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**Taija Sparkman** • Jul. 25, 2014



By now, you've probably heard of "content marketing," even if you're not sure what it is or why it's being talked about in the accounting industry. It's not just jargon thrown around by marketing professionals, and it definitely has a place in your firm. Simply put, content marketing is connecting with your clients without pushing your services on them.

Because content marketing allows you to provide information to clients outside of

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items to consider when putting together content for them.

For example, instead of generating materials promoting your tax services during busy season, try providing clients with information that they will want to read, such as common tax time mistakes and deductions and credits they may qualify for. Perhaps there are several types of questions you receive often from clients. Use those questions as a guide to draft communications to address those questions and other related topics.

Truly knowing your clients will also help you determine the best way to reach them. If your clients primarily interact with you through your client portal and social media, you don't want to concentrate all your content marketing efforts on traditional email. Chances are your clients are everywhere and you interact with them in different ways at different times. Your content marketing efforts should reflect this. A well-planned strategy will push the content your clients want when they want it where they want it. And, because you interact with your clients on a personal level regularly, this information is readily available to you.

When you focus on topics and areas that are of high interest to your clients, you won't need to focus on the benefits of your services. The services you provide will be in these same interest areas, and when you provide useful information, you are establishing trust and a rapport. And, subtly telling your clients they can trust your services as well. You have shown them that you not only understand their issues and know what you're doing, but that you also care about what's important to them. This is huge in establishing and strengthening your client relationships.

Connecting with clients on a personal level will be fairly simple for many accounting professionals. Most of your clients already come to you for their personal and financial affairs, and because of this you know them by name. Content marketing

allows you to take this a step further. It allows you to create content that can then be

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