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Gail Perry • May. 29, 2014



Sage North America is gearing up for its annual learning event, the Sage Summit. Whether you've attended the Summit in the past or are new to the event, you're likely to experience a new way of learning, growing, and improving your business.

CPA Practice Advisor spoke with Gabrielle (Gabe) Boko, executive vice president of marketing for Sage North America, about what attendees can expect from this year's

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on a variety of topics. It was almost like those progressive dinners where you move from one location to the next, everyone brings his own dish but shares with everyone else. Sage City managed to inject face-to-face social networking into the traditional concept of roundtable discussions, removing the formality and the schedules and just allowing people and ideas to flow.

“With Sage City, we saw people getting excited about communicating with one another. We took those principles and used them to design the new Sage Summit and take it to a different level for attendees,” said Boko. “With conversations that span from the top of the small business imperative, generations, healthcare, taxes, and so on, down to what does this mean to me and how can I find a product that will help with it – we hope to attract customers we haven't seen in awhile and also potential customers looking to solve a problem.”

Boko explained that in the past, attendees would choose a track of training sessions, go from class to class, and networking was done only at dinners and parties. This year, attendees will find multiple types of theaters, ways to flow into conversations, labs – all in one room. “We wanted it not to be something you have to uproot yourself from, so all of the facilities and conversation pits are built to be very social. And with food stations, people can stay in the room.”

The conference is created for both Sage customers and Sage partners, but interestingly, many non-Sage users are signing up too. “People who want to be part of the small business conversation,” said Boko. Sessions will include a mix of all types of attendees. “We're not separating the tracks – you can't separate people based on their knowledge.

“Sage Summit is not a three-day destination – it's a conversation,” said Boko. “Attendees will come away with a set of people and contacts they feel they have something in common with, an understanding about Sage that is different from

what they had before, knowledge of products that help you be efficient and run your

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