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Jason Lawhorn, CPA – 32

Operations Principal, Lawhorn & Associates, PLLC, Knoxville, TN

**EDUCATION:** Master of Accountancy; BS — University of Tennessee – Knoxville

**FAMILY:** “Soul-mate extraordinaire” (wife) Stacy and his awesome sons Michael, Jeremy and Jacob (a.k.a. his “football team”)

**HOBBIES & INTERESTS:** enjoys playing and writing music, fly fishing, and traveling with the family

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:** TSCPA, AICPA, Boomer Technology Circles

**What’s the one piece of technology that MOST helps you get through your normal workday?**

“We use so much technology throughout the day. If we were allowed to include software, it would absolutely have to be the integrated software suite we use. We couldn’t be as good as we are at what we do without Thomson CS programs. As far as hardware, the Fujitsu ScanSnap S500 Desktop Scanner is by far the best hardware investment we’ve made this year.”

**What will be the biggest change over the next five years in the ways tax and accounting firms operate?**

“The most significant change in the next five years is the way accounting firms will communicate with their clients and third parties; and the way accounting firms will value and bill the services they provide. Portal technology, XBRL, OCR technologies, integrated software and web solutions are currently in the process of revolutionizing the way firms communicate value to clients. Some

firms have already jumped in headfirst just as we have made the plunge. Others

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communication. The old adage 'knowledge is power' has never been more true than today. How do we as accountants, the bean counters that we are perceived to be, provide true value or knowledge to our clients? By employing the most efficient communication possible.

"In the past, our communication abilities were stifled by the back and forth and the process of accounting. And maybe even the 'black-box of accounting.' In the environment today, we have the ability and the responsibility to open up the black box and show our clients what is inside that box — show our clients why the contents are so important and how each of them can become better business people by using the tools and information we can put at their fingertips through efficient communication.

"Some practitioners will scoff at the idea of opening the box and building efficient lines of communication. Those practitioners will provide little value to their clients. Our clients, however, will have a better understanding of what the accounting profession does for them on a daily basis. Our clients will be empowered to be better business people, making better decisions with our assistance, and watching their businesses grow successfully.

"Employing efficient lines of communication, those practitioners that provide it, will have no choice but to change from the old hourly standard of billing to the new value-based system of billing for the services and communication they provide. The old way of gathering data and providing information may take more time, and it may be a more cumbersome process, but that does not mean that it holds more value than the new way of zero data entry, one-fourth the time commitment and one-fourth the delivery time. On the contrary, the knowledge that is communicated in a fraction of the time holds more value and should be billed for accordingly.

“It is not easy or comfortable to change business practices that have

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### **What Jason's peers had to say about him:**

Jason has been integral in his firm's success, with a vision for growth that centers on technology. Lawhorn & Associates is a family owned business, and Jason has helped the firm significantly expand client services and elevate efficiency to unprecedented levels via online, integrated processes. For example, Lawhorn & Associates provide payroll services that are offered completely online, which translates to increased profitability and ultimate convenience for their clients. As operational principal and technology guru, Jason has led his firm's transition from paper-based to paperless processes, which have not only elevated profits and productivity, but have also enhanced the client-accountant relationship. Recognized as a leader in the profession (and his firm as a model for efficient workflow processes), Jason is viewed as a technology expert by his colleagues and has become a sought-after speaker.

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Technology

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