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**Kristy Short** • Sep. 30, 2013



If there's one thing Charlie Jones, CPA has learned after years of managing his accounting firm, it's that working with technology is an art.

"You can't just adopt stand alone applications here and there, you have to envision a complete *system* and how disparate technologies fit together to support end-to-end digital processes," stated Jones. "It's an art that has taken me years to understand."

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accounting firm.

His insight into technology and how to piece the right applications together for maximum workflow productivity not only advanced his firm's operations, but enabled him to launch OnDemand Accountant and enter the growing Virtual Accounting arena.

"I've learned a great deal over the years in relation to the technologies required to run an efficient operation," stated Jones. "I took this knowledge and launched OnDemand Accountant, a service where clients outsource their accounting work to us, while always staying connected because work is completed within our online, collaborative platform. Clients love it!"

His Virtual Accounting service was just the start for Jones. He recently launched a new offering that promises a healthy revenue stream. That service is Technology Consulting.

### **Technology Consulting: Profitable Revenue Stream and Gateway to Virtual Accounting**

Before he launched OnDemand Accountant, Jones took the time to understand today's leading cloud-based technologies and how they fit together. He then parlayed this knowledge into his newest service.

"Having built a highly efficient infrastructure upon which Marshall Jones and OnDemand Accountant run, I am more than confident in advising my clients on technology. So, I thought: why not offer this as a new service?"

Jones is currently marketing his technology consulting service to CPAs in industry and a few select business niches.

“I want to help businesses and CPAs within corporate accounting departments

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“Business owners know how important technology is to operations. The real issue is time. A lot of folks also don't want to deal with the learning curve; technology can be intimidating.”

A savvy business person, Jones is also quick to point out that technology consulting can lead to a larger and longer-term engagement—virtual accounting. “Once you have a client set up with the right solution set and they begin to see the extreme increase in efficiency, they tend to start looking for other areas to improve. Once up and running within a digital system, clients also have a better understanding of how easy it is to outsource back office work.”

While technology consulting is a sustainable service, it's clear that it can also serve as the gateway to value-added virtual accounting engagements.

“Business owners are always looking for ways to reduce costs and improve the bottom line. Outsourcing back office work, like bookkeeping, can immediately reduce onsite hours. The fact is that virtual accounting services are often less expensive than a full-time bookkeeper.”

### **Technology is Where It's At**

“You can't exist in the profession today if you don't stay somewhat updated on technology; it's the key to success. If you aren't operating efficiently, you can't adequately grow,” asserted Jones.

Technology is not only at the heart of an efficient operation, it's also core to the quality of client services. Clients of today are vastly different from those just 10 years ago; they expect online access and real-time views into their data. They also look to their accounting professional for far more than financial statements and annual services.

“CPAs aren’t simply number crunchers to clients anymore. They look to us to be their

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virtual accounting business as well. With a well-defined vision, and having put in his time ascending the technology learning curve, I say “go forth and prosper!”

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