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MARKETING YOUR FIRM FROM THE INSIDE OUT

There is a common thread running through the operation of a successful accounting firm and a successful sports organization. Both require teams that are committed to their organization's game plan, and coaches who inspire the players to give a 100 percent effort.

The challenge in a CPA firm is to create a culture where marketing is encouraged by the coaches and accepted by the players. Victory will come from the team's marketing efforts (the game plan). There are four main components to a successful game plan.

Demonstration. Don't expect staff to become excited about marketing activities if partners do not participate. Staff pays more attention to what partners do than to what they say, so the partners must be the role models.

We use a self-assessment form on which partners rate their involvement in certain marketing activities. This includes the amount of time they devote each month to learning about clients' businesses, how often they contact clients, whether they routinely obtain feedback on the value of our services, and whether they obtain input from their engagement teams regarding additional services clients may need.

Partners also rate their efforts to expand the firm's client base. Activities in this area include meeting regularly with referral sources to discuss business opportunities, attending trade association meetings and civic functions to make new acquaintances, and promoting their skills and expertise by giving speeches, making presentations, and writing articles.

The partner self-assessment form also covers internal marketing efforts. These activities include inviting younger members of the staff to various association and civic functions, recognizing and rewarding their marketing efforts, and maintaining an enthusiastic attitude toward marketing training and the enhancement of their own sales and marketing skills.

Information. People need to know what is expected of them if they are to perform up to expectations, and the information process should begin when staff is recruited. We let people know at the outset that our firm is marketing-oriented by discussing our "marketing career ladder" with them.

This document outlines specific marketing activities in which an individual is expected to engage during progression from staff accountant to partner. Upon successful completion of the CPA examination, for example, a staff accountant is required to learn about various community organizations and to join one of his or her choice. At this level, staff members become familiar with all of the firm's services by attending speaker forums and staff meetings, and by reading the various firm newsletters supplied them. They also attend in-house work-

What's Inside

shops on topics such as developing writing skills, client relations, the importance of quality service, listening skills, and communications. Everyone is expected to participate in the firm-wide brainstorming sessions.

With each career advancement, greater involvement in the firm's marketing activities is required. Seniors are expected to make contributions to the firm's newsletters by helping to create articles, and by forwarding technical information to the marketing director. They should also initiate discussion with partners regarding opportunities for cross-selling to clients.

Supervisors participate in the speaker forums at staff meetings, begin involvement in the firm's sales and marketing plans, accompany partners on certain sales calls, and attend client receptions, where appropriate. They also participate in workshops dealing with networking, establishing business relationships, and basic sales training.

Managers continue the above activities, but increase their involvement in the firm's sales and marketing teams. In addition, they attend workshops on topics such as giving effective feedback, stress management, advanced sales training, and client service.

Partners are engaged in all aspects of the above activities. They must also incorporate a sales or marketing topic into the training sessions at the annual partners meeting. Sometimes, outside speakers are required for these sessions. Partners must act as mentors to staff members who are working their way up the marketing career ladder. This requires a progressive and positive attitude about marketing.

Education. Professional and administrative staff need training to develop their marketing skills. We have a number of programs for this purpose. These include the speaker programs, staff meeting presentation programs, and our Toastmasters Club.

The Toastmasters Club provides a good environment in which to learn how to become a better speaker and how to think on your feet. At the staff meeting presentation program, we teach staff how to talk about the firm. This training is particularly important for the receptionist, who is frequently the person who makes a lasting impression on clients and potential clients. The basic idea behind these programs is to train people to listen and critique, to find out where they need help, and to give them sufficient training and follow up.

Motivation. Make marketing fun. Establish a formal recognition and reward program. Recognize people for their attempts, as well as their successes. We use internal newsletters and firm scrapbooks that contain items such as newspaper articles, motivational quotes, and photographs. We also maintain bulletin boards on marketing matters, and a library of motivational tapes and books.

Involvement in community events helps build team spirit. We participate in the annual corporate challenge, softball, and swimming events. These activities can even be turned into informal marketing functions —softball games with referral sources, for example. The events should be enjoyable. We encourage staff to devote a day to such activities. It's a good way to meet people.

All four components of the game plan (Demonstration, which covers partners as role models—Information, which examines how firms convey information to staff regarding their expectations—Education, which discusses ideas for training/educating staff to market the firm—Motivation, which deals with attitude adjustment) are necessary to develop a strong marketing culture in a CPA firm. ☑

—by **Julie A. Gaver**, *Keller, Bruner & Company, 201 Thomas Johnson Drive, Frederick, Maryland 21702, tel. (301) 663-8600, FAX (301) 663-0525*

Editor's Note: The Practicing CPA on Practice Development *(a collection of articles from the* Practicing CPA*) contains a number of ideas on both training staff in the practice development skills that are essential to becoming a partner and on the various ways to change partner and staff attitudes about marketing and selling services. To purchase the book, product no. 092100, cost $36.50, call the AICPA Order Department, (800) TO-AICPA. Ask for operator PC.*

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Editor: Graham G. Goddard

Highlights of Recent Pronouncements

GASB Statements of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board

No. 23 (December 1993), *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Refundings of Debt Reported by Proprietary Activities*

- ☐ Supersedes paragraphs 13 and 14 of National Council on Governmental Accounting (NCGA) Interpretation 9, *Certain Fund Classifications and Balance Sheet Accounts*, as amended by GASB Statement no. 7, *Advance Refundings Resulting in Defeasance of Debt*.
- ☐ Establishes standards of accounting and financial reporting for current refundings and advance refundings resulting in defeasance of debt reported by proprietary activities—that is, proprietary funds and other governmental entities that use proprietary fund accounting.
- ☐ Requires, for current refundings and advance refundings resulting in defeasance of debt reported by proprietary activities, that the difference between the acquisition price and the net carrying amount of the old debt be deferred and amortized as a component of interest expense in a systematic and rational manner over the remaining life of the old debt or the life of the new debt, whichever is shorter.
- ☐ Effective for financial statements issued for periods beginning after June 15, 1994. Earlier application is encouraged.

No. 22 (December 1993), *Accounting for Taxpayer-Assessed Tax Revenues in Governmental Funds*

- ☐ Amends:
  1) Paragraph 67 of NCGA Statement 1, *Governmental Accounting and Financial Reporting Principles*;
  2) The AICPA's 1974 Industry Audit Guide *Audits of State and Local Governmental Units*;
  3) Statement of Position (SOP) 75-3, *Accrual of Revenues and Expenditures by State and Local Governmental Units*.
- ☐ Requires revenue from taxpayer-assessed taxes, such as sales and income taxes, net of estimated refunds, to be recognized in governmental funds in the accounting period in which they become susceptible to accrual—that is, when they become both *measurable* and *available* to finance expenditures of the fiscal period.
- ☐ Effective for financial statements for periods beginning after June 15, 1994. Earlier application is encouraged.

No. 21 (October 1993), *Accounting for Escheat Property*

- ☐ Supersedes NCGA Interpretation 9, *Certain Fund Classifications and Balance Sheet Accounts*, paragraph 11.
- ☐ Changes the manner in which governmental entities should report the escheat property that will be reclaimed and paid to claimants.
- ☐ Establishes standards for the fund type to be used to report escheat property and for reporting liabilities and interfund transfers relating to escheat property.
- ☐ Applies to all state and local governmental entities.
- ☐ Requires escheat property generally to be reported in either an expendable trust fund or the fund to which the property ultimately escheats.
- ☐ Effective for financial statements for periods beginning after June 15, 1994. Earlier application is encouraged.

No. 20 (September 1993), *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Proprietary Funds and Other Governmental Entities That Use Proprietary Fund Accounting*

- ☐ Amends NCGA Statement 1, *Governmental Accounting and Financial Reporting Principles*.
- ☐ Provides interim guidance on business-type accounting and financial reporting for proprietary activities, pending further GASB research that is expected to lead to the issuance of one or more pronouncements on the accounting and financial reporting model for proprietary activities.
- ☐ Effective for financial statements for periods beginning after December 15, 1993. Earlier application is encouraged.

No. 19 (September 1993), *Governmental College and University Omnibus Statement*

- ☐ Amends GASB Statement nos.:
  1) 10, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Risk Financing and Related Insurance Issues*;
  2) 15, *Governmental College and University Accounting and Financial Reporting Models*.
- ☐ Provides guidance on the appropriate fund group classification for Pell grants and on risk financing activities reported in a single fund by governmental colleges and universities that follow the AICPA College Guide model, as described in Statement no. 15.
- ☐ Requires governmental colleges and universities that follow the AICPA College Guide model to report Pell grants in a restricted current fund.
- ☐ Requires that if a single fund is used to account for risk financing activities, that fund should be reported as an unrestricted current fund.
- ☐ For Pell grants, this Statement is effective for financial statements for periods beginning after

June 15, 1993. For risk financing activities, this Statement is effective for financial statements for periods beginning after June 15, 1994. Earlier application is encouraged.

Statements of Position

No. 93-8 (December 1993), *The Auditor's Consideration of Regulatory Risk-Based Capital for Life Insurance Enterprises*

- ☐ Amends AICPA Industry Audit Guide *Audits of Stock Life Insurance Companies*.
- ☐ Addresses the auditors' responsibility that arises from the risk-based capital requirements imposed on life insurance enterprises.
- ☐ Effective for audits of life insurance enterprises' financial statements for periods ending after December 15, 1993.

No. 93-7 (December 1993), *Reporting on Advertising Costs*

- ☐ Provides guidance on financial reporting on advertising costs in annual financial statements.
- ☐ Requires:
  1) Reporting the costs of all advertising as expenses in the periods in which those costs are incurred, or the first time the advertising takes place, except for direct-response advertising *(a)* whose primary purpose is to elicit sales to customers who could be shown to have responded specifically to the advertising and *(b)* that results in probable future economic benefits (future benefits);
  2) Reporting the costs of direct-response advertising *(a)* whose primary purpose is to elicit sales to customers who could be shown to have responded specifically to the advertising and *(b)* that results in probable future benefits as assets;
  3) Amortizing the amounts of direct-response advertising reported as assets, on a cost-pool-by-cost-pool basis, over the estimated period of the benefits;
  4) Disclosure of certain information.
- ☐ Amends Statements of Position:
  1) 88-1, *Accounting for Developmental and Pre-operating Costs, Purchases and Exchanges of Take-off and Landing Slots, and Airframe Modifications*, paragraph 22;
  2) 89-5, *Financial Accounting and Reporting by Providers of Prepaid Health Care Services*, paragraph 54;
  3) 90-8, *Financial Accounting and Reporting by Continuing Care Retirement Communities*, paragraph 15.
- ☐ Applies to not-for-profit organizations.
- ☐ Effective for financial statements for years beginning after June 15, 1994. Earlier application is encouraged in fiscal years for which financial statements have not previously been issued.

No. 93-6 (November 1993), *Employers' Accounting for Employee Stock Ownership Plans*

- ☐ Supersedes SOP 76-3, *Accounting Practices for Certain Employee Stock Ownership Plans*, and affects certain FASB Emerging Issues Task Force consensuses.
- ☐ Provides guidance on employers' accounting for employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs).
- ☐ Applies to all employers with ESOPs, both leveraged and nonleveraged.
- ☐ Brings about significant changes in the way employers report transactions with leveraged ESOPs.
- ☐ Contains guidance for nonleveraged ESOPs.
- ☐ Addresses issues concerning pension reversion ESOPs, ESOPs that hold convertible preferred stock, and terminations, as well as issues related to accounting for income taxes.
- ☐ Contains disclosure requirements for all employers with ESOPs, including those that account for ESOP shares under the grandfathering provisions.
- ☐ Effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 1993. Earlier application is permitted.

Statement on Standards for Attestation Engagements

No. 3 (December 1993), *Compliance Attestation*

- ☐ Provides guidance for engagements related to management's written assertion about either:
  1) An entity's compliance with requirements of specified laws, regulations, rules, contracts, or grants or;
  2) The effectiveness of an entity's internal control structure over compliance with specified requirements.
- ☐ Effective for engagements in which management's assertion is as of, or for a period ending, June 15, 1994, or thereafter. Earlier application is encouraged.
- ☐ EXCEPTION: Effective for engagements to perform agreed-upon procedures to test a financial institution's compliance with specified safety and soundness laws in accordance with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act of 1991, this Statement should be implemented when management's assertion is as of, or for a period ending, December 31, 1993, or thereafter.

Your Voice in Washington

Congress aims to reform home-office deduction and subchapter S; AICPA supports bills

Members of Congress took aim at two troublesome areas of the tax code for small business owners when they introduced bills to liberalize the home-office deduction and modernize the rules under which S corporations operate.

The AICPA endorsed the proposed legislation to liberalize the home-office deduction and applauded introduction, in the U.S. House of Representatives, of a companion bill to the S corporation reform bill introduced last fall in the Senate (see the *Practicing CPA*, January 1994).

Concern arose about the availability of the home-office deduction after the U.S. Supreme Court handed down a decision last year that restricted the conditions under which the deduction can be taken.

In *Commissioner* v. *Soliman*, the Court raised serious questions as to whether a deduction is allowable unless 1) the customers of the home-based business physically visit the home office and 2) the business revenue is produced within the home office.

In letters to the bills' sponsors, Rep. Peter Hoagland (D-NE) and Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT), the AICPA said it believes the proposed legislation "upholds the original intent of the home-office deduction, but provides standards that reflect the realities of the business world."

Under the legislation, H.R. 3407 and S. 1924, a home-office deduction would be allowed in circumstances where management activities carried on from the home office are a significant part of the entire business.

In a related action, the IRS has now issued guidance in Revenue Ruling 94-24 illustrating how it will apply the *Soliman* decision. Revenue Ruling 94-24 appeared in *Internal Revenue Bulletin 1994-15*, which was dated April 11, 1994.

S corporation reform

The AICPA's long-time effort to assist more than 1.5 million of the nation's small and family-owned subchapter S businesses moved another step forward with the introduction of H.R. 4056 in the House by Rep. Hoagland. Like its AICPA-backed counterpart in the Senate, S. 1690, the House bill would open up new sources of investment and simplify the rules under which S corporations operate. The two bills are identical except for their effective dates.

The bills would make S corporations more attractive investment vehicles for venture capitalists, make it easier to pass on family-owned businesses to younger generations, and remove traps and unnecessary tax burdens that cause small business owners to avoid forming S corporations. ☑

Conference Calendar

Tax Symposium*
June 3–4—Brown Palace, Denver, CO
Recommended CPE credit: 11 hours

Conference on the CPA's Role in Matrimonial Disputes (formerly the National Conference on Divorce)
June 6–7—New Orleans Marriott, New Orleans, LA
Recommended CPE credit: 16 hours

Women and Family Issues
June 13—Sheraton New York, NY
Recommended CPE credit: 7 hours

CPA and the Older Client
June 20–21—Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco, CA
Recommended CPE credit: 16 hours

MICRO94: The AICPA Microcomputer Technology Conference
June 26–29—Bally's Casino Resort, Las Vegas, NV
Recommended CPE credit: 24 hours

National Accounting & Auditing Advanced Technical Symposium
June 27–28—Ritz-Carlton, Buckhead, Atlanta, GA
July 28–29—Desert Inn, Las Vegas, NV
Recommended CPE credit: 16 hours

Not-For-Profit Conference
July 7–8—Grand Hyatt, Washington, DC
Recommended CPE credit: 16 hours

Practice Management/Firm Administration*
July 25–27—Loews Coronado Bay, San Diego, CA
Recommended CPE credit: up to 27 hours

Health Care Conference
July 25–26—Bally's Casino Resort, Las Vegas, NV
Recommended CPE credit: 16 hours

Estate Planning Conference
July 27–29—The Minneapolis Hilton & Towers, Minneapolis, MN
Recommended CPE credit: 24 hours

To register or for more information, call the AICPA CPE division, (800) 862-4272.

*For more information, call the AICPA meetings and travel department, (201) 938-3232.

Developing a Computer Strategy for a Small Firm (Part 2)

The first part of this article, in the March 1994 Practicing CPA, *dealt with developing a strategy regarding basic computer hardware purchases to avoid acquiring inappropriate or unnecessary equipment. This part will focus on commonly used programs, and will also look at some optional packages so you can see how they might apply in your practice.*

Necessary software

Following are the five main types of computer programs commonly used in CPA firms.

Wordprocessing. Two comparably priced products which are well-suited to a CPA firm's needs dominate this market. They are *WordPerfect* version 5.1 by WordPerfect Corporation, and *Word* 5.5 by Microsoft Corporation. My preference is to stay with the industry leaders when buying this type of software. It is easier to get the needed support and training.

Spreadsheets. The three major products are *Lotus 1-2-3* versions 2.3, 3.1 +, and Windows version 2.1; Borland's *Quattro Professional* version 3.0; and Microsoft's *Excel* version 3.0. All these products offer the same basic capabilities in numeric calculation, database management, and graphic design, but differ significantly in their method of operation. Therefore, if you learned spreadsheet operation on *1-2-3* version 1.0, stay with *Lotus* or try *Quattro*. If you are new to these programs, we recommend *Excel* as the product of choice. You might want to check which programs other firms in your area are using.

Income tax projections. Since the advent of personal computers, tax projections have been one of the tasks CPA firms seek to computerize. Popular tax projection programs include *Tax Minimizer* by Sunrise Software; *IRIS* by IRIS, Inc.; and *BNA Income Tax Spreadsheet* by BNA. Choose the product that is the easiest to use in your practice.

Time and billing. There are numerous time and billing programs ranging from simple stand-alone products, such as *Timeslips III* version 4.0 which sells for under $200, to software written to run on local area networks (LANs), such as *T-Bill*, from Network Systems, which costs $1,500 for most installations. The high-end products offer more flexibility in producing bills and analyzing information from the system. The key to using this software is to capture time at the source.

General ledger (write up). Many general ledger packages are regularly updated with new features, such as help windows, menus, and hotkeys. The prices vary widely. *Peachtree Complete*, for example, which is a complete accounting system, sells for under $199. *Axcent*, on the other hand, costs about $1,500, depending on the options purchased.

The Peachtree product is a good, basic, general ledger package. Straightforward and easy to set up, it can be used by clients as well as by CPAs. *Axcent* is aimed at the CPA firm and includes many time-saving ways to enter large amounts of data quickly. It also contains the best financial report generator I have come across. I recommend both packages, but if your budget permits, purchase *Axcent*.

Optional software

Let's quickly look at some other packages so you can see how they might apply to your firm.

Income and estate tax preparation. If you process over 500 returns a year, in-house preparation is clearly the way to go. It offers quicker turn-around and a high degree of control over the final product (in fact, more control over your tax season). There is more up-front cost involved than when you use a service center, however, and you need a good laser printer, a fairly fast copy machine, and trained personnel to enter the data and assemble the finished return. Products range from *TurboTax* from Chipsoft at the lower end to *Lacerte* and *A-Plus* from Anderson Consulting at the high end. Input forms and processing methods differ, so review the products carefully.

Depreciation and amortization. One way to handle the running of multiple-depreciation methods is via a spreadsheet template. But most practitioners who deal with a large number of assets prefer a stand-alone program. *Best Software Depreciation* is a popular package which allows many types of calculations using various methods. It is, however, time-consuming to set up each asset, and it requires accurate knowledge of federal and state law to set it up properly. The new, easy-to-use *AICPA Depreciation* calculates depreciation for six separate reporting bases, automatically recalculating as information changes.

Audit assist. Two popular products that assist in the preparation of audit workpapers and financial statements are the AICPA's *ATB* package and Sequel/McGladrey's *ACE*. The products also perform analytical review procedures and other audit-related tasks. We have found the packages helpful in repetitive areas such as posting adjusting journal entries, footing trial balances, and calculating various ratios. Product prices range from $400 to $8,000, depending on the options selected.

E-Mail. The implementation of electronic mail on a local area network can really improve office productivity. Administrative staff can input detailed messages from clients to a computer, so you can retrieve them at a later date for review. In addition, you can leave messages on staff computers after working hours, or be informed who is on hold while you are talking on the telephone. Two popular packages are *Notework* from Notework Corporation, Inc. and *CC:Mail* from Lotus Corporation.

Desktop publishing. The ability to generate in-house newsletters is the prime application of desktop publishing software for CPAs. The packages produce excellent products but can be expensive and difficult to master. Top-of-the-line word processing programs contain many of the same features.

Forms design. This type of software can be used to produce the various forms your firm uses in its operations. The products are accurate and look professional, but it is time consuming to master the complexities of this type of software.

Tax research library. The Internal Revenue Code, IRS regulations, rules, and interpretations are now available on CD-ROM at nominal cost. In addition to saving library space, filing weekly updates is no longer necessary. ☑

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Using E-Mail Effectively

Another "Techi gadget or a productive tool?" The article, "Developing a Computer Strategy for a Small Firm (Part 2)" on page 6, lists electronic mail (E-Mail) packages as optional software that can improve office productivity. Although initially viewing it as a gadget, W. Thomas Cooper, a Louisville, Kentucky, practitioner, says he soon observed that the product saves considerable time by eliminating extraneous conversation when someone desires a quick answer to a simple question.

"While we all want to be sociable and courteous to our colleagues," he explains, "oral communication can result in needless chatter. E-Mail reduces the time this consumes."

Ronald W. Stewart, who practices in Monroe, Louisiana, says, "We use E-Mail on our network (Futurus Team) and have eliminated the need for message slips. We use the scheduling and calendar functions, store phone numbers and addresses, and are most pleased with the product." Mr. Stewart guesses at an efficiency gain of 5 percent to 7 percent.

Abram J. Serotta says there are twenty-six full-time and part-time employees at Serotta Maddocks Evans & Co., and that the Augusta, Georgia, CPA firm uses E-Mail extensively. Mr. Serotta says the system—Futurus Team on a Novell network—has increased efficiency and boosted staff and partner attentiveness and satisfaction. He explains that

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Letters to the Editor (Sole Practitioners' Experiences)

A note at the end of the article, "A Sole Practitioner Reflects on Changes," in the January Practicing CPA, *encouraged other sole proprietors to share their experiences. Following are two letters from readers.*

I have been a sole practitioner for more than twenty-five years and agree with most of the comments in Mr. Trapani's article. I don't agree about in-house tax preparation, however. Now that I've gone in-house, I find I spend much of my time on details such as computer memory, software bugs, crashes, data backup, toner cartridges, and printer paper. Consequently, I now have less time to focus on tax issues and client needs.

I agree that quick turnaround is nice, and no-charge reruns are a plus. I suspect that for me, though, the total cost of in-house tax preparation is greater than the cost of service-bureau preparation. Although I now spend less for software than I used to pay in service-bureau fees, the savings is absorbed by new costs. These include the costs of maintaining and operating the computer and printer, and the costs of collating and stapling returns.

I'm inclined to think that in-house tax preparation is better for larger firms than for small ones. Large firms can justify hiring personnel to maintain and operate computers and printers and collate and staple returns. Small firms can't.

Small firms should farm out as many computer and clerical tasks as possible to enable key personnel to focus on true professional work. Some accountants like messing around with computers. I certainly do. But that activity shouldn't be confused with productive, professional work.

—**George W. Carlyle, CPA,** *P.O. Box 9157, Newport Beach, California 92656-9157, tel. (714) 955-3449*

In response to Mr. Trapani's request for dialog concerning the issues facing sole practitioners, I would like some recognition for those of us who have no professional employees. We have a unique problem. We lack having another professional in our firms to review work, check out our view of a situation, or to respond to queries on tax and other topics. I would like to be involved with a small group (preferably local), that would facilitate such exchanges for our mutual benefit.

—**Doris Stamper, CPA,** *Suite 304, 4300 Evergreen Lane, Annandale, Virginia 22003, tel. (703) 354-5010, FAX (703) 354-5802*

Using E-Mail Effectively
(continued from page 7)

Futurus is activated by hitting a "hot button," the apostrophe key, which allows a choice of one or several menu items, many of which the firm uses.

All of the firm's computers have E-Mail available, so a message can be sent to one person or to a group, such as to all managers or partners. The computers are configured to emit a beep on receiving a message and post an "E-Mail waiting" sign on the screen. Users review their E-Mail periodically.

Mr. Serotta says most messages are sent by E-Mail. He says it is a good way to notify individuals who are on the telephone of the arrival of someone with whom they have an appointment, or to let someone know that you would like to meet with him or her at a certain time. Staff also uses E-Mail to obtain decisions on items that have held up completion of work. For example, a member of the staff might E-Mail questions such as "Do we take IRC Sec. 179 on this return?" or "To whom shall I deliver the return?"

E-Mail has saved the firm time another way. Instead of someone walking in from a different part of the premises and having to wait outside a partner's office because a meeting has run longer than expected, he or she can simply send an E-Mail message, "When you are out of your meeting, let me know. I just need a quick answer to a question."

Mr. Serotta says some members of the firm use the E-Mail function to maintain a "to do" list. For example, a partner might send a memorandum by E-Mail to a member of the staff about a certain task, and only remove his own copy of the memorandum from E-Mail when the task has been completed.

Other Futurus menu items used at Serotta Maddocks & Evans include

P-Mail which logs phone messages in the order in which they are received. On leaving the office, firm members can print their P-Mail entries and use a car phone to return calls. This feature serves as a reminder to return calls in a timely manner.

Print Q which allows users to switch between laser printers. For example, they might want to use a printer that holds extra paper for tax returns, one that contains particularly good quality paper for a client presentation, or a printer that is in a more convenient location. ☑

Editor's note: The AICPA information technology membership section will soon be releasing an article in its newsletter that further explores E-Mail systems. For information about the publication, InfoTech Update, *contact Nancy Cohen at the Institute, (212) 596-6010.*

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