a multi-district networking event October 21-22 at Washington Dulles to exchange ideas among state officers, state directors, and executive directors to coordinate efforts between NSA and ASOs. I was one of the attendees monitoring the event which I would deem a success.

I just finished attending the Executive Director Conference, with executive directors of our state affiliates, and the 2012 Leadership Networking- Leadership Training-Legislative Strategy Conference that was held in St Louis, MO on October 25-28. Those in attendance included affiliate state organization leaders (executive directors, presidents, board members, etc.), state directors, NSA leadership, members, and staff. The topics cover leadership training and ASO administration and legislative strategy. Those NSA members who are involved in the planning and presentations informed and taught the “professional mission.” Thank you for sharing your talents.

Always remember the mission of NSA: NSA provides national leadership and helps its members achieve success in the profession of accounting and taxation through the

advocacy of practice rights and the promotion of high standards in ethics, education, and professional excellence.

The District IX (AK, CO, ID, MT, OR, WA, and WY), X (AZ, CA, NV, and UT), and XI (HI), Networking Event was held on November 3, in Phoenix, AZ. NSA is not sitting back but continually trying to fill the professional needs of its members.

The seminar season is now upon us for accounting and tax preparation advancement. Remember, if you need the RTRP certification, do your preparation through the tools NSA offers. If you are a smaller firm, pass the word and get involved with NSA because we are there for you. If you can sign up for the Mentor Program to build member relationships, do so. Be sure to go to the NSA website to find other NSA benefits. NSA is “your” member organization—use it.

Truly yours in NSA,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Harlan Rose". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Harlan Rose, EA, ABA
NSA President 2012-2013

LEGISLATIVE LINK

WHO SAYS NOTHING IS GOING ON IN THE WORLD OF ACCOUNTING?

Help May Be on the Way

AICPA

The AICPA has released for comment a proposed Financial Reporting Framework for Small- and Medium-Sized Entities (“FRF for SMEs”). According to the proposal, the framework is an option that is proposed for use by privately-held small- to medium-sized entities (SMEs) in preparing their financial statements. The FRF for SMEs is a less complicated and less costly framework of accounting for SMEs that do not require financial statements based on accounting GAAP. In other words, users of the FRF for SMEs would be preparing and presenting OCBOA-based financial statements.

The benefits of FRF for SMEs, according to the proposal, include:

- Disclosures are reduced, while still providing users with the relevant information they need.
- Familiar and traditional accounting methods are employed.
- Adjustments needed to reconcile tax return income with book income are reduced.
- The framework is a principles-based framework, usable across industries by incorporated and unincorporated entities.
- The framework contains less complicated, leaner, relevant financial reporting principles for SMEs.
- Only financial statement matters that are typically encountered by SMEs are addressed in the framework.

The FRF for SMEs is intended as a stable framework that will not undergo frequent changes.

Written comments should be sent to Robert Durak at rdurak@aicpa.org or mailed to Robert Durak, AICPA, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10036.

The NSA Accounting Standards Committee will be reviewing the proposal and making appropriate comments. Please let us know of any comments/concerns you have so that we can consider them for inclusion in NSA’s comments. Please send your comments to members@nsacct.org, with “FRF for SMEs” in the subject line.

A copy of the FRF for SMEs is available [here](#).



*John G. Ams, CAE
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FASB

The Financial Accounting Standards Board, by a 4-3 majority, has tentatively voted that under U.S. generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) it would be the responsibility of a company’s management to assert that there is substantial doubt about an entity’s ability to continue as a going concern. Currently, the auditor has this responsibility.

FASB members also decided to propose a new financial reporting model for management’s assessment of going concern and related disclosures. Under the model, at each reporting period, management has to assess the likelihood of the inability of an entity to meet its obligations in the ordinary course of business 12 months from the financial statement period end date. This would be expanded to 24 months if there are events or circumstances facing the company for which it is probable that they would not be able to make their obligations in the ordinary course of business, FASB members agreed.

Management would need to provide disclosures about its potential inability to continue as a going concern before there is substantial doubt. Those disclosures would be required when it is more likely than not that an entity may be unable to meet its obligations in the ordinary course of business within a reasonable course of time. In evaluating the need for this assertion, management would consider the effect of all management plans. In performing the assessment, management would consider existing events or conditions that may result in an entity’s inability to meet its obligations within a reasonable period of time.

The board is in ongoing discussions toward issuing an exposure draft in March 2013 on its viewpoint but has not yet decided on the following issues, which will be considered at its next meeting:

- applicability to nonpublic entities,
- further analysis of the nature of disclosures and its interaction with the management discussion and analysis for public companies,
- guidance on how management’s plans should be distinguished and considered, and
- effective date and transition.

FASB’s updates on this issue are available [here](#).



ConnectED WEBINARS

CPE Made Easy, Live or On Demand Webinars

Audit Reconsideration

November 6

2:00 PM EST (11:00 PST)

Sometimes our clients fail to timely respond to IRS examination notices. As a result the IRS makes an assessment and issues collection notices. This class will cover the option to seek audit reconsideration, as well as the taxpayer's options when the IRS denies their request for one. Learn: audit reconsideration rules, reopening substitute for return assessments, documentation pointers, taxpayer advocate assistance, and litigation rights post assessment.

CPE: 2 Hours/Taxes

Presented by Robert E. McKenzie, EA, Attorney

Non-Filer Representation

November 13

2:00 PM EST (11:00 PST)

This presentation will cover the best methods to represent your non-filing clients. We will discuss IRS investigation techniques, IRC Sec. 6020B returns and substitutes for returns (SFRs). You will learn: who might be prosecuted for non-filing and when, IRS priorities, IRS notice procedure, campus procedures for ASFRs, how many years to file, and case resolution techniques.

CPE: 2 Hours/Taxes

Presented by Robert E. McKenzie, EA, Attorney

IRS Correspondence Audits

November 27

2:00 PM EST (11:00 PST)

The IRS has more than doubled its level of examinations over the last several years. More taxpayers are becoming subject to correspondence audits. Learn how to assist the client and the Service in reaching a proper determination by knowing the best ways to respond to Correspondence exams. Also, learn the best ways to support your client's tax returns and appeal rights when the exam can not be resolved with the Compliance Center.

CPE: 2 Hours/Taxes

Presented by Robert E. McKenzie, EA, Attorney

Successfully Negotiating Offers in Compromise

December 11

2:00 PM EST (11:00 PST)

Over the past several years, the Internal Revenue Service has totally revised its system of offers in compromise. Practitioners must comply with increasingly complex rules for settlement of outstanding tax obligations.

CPE: 2 Hours/Taxes

Presented by Robert E. McKenzie, EA, Attorney

AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT



Robert McKenzie

Robert E. McKenzie is a Partner of the law firm of Arnstein & Lehr LLP of Chicago, Illinois, concentrating his practice in representation before the Internal Revenue Service and state tax agencies.

He has lectured extensively on the subject of tax representation. He has presented courses before thousands of CPAs, attorneys and Enrolled Agents nationwide. He

has made numerous media appearances including Dateline NBC and The ABC Nightly News.

REGISTER NOW

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3. Fill out each of the information fields on this page by clicking on the small icon to the right of each category. Each field must be filled out.
4. Be sure to click 'Save' when you are finished.
5. Click on the link at the bottom, 'Click here to view your mentor(mentee) profile'. Check to make sure you have included everything in your profile that you want to include. Ensure that your status is set to 'Participating' at the top of the profile page. Now you are ready to be matched with a mentor/mentee.

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The Next Generation of Leadership

By Jim Boomer

We are headed toward a massive transition in leadership at firms across the country as the current leadership gets closer to retirement. Some firms have already successfully transitioned, others are preparing, and then, there are those that don't yet have any plans in place. The transition discussion is abuzz at the conferences I've recently attended—both among attendees and speakers. And, tensions are high between the very generations whose roles are about to shift, which is extremely concerning.

THE STATE OF THE STATE

Current leadership often complains they can't find quality candidates to fill the pipeline. Pointing to a generation that doesn't want to put in the hours or work for it. They use words like lazy and entitled to describe them and say they waste time using technologies like mobile and social media. The younger generation uses terms like out-of-touch and archaic to describe the people they will succeed. They point to a need to do things differently to succeed in the future and some suggest throwing out the old model completely.

So who's right? I'll show you here how the correct answer lies somewhere in the middle.

LISTEN UP EMERGING LEADERS

I've been hearing an increasing number of people from my generation (the emerging partner group) spreading a message that the old model is antiquated and needs to be replaced by completely new thinking. I agree that we need to do things differently but a complete reboot isn't necessary. Emerging leaders need to step back and understand a few things about those that have come before us.

First, they have years of wisdom and professional experience that we can and should tap into if we are smart business people.

We also need to appreciate everything they've done to set up the opportunity that is currently ahead. It would not exist if not for the hard work they put in throughout their careers.

We need to realize it's hard to let go of something you've been doing your whole life. We may have to temper our expectations of how quickly we are going to ascend in the firm.

We also need to present our new ideas with respect and ask how they fit in with current leadership's view of the environment.

Finally, don't push too hard. This is an emotional transition that takes time. They need to work through it personally before they can work share the plan or roadmap with anyone else.

TIPS FOR CURRENT LEADERS

Seasoned professionals must think back to earlier in their own careers so they can better empathize with what the emerging professionals are thinking, feeling, and doing. A few years ago I listened to Bill Reeb speak on generations. He read an article to the audience that listed all the gripes current management had with the next generation. Only after the audience (made up mostly of seasoned professionals) had finished their wave of head nods in agreement did he reveal that the article was from many years ago and was actually written about the Baby Boomer generation. Truth be told, you've been in their shoes and, likely, someone judged your perceived intentions (or lack thereof) at some point in your career. So let's look for the positives that we can leverage to move forward toward a successful transition.

**FIRST AND FOREMOST,
THE UP-AND-COMING LEADERS
BRING A FRESH PERSPECTIVE
THAT IS IMPORTANT TO THE
FUTURE OF THE FIRM.**

First and foremost, the up-and-coming leaders bring a fresh perspective that is important to the future of the firm. They also bring new ideas and skills to the table as well; especially in the area of technology. Leverage these to the firm's advantage.

Open your mind to new ways of thinking and doing things. Consider how these ideas might fit into how you've traditionally done things.

Coach and mentor young professionals but also challenge them. This involves stepping back, which can be emotional and difficult to do but is necessary to the transition.

FINDING A MIDDLE GROUND...TOGETHER

Although Thoreau wasn't referring to the accounting industry when he said "things don't change, we change," I think this quote is a great way to approach the coming of ages. The sooner we stop throwing daggers at each other based on what the other perceives to be wrong and start focusing on the positive aspects we all bring to the table,

the quicker we can start blending our perspectives and planning the transition—together. This building tension and divide must stop. It will derail, delay, and even destruct the impending and important shift in leadership, and we must all come together now to ensure a successful transition.

Put an action plan in writing that spells out the transition timeline, what/when activities will be transitioned, and how approaches can be melded. This will probably require many emerging leaders to 'tap the brakes' and current leaders to 'hit the gas,' but working together, you can figure it out.

This article was originally published in the August 2012 issue of CPA Practice Advisor.



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Growing Your Firm by **Managing** Your

By Ray Bigley and Jennifer Warawa



Whether you are aware of it or not, you have been creating a personal brand your entire life. The clothes you wear, the type of work you do and who you do it for, the organizations you volunteer with, and even how you respond to an email contribute to your brand. That's because personal branding is about your *image*.

If you do not spend time developing your own unique image, what are the consequences?

Amazon's Jeff Bezos is famously attributed as saying: "Your brand is what people say about you when you leave the room." Branding means to characterize yourself and your firm or business so you can compete. As tax and accounting services become more commoditized by Big Box preparers and advisors, it is more important than ever to compete and to differentiate yourself with your own brand.

Now, the question is whether the brand you have established is the one you want. How do you know if it's working for you? Is it effective or do you need to "rebrand" yourself some other way? Ask yourself these questions:

- Am I doing what I love to do and what I am good at?
- Do clients and colleagues reach out to me for advice regarding my expertise?
- Who is my ideal client? Do the majority of my clients fit within this profile?

If you answered "yes" to these questions, your brand is probably well established and you can skip to the end of this article, which talks about promoting your personal brand. However, if you're interested in learning what you have to do to change the way you're perceived by clients, it's probably time for a change.

REFRESHING YOUR BRAND

Most companies take months or longer to figure out their brand. Disney didn't come up with its image of the happiest place on earth overnight; it took a period of many, many years for this to happen. Nike's swoosh isn't just an emblem; it's symbolic of a feeling of exhilaration or excitement you have when you buy a pair of Nike sneakers.

We know accountants have neither the time nor the resources and patience to spend years branding their

image. Most likely, you're thinking you can do this before or after busy season, in between filing deadlines, or maybe even before your last appointment of the day. Whatever path you choose to take, the point is to begin thinking *differently* about how you describe what you do and what you offer in order to make a long-lasting impact on your clients and prospects.

Personal branding starts with knowing your niche and discovering what separates you from the competition. This is based on your expertise, what you enjoy doing on a day-to-day basis, and who your ideal client is. Think about what differentiates you from your competitors.

Your niche could be anything:

- Accounting for the medical and dental industries
- Personal finance advisor for individuals
- Real estate accounting
- Risk management
- Forensic accounting
- Nonprofit audits

The industries and areas of expertise are endless. Identify yours from your skills and knowledge, and ensure they are part of your identity.

EVALUATE THE PERSONAL IN YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

Your brand extends beyond your professional expertise to your clothes, hairstyle, communication skills, and where you spend your time outside of work. Evaluate the following:

- The old adage, *you are what you wear*, is true. From photos posted online to the way you dress in the office, an unflattering presence can easily impact your personal brand.
- Good customer service and how you communicate

are huge. Audit yourself and your firm and examine even the smallest details. For example, how do you manage email—your primary, daily link to clients and colleagues? We are all inundated with emails and requests that can be overwhelming, but think about what kind of message you send by NOT responding. When you don't have time to answer the question an email poses, send a note back saying something like this: "Thanks for your note! I will go over your request and get back to you within 3 days. Should you need a reply sooner, let me know."

- Community and professional involvement and hobbies matter. The core values of the organizations you choose to align yourself with give others an impression of what is important to your brand. Your activity level with the organization also helps form your brand, but choose an organization that means something to you. Your commitment, interest, and involvement will naturally spill over to your professional image.

- Who you know and who you are connected with strongly influence your brand. Have you ever purchased something just on the recommendation of a friend or colleague? Your clients have, too. Networking with the right people is always the name of the game in terms of success.

Part of working on your personal brand includes looking for the gaps in your brand profile and making changes that will positively impact your image. When you know your personal brand, niche, and communication style, it's time to create a brand toolkit. This may sound intimidating, but you probably already have many, if not all, of the components of your brand toolkit. You just need to ensure they are consistent and reflect the brand you want.

CONTENTS OF A BRAND TOOLKIT

Brand toolkit essentials include your business card and your professional bio. Review these to ensure they reflect the image you want to portray. Your bio should be consistent on the firm's website, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and other social media, AND it should use language that reflects who you are. In this day and age of social networking, it is essential that your posts and updates on these sites also reflect this expertise.

USING YOUR BRAND TO SELL DIFFERENTLY

In the examples provided above, the point of creating your brand is to think differently about what you do in order to provide services beyond traditional tax and accounting. The final step in the process is promoting yourself. Social media provide unlimited personal brand building opportunities, but remember that how you market yourself has an impact on your brand. Touting your achievements rather than providing value-added information can do more to harm your brand than help it.

Remember: building a reputation takes time and energy, but it is an essential part of developing a unique edge and differentiating yourself among the competition. You'll know whether you've made an impact on clients and prospects when you begin to pick up new engagements.

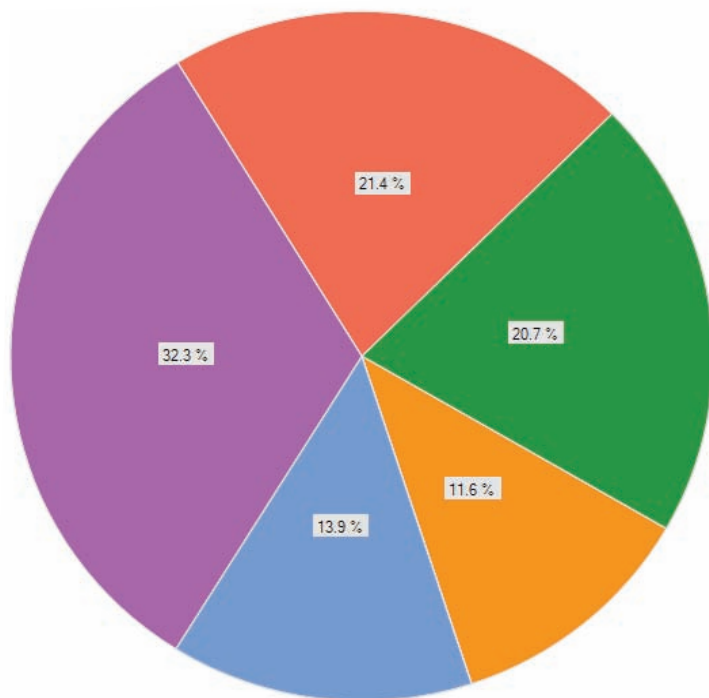


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NSA Poll Do you accept credit card payments?



11.6% Absolutely! More than half my clients pay with credit.

13.9% Sure do and more than 20% pay with credit.

32.3% Yes but less than 20% pay with credit.

21.4% No but I am thinking about it.

20.7% No and never will.

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HOT TOPICS AND TIPS FROM OUR TAX DESK

By Deborah Aiken, CPA, JD

CHANGING FROM A CORPORATION TO A PARTNERSHIP

An entity that is taxed as a C corporation or an S corporation cannot be changed to a partnership without creating a taxable event. This is true even if the underlying entity of the C or S corporation is an LLC. If a state corporate entity that is taxed as a C or S corporation is changed to a state LLC, there is no taxable event as long as the taxpayer continues to be taxed as a C or S corporation. The IRS does not care what is the underlying state entity, it only looks to the chosen tax entity.

UNDERPAYMENT PENALTY

To avoid an underpayment penalty, an individual taxpayer not only has to pay enough—90% of tax due or 100% of the prior year's tax (110% for higher incomes)—but it has to be paid in during the year. Taxpayers have to use the regular method, which is one-quarter of the tax due by each estimated payment date, or the annualized method on form 2210, which accounts for when the income was earned during the year. So taxpayers who owe no tax on their tax return can have an underpayment penalty if they earned their income throughout the year and only paid in the tax by withholding or estimated payments at the end of the year.

NEW STREAM-LINED FBAR REPORTING

There is a new IRS program for reporting foreign bank accounts that allows streamlined filing for non-resident US taxpayer (US citizens and green card holders) specially including dual citizens that allows them to use a streamlined filing, but only those who have not filed a US tax return since 1/1/2009.

FEE PAID TO DEBT RELIEF COMPANY

If individual taxpayers pay a debt relief company to have personal debt reduced, such as debt to credit card companies, the fee paid is not deductible. Also the fee paid to the debt relief company cannot be used to reduce the amount of cancellation of debt income. A 2009 Tax Court case, Robert F. and Joy Melvin v. Commissioner, determined that those fees were personal costs. This does not apply to debt relief fees paid by a business.

ANNUITIES HELD BY NON-NATURAL PERSONS

Section 72(u)(2) provides for the treatment of the income of annuities not held by individuals. It says that the income on the contract for any tax year will be treated as ordinary income received or accrued by the owner during such tax year. In other words, the income is not deferred.

WHY YOU SHOULD CONSIDER HAVING MORE THAN ONE WEBSITE



By Hugh Duffy

Most accounting firms have one main website to showcase their services, knowledge, and experience, but I've found that very few accountants even think about having additional websites dedicated to their areas of expertise or niche set of services.

While you might think it could be confusing for clients or prospects to have to visit more than one website, *the way you promote the individual websites* is key to attracting more business and increasing referrals from current clients. By creating niche websites, you create an entirely new way to push out information and pull in prospects.

Thomas J. Palm Jr. has an accounting, tax, and business advisory firm, Thomas J. Palm, PA, in Baltimore, Md., and, as part of the larger firm, a QuickBooks® consulting business. Originally, he used his firm's main website to market all of the firm services, but when Build Your Firm suggested he create an additional website dedicated to the firm's QuickBooks services, he jumped on it.

"Our niche QuickBooks website complements our main firm website by creating double the exposure in our local area for business clients searching for an accountant who also has expertise with QuickBooks," says Tom. "While it is difficult to pinpoint exactly which one of the two websites clients and prospects contact us from, the fact that we get calls and emails as a result of our efforts is fine by me!"

A niche website allows you to get more specific about the services you offer for that industry or service area without discouraging clients who may be interested in your broader services. Both websites cover similar topics, but the niche website drills down into more depth and is much more persuasive for the business owner who has a specific need or problem. And, the niche website is optimized for Google, Bing, and Yahoo, with content devoted to the specific industry or service. While there may be some overlap between the main website and the niche website, they have separate URLs or web addresses. For example, Tom's primary site is "www.thomasjpalm.com," while his QuickBooks website is called, "www.baltimoreqb.com."

FINDING YOUR NICHE

How do you determine what to highlight in a niche website? Take a look at your clients and services. What specialties do you offer? What industries do the bulk of your clients come from? Some examples of niche websites include:

Service Specific Niches

IRS Problem Resolution
Expat Tax Services
QuickBooks
Outsourced Controller

Industry Specific Niches

Faith-based Accounting
Nonprofits
Restaurants/Hotels
AgriBusiness/Farms/Wineries

The key is to differentiate yourself from your competitors. I can practically *guarantee* very few of your competitors ever think about creating an online presence over and above their main website. Keep in mind, too, that the website doesn't have to be big in depth and pages; it could be as simple as a 4-6 page website, or even a blog showcasing your expertise and your services, along with a background or experience tab and a link to your main website. However, it does need to be well organized, persuasive, updated and SEO (search engine optimization)-enabled.

Of course, you can have more than two websites depending on how many niche industries and services you want to promote. In Tom's case, his main website positions him and his team as a local accounting and tax firm. Searches using keywords such as "Baltimore Accounting firm" and "Baltimore IRS Tax Audit" generate lots of traffic to the main website, while searches for "Baltimore QuickBooks Accounting" drive traffic to the niche website. If Tom wanted to grow faster, he could either add another website, such as "IRS Problem Resolution," and/or add a blog to one of his existing websites.

BRANDING AND DESIGN OF TWO WEBSITES

Should the two (or more) websites have the same brand? The goal of having two websites is not to establish two different companies, but to enable clients and prospects

to find you by searching for the services they need. So, the look and feel of the websites, the logo, and the color scheme can be similar. It is the content and imagery of the website that are different.

Images appeal to your audience and are one way to easily distinguish and brand the different websites. A firm specializing in bookkeeping for physicians may use medical images, while one that works with contractors will use images of construction sites or equipment. Be sure to avoid copying and pasting images from the Internet that are copyrighted by their owners. Instead, subscribe to a photo service or sign up for iStockPhoto, a good source for relatively inexpensive images.

"In our case, the two website designs are similar, but not the same. We do not use our company logo on the niche website," says Tom. "Instead, we put more emphasis on our QuickBooks expertise on the second website, with images of our QuickBooks certifications and a menu that outlines our QuickBooks consulting and support services."

A MULTIFACETED ONLINE STRATEGY

Additional websites aren't the only way to grow your business and improve visits. A multifaceted approach to an online presence is essential because clients search for your services in more than one way.

"It's hard to say exactly how new clients find me on the Internet," says Tom. "I have had some say they found me through a particular medium, such as www.bookkeeping-help.com or our Facebook page. I guess the majority of clients initially find us on Google through one of two websites, do some research online by clicking on my LinkedIn page or Twitter page, and then decide to contact us because they can see we are a serious accounting firm that markets well. We also have online reviews to back up our reputation."

You should make sure your accounting firm is listed in the appropriate places on the web and that you are moni-

toring those listings. Here's a sampling of the websites you should consider being involved with:

[LinkedIn](#) – Whatever your profession, you should have an active individual LinkedIn profile for every employee with connections to business contacts, clients, and colleagues. Ask for recommendations so that people searching for you can get a sense of the level of service you offer. Actively promote your activities and pay attention to the new LinkedIn skill "Endorsements, where clients can endorse your work, based on specific skill sets."

[Facebook](#) – I don't recommend Facebook for business purposes for accountants. However, it is a fun tool for personal use, and the more you put the word out that you are an accountant, the more business-related results you might see.

[Twitter](#) – Twitter requires consistent use to be effective. If you have time and content to post on Twitter, try it out, but try to measure its effectiveness so you know whether it is a good use of your time.

[Yelp](#) – Yelp is an online directory to help individuals connect with local businesses. Whether you know it or not, you probably have a listing on Yelp. Make sure it is up to date.

[YouTube](#) – Did you know YouTube generates more searches than Yahoo and Bing? People search YouTube for free information on how to solve a problem or to seek advice on how to make more informed decisions—all without having to "read." Having videos available on questions your clients frequently ask can really help build your reputation and business.

Bookkeepinghelp.com – Through a zip code search engine, this subscription-based site connects local bookkeepers and tax practitioners with prospective clients.

The bottom line is this: You need a solid strategy to build business. Having more than one website is one of the easiest, most cost-effective methods. Ensure, however, that you update the website on a regular basis with fresh content. This helps with SEO, but also positions you as an expert in your respective niche.



*Hugh Duffy
Co-Founder and Chief Marketing Officer
Build Your Firm*

Hugh teaches a series of Accounting Marketing Workshops; has a LinkedIn Discussion Group called [Modern Marketing Methods for Accountants](#); and provides outsourced marketing for accountants. Contact him at 888-999-9800 x151, or at hugh@buildyourfirm.com.

ACAT NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR ABA, ARA, AND ATA EXAMS

Visit the NEW ACAT Website

The Accreditation Council for Accountancy and Taxation® (ACAT) is now accepting exam applications from accountants, tax preparers, and students seeking to earn the Accredited Business Accountant/Advisor® (ABA), Accredited Retirement Advisor® (ARA), Accredited Tax Advisor® (ATA), and Accredited Tax Preparer® (ATP) credentials. Upcoming 2012 exam dates are November 24–December 15.

ABA ACCREDITED BUSINESS ACCOUNTANT



ABA Exam The Comprehensive Examination for Accreditation in Accountancy (ABA) tests the technical proficiency of candidates in financial accounting, financial reporting, financial statement preparation, taxation, business consulting services, business law, and ethics. Emphasis is on a practical approach to public accounting. The exam is divided into two parts:

- Practice 1 consists of 100 multiple choice questions to be completed in 3½ hours. It covers financial accounting and financial statement preparation, presentation, and reporting.
- Practice 2 consists of 100 multiple choice questions to be completed in 3½ hours. It covers the following topics: taxation, business law, business accounting, and ethics.

THE ACCREDITED TAX ADVISOR®



ATA Exam The Accredited Tax Advisor exam is a 100–question multiple-choice exam. Questions follow a Job Practice Analysis that studies what tax preparers do, how often they perform each task, and how important they perceive the

task to be.

The ATA is a premier national tax credential for practitioners who handle sophisticated tax planning issues, including planning for owners of closely held businesses, planning for the highly compensated, choosing qualified retirement plans, and performing estate tax planning. Their expertise covers tax returns for individuals, business entities, fiduciaries, trusts and estates, as well as tax planning, tax consulting, and ethics.

THE ACCREDITED RETIREMENT ADVISOR®



ARA Exam The ARA examination is a 100 multiple-choice question exam that tests for a thorough knowledge of topics relevant to retirement planning and special issues facing senior citizens, including tax planning, and for decedents, estates, and trusts.

For testing information and more, visit the NEW ACAT website at <http://www.acatcredentials.org>.

NSA SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION IS NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2013 SCHOLARSHIPS

NSA Scholarship Foundation

Earning

Each year, the NSA Scholarship Foundation awards outstanding students with scholarships based on several criteria, including overall academic record, honors, demonstrated leadership and participation in school and community activities, work experience, stated goals and aspirations, and financial need.

Since 1969, the Foundation has provided nearly \$1 million in scholarships. Scholarship applications for the 2013-2014 academic year must be postmarked by March 10, 2013, and sent to Scholarship Management Services, a division of Scholarship America, which is managing the application process.

The scholarship application guidelines and additional information can be found online. [Click here to visit the NSA Scholarship Foundation Webpage.](#)

Please consider passing this information on to anyone in your area that would benefit from this opportunity.

Giving

The Scholarship Fund is the result of many generous contributions from individuals, businesses and organizations. A number of scholarships are awarded in honor or memory of these benefactors.

The Foundation welcomes special donations honoring an individual or commemorating a special event, as well as designated scholarships and grants. For more information on giving opportunities visit the Scholarship Foundation Webpage: <http://www.nsacct.org/Education/NSAScholarshipFoundation/tabid/6976/Default.aspx> or questions can be directed to Sally Brasse at sbrasse@nsacct.org.

WHAT IS HAPPENING ON MEMBERCONNECT THIS MONTH?

CONNECT, COLLABORATE, COMMUNICATE

MemberConnect

Discussions

Tax Talk continues to be a valued resource by NSA members. The discussion archives, with over 15,000 entries, offer a wealth of information to search through. Here are just a few of the most recent topics:

- IRS RTRP Exam
- Child Tax Credit
- Sales Tax on Home Sale
- Farm Income
- Foreign Wage Income Earned
- Hobby Income & Expenses
- Tax Implications for Hair Salon Workers

Resource Library

There are over 190 client letters in the Resource Library. Topics range from 2012 planning to new health care tax implications.

Separate libraries house sample tools and forms, such as engagement letters, and articles on practice management, tax, and accounting topics, as well as new technology information. Visit the Resource Library often to enhance your practice management needs.

NSA Blog

Become a blogger or share your current blog entries on the NSA website. We welcome members to share their expertise with fellow peers in this simple-to-use forum. Visit the NSA Blog page at: <http://connect.nsacct.org/NSACCT/Blogs/NSABlog/>.

Questions? Contact Claire Berlin at cberlin@nsacct.org or 703-549-6400 x1317.

MOBILENSA: DOWNLOAD THE NSA MOBILE APP TODAY!

MobileNSA



Download it today!

If you haven't already, be sure to add the NSA membership app, MobileNSA to your smartphone. The app, available for BlackBerry, Android, iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch, allows you to find and network with other NSA members, stay up to date with news and information, and view NSA events and happenings from the convenience of your phone or other mobile device.

DIRECTORY – Get quick access to your fellow NSA members. Search the directory by first name, last name, or company. Call and email fellow members directly from the app or touch their address to see their location on a map on your smartphone.

NEWS – Read the latest tax, accounting, and NSA specific news, stay connected with the NSA Twitter feed, read NSA staff and member blogs, and view new additions to the document libraries.

EVENTS – Stay on top of upcoming NSA events, including webinars, ASO events, committee meetings, and more.

DISCUSSIONS – Collaborate with other NSA members, ask questions, and get answers. Tax Talk and other discussion groups that you are subscribed to on NSA MemberConnect are available on MobileNSA. Once logged in, you can post new messages, reply to another member's messages, or simply follow discussions.

MESSAGES – View and respond to messages you've received from other NSA members on MemberConnect.

CONTACTS – Save NSA member contact information to your smartphone or mobile device address book. You can also call or email a fellow member directly from MobileNSA!

NSA PREPARES TO LAUNCH AN UPDATED WEBSITE

www.nsacct.org



We are excited to announce a new website is set to launch near the end of the year! While the overall look will be similar to what you are accustomed to, the new NSA website will offer a better user experience with quick and easy access to essential information specific to NSA as well as the latest industry news. This update is part of the association's ongoing efforts to enhance the quality and availability of information to members and tax and accounting professionals nationwide.

What Will Change

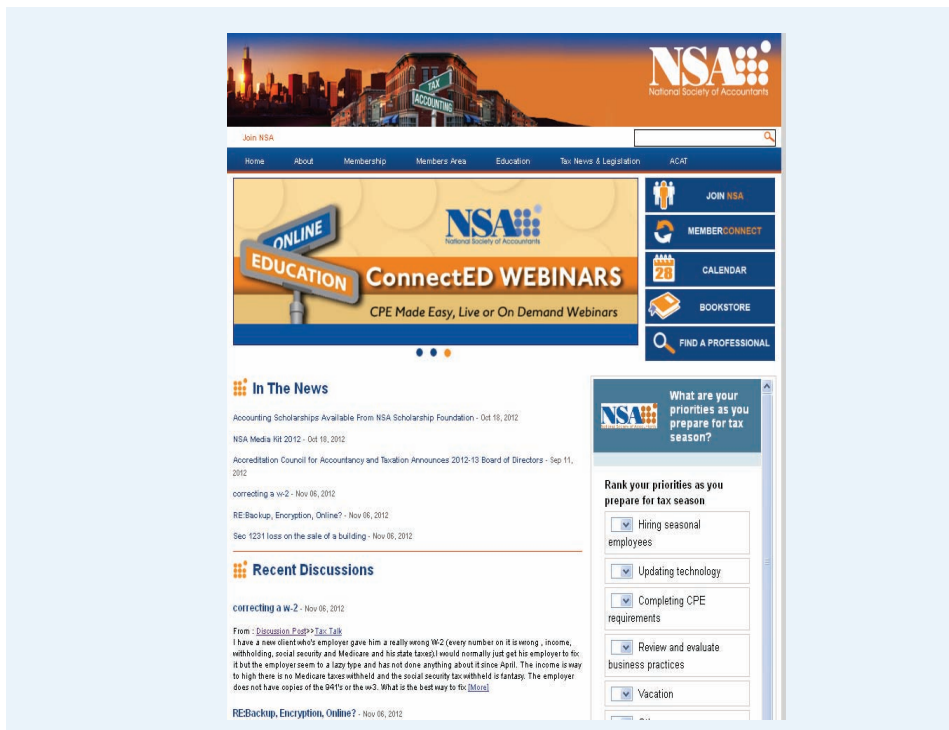
- ❖ The homepage will have a new design that makes visiting the most frequently used webpages easier with quick links, such as the buttons above.
- ❖ Finding what you are looking for will become quicker through more intuitive menu options.
- ❖ A rotating banner on the homepage will provide you with timely information on the latest promotions and events.

What Will Not Change

- ❖ The web address for the site will remain www.nsacct.org.
- ❖ NSA MemberConnect will remain the members area for the organization, and will not change.
- ❖ Your login information will remain the same.

If you have never logged into the website, your member benefits are waiting for you! Sign on today to make the most of your membership. If you need assistance, we are here to help. Contact Member Services at 1-800-966.6679.

Watch for more details to come on this exciting update!



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Boston, MA Sept 23–28
Chicago, IL Oct 7–12
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STUDY GUIDE

Written by subject matter experts, John O. Everett, Ph.D., CPA and Cherie J. Hennig, Ph.D., CPA, the NSA Registered Tax Return Preparer Exam Review Course is aimed at providing a thorough review of all the federal taxation topics and subjects outlined by the IRS.

PTIN

Visit the NSA webpage on PTIN information for the very latest information from the IRS, as well as everything you need to know about PTINs and keeping up to date. Find out more about obtaining a PTIN, renewing, and important deadline dates.

EXAM

NSA's website has a page dedicated to the latest information, to help you take the IRS competency exam...and pass. The Frequently Asked Questions is a great place to start. Watch the short webinar aimed at helping you dust off your test taking skills. A 5-Part RTRP Exam Review webinar series is also available.

CPE

As an IRS Approved Continuing Education Provider, NSA has all the tools you need to remain in compliance with the new requirements. The RTRP Exam Review webinar series provides up to 10 Federal Taxation CPE hours. Visit the RTRP Exam webpage for all the latest tips.

<http://connect.nsacct.org/RTRP/>

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