CPA

Practice **Advisor**

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Nov. 06, 2014

Your expertise in tax and accounting matters makes you your clients' trusted advisor of all things financial. Getting messages out in a timely manner to clients impacts relationships. The puzzle of communication is how to efficiently and effectively get messages out to clients in a way that allows them to read it when, where, and how they prefer (i.e. some clients prefer email or visiting your website, while others may prefer paper mailers or social media). Add to this the task of developing and writing the content you wish to communicate, and the time required to manage client communication escalates.

The communication puzzle is challenging. Practitioners like you are pressed to find time to develop messages or content, master the communication tools, and ensure the delivery methods chosen meet clients' varying preferences (mobile, paper, digital (email), etc.) concerning how they want to receive messages from you. Despite these challenges, when you successfully and consistently get your messages to clients several things are likely to happen:

- 1. You remain top-of-mind as their trusted advisor throughout the year,
- 2. Information you share with clients empowers them to make better informed decisions,
- 3. Topics that interest clients will move them to take action including sharing your content with others, thus leading to more word-of-mouth advertising, and
- 4. Clients will call to discuss topics they are interested in, thus strengthening your relationship with them.

Consider Ben Copeland, President and CEO of Copeland Financial Services, LLC. Mr.

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Had Copeland found the time to put pen to paper, the end result would have been relevant content. The challenge remaining would have been getting his messages into the hands of his clients. This is no easy task given the diversity of today's communication channels. When you can leverage an affordable solution that could combine messages that resonate with clients and were delivered with the right delivery tool you will have solved the communication puzzle.

Copeland's story does have a happy ending, he did fix the problem. Today, he subscribes to a digital (email) monthly newsletter and weekly tax tip service. He customizes and brands the content with his logo, which his clients relate to his trusted-advisor status. Because of the automation of the service he subscribes to, clients get the newsletter and tax tips information through whatever communication channel they prefer, some read it on his website while others get an email message, and others see it on their browser via RSS feed.

Delivering messages to clients in whatever way each client prefers helps to ensure the communication exchange happens. Copeland will attest that today it is common for clients to call him when a topic appears that gets their attention. Further, it is also common for clients to schedule an appointment to discuss issues that were covered in the newsletter or tax tip.

Solving the communication puzzle by leveraging communication services that handle all of the heavy-lifting for you is smart business. Puzzle solved.

(More about Ben Copeland's story is on the Tenenz website.

Bob Tenner is the president of Tenenz, a provider of tax and accounting supplies and technology for accounting and tax professionals.

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