CPA

Practice **Advisor**

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Taija Sparkman • Dec. 28, 2012



Massey Consulting recently launched its educational webcast series for CPAs with its first session, "CPAs and Social Media" featuring marketing strategist Dawn Westerberg. Massey Consulting offers accounting software, services and consultation.

"In sponsoring these educational sessions, we want to help CPAs become more

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Many CPAs that have yet to embrace social media are hesitant because they do not see the benefit in it, says Westerberg. They see social media as a platform to share frivolous updates, such as what someone had for breakfast. The webcast aimed to dispel this belief and show accounting professionals how they can use social media to connect with clients, prospective clients, peers, the IRS and CPA societies.

"CPAs should build a following of relevant contacts that matter to them," says Westerberg. The discussions and topics will be more significant because their contacts are talking about subjects that matter to them."

Best practices and tips were offered during the webcast to help professionals get the most out of social media sites. Professionals should first create a social media strategy that will include outlining who is responsible for maintaining the firm's online presence, training the designated person and setting expectations for frequency and content, as well as other guidelines.

Accounting professionals also need to evaluate their clientele and make sure they are aware of their client's communication preferences. While it's important for professionals to have a presence on the social media sites where their clients and prospects are, they need to master one site first before branching to the next. They should look at which websites key audiences and clients are spending majority of their time before deciding on a social media site.

Social media can be leveraged to solidify a firm's position as a local or profession expert if used correctly. When filling out their profile, professionals need to be mindful that they are including relevant and accurate information. They should also take advantage of having an extended web presence. Westerberg suggests professionals schedule a series of tweets, such as reminders about upcoming filing deadlines or links to the IRS forms page. Professionals can also use the information

found on social media, such as LinkedIn connections or career history, to serve as

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