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ACCOUNTANTS *In focus*

BEST PRACTICES: MARKETING STRATEGIES
FOR ACCOUNTANTS



“Ready, fire, aim” is risky business. Now is the time to plan your marketing strategy, and the best place to start is lead generation.

Filling the funnel with prospective clients

When developing a marketing plan for your firm, you will be tempted to start at a dubious beginning — planning marketing programs and establishing a budget. You may start by describing your services and deciding how you want to communicate your offer to the public. Perhaps you will envision a newsletter, a website, webinar, some local advertising, or a new page on a social media site. You may dive in to the projects with unbridled enthusiasm. In fact, a study of best practices for marketing accounting services and firms, shows that starting at the *end*— identifying and studying pro-

spective clients, instead of starting with a focus on your message or program, is more likely to yield a regular flow of new clients faster. Why? First off....consider the timing. A well-designed, well-constructed marketing program, like a website or e-newsletter, may take weeks or months to design, launch, test. Whereas, a tightly planned lead generation campaign aimed at a particular target list of prospects can start yielding new clients immediately.

Secondly, consider the competition. If you address a market niche not well-served by your competition, you dominate that niche.



SERVICE INNOVATION

What's new? There is no industry more in need of innovation than financial services. Combine the nature of the current economy, the attack on personal savings, the roller-coaster ride of the stock market, and the erosion of trust in bankers, financial planners and other professional services in the world of money, and you have a compelling argument for innovation. Change something about what you do or how you do it and there's a competitive advantage. To be successful, such innovation is based on research and knowledge of prospective clients.



What do YOU do best? Find your niche....

"Jack of all trades and master of none." If you can't be good at everything, be great at one thing!

What is that **one thing** you do best? What do your clients **say** about you? **Why** do your clients return **to you** for advice year after year?

Capitalizing on that "singular focus" involves uncovering an un-met need by anticipating your client's financial challenges. Expanding your practice based on market need information is part science, part imagination.

Scientifically, you can factor an analysis of the market into a cohesive business plan with financial data that can project income and expenses. This data helps you decide if a particular service niche could fill the sales pipeline with prospects or if it looks more like a pipe dream. In your mind's eye, you can envision a future of satisfied clients, a growing business and you may achieve the fulfillment that comes with knowing that you've done a good thing for

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your clients and ultimately, for your community. Last year, in an article published in the Economic Times, "*Post recession, niche players growing the fastest: Deloitte*" (The firm ranks the 50 top fastest growing technology companies.) The top 3 were niche players averaging a growth rate of 1,617% over the previous three years. Your clients will need to know how technology will impact them. [Read Deloitte's TMT predictions, watch the video.](#)

MARKETING TOOLS:

The good, the bad, the ugly.

Search engine optimization...
website content...link building...
pay per click marketing...
professional and targeted
news releases...
click to call technology...
direct mail...email marketing
...Google Adwords...keywords.....
and more.

From lead generation to traditional and online marketing, how do you know what tools are most effective for growing your business? You don't.

There is no one answer. Create a plan to consistently, concisely and directly communicate your value to prospects and clients.



Free Marketing Consultation

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