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professionals to more quickly acquire data science, business analytics and AI skills. By acquiring cognitive skills, accounting professionals can play a bigger role in ...

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IBM and the Maryland Association of Certified Public Accountants have partnered to modernize the accounting profession and prepare accounting and finance professionals for future skills in artificial intelligence (AI), Big Data and cognitive computing. MACPA is the first state society that IBM has worked with in these areas.

IBM will provide an advanced cognitive and data skills platform to accounting professionals to more quickly acquire data science, business analytics and AI skills. By acquiring cognitive skills, accounting professionals can play a bigger role in guiding digital transformation within their organizations. The partnership will transform how accountants work, but also how they learn — from in-person classes in traditional disciplines to hands-on cognitive learning that will provide skills to extract insight from the sea of data.

For example, accountants and finance professionals today focus on analyzing contracts to ensure business such as tax compliance and mergers runs effectively. However, by applying the power of cognitive technologies to these data-driven activities, accounting professionals free themselves to redeploy talent to higher value, more strategic business activities.

"An important part of creating a future for accounting and finance professionals is providing them the opportunity to gain the necessary growth skills to avoid disruption," said Tom Hood, CEO of the MACPA and the Business Learning Institute. "We've seen what IBM can do with automating data-driven businesses, and we are excited to advance our century-old mission of equipping members with the most

advanced skills needed to be competitive in tomorrow's job market. We look forward

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"Data Science and AI are transforming every industry, providing business professionals with deeper and more actionable insights, leading to better business decisions," said Willie Tejada, Chief Developer Advocate. "IBM is committed to providing students, professionals, and developers with the skills they need to leverage these news technologies."

This partnership, extends IBM's commitment to equip data scientists and developers with the educational resources they need. IBM recently announced partnerships with Galvanize and TopCoder, as well as the introduction of an AI nanodegree program with Udacity to help developers establish a foundational understanding of AI.

Hood said the new technologies will help professionals be more proactive, offering a windshield view into business financials, which allows the accountant to see future issues. Conversely, old reporting techniques often focused on prior data. "As a former CFO, I spent most of my time trying to get the numbers right," he said. The new augmented intelligence systems will allow accountants to do what we were trained to do: use our professional judgement."

Additionally, IBM offers the IBM Learning Lab, which features more than 100 curated online courses and cognitive use cases from providers such as CodeAcademy, Coursera and Udacity. IBM developerWorks also offers how-to tutorials and courses on IBM tools and open standard technologies for all phases of the app development lifecycle.

Accounting • Artificial Intelligence

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