

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

FIRM MANAGEMENT

Connection is Key for Accountants

Intuit looks to empower connect large accountant firms with its QuickBooks Connect Accountant Track.

Sep. 11, 2015



There has been a lot of talk lately centered on empowering small firms to serve their clients better. Intuit's focus on helping small to medium-sized accounting firms is largely known and the company wants to take that conversation to large firms to let them know they too can become firms of the future.

The company is adding several accountant-specific sessions to its second annual [QuickBooks Connect](#) event this fall. Designed to connect, inspire and educate small businesses, accountants and developers, QuickBooks Connect will take place at the San Jose Convention Center November 2-4, 2015.

To register for the event, go to www.quickbooksconnect.com.

Intuit recognizes that while all accountants are moving towards the Cloud, larger firms have different needs than smaller firms, which is why it is important to have educational tracks that address the unique needs of both types of firms. Both small and large firms have steps they need to take in order to transition their firms to the Cloud and to start leveraging the technology that is available to them. However, larger firms will require a depth of planning that might not be needed at the small firm level.

“Large firms need to think in terms of scale when transitioning their firms. Compared to smaller firms, there are more levels of management involved whenever change happens, and a commitment to that change needs to be made at each level. Once you have the commitment, the capability will come and with capability comes confidence,” said Gary Boomer, CEO, Boomer Consulting, Inc. Boomer is working closely with Intuit to create sessions at QuickBooks Connect to benefit larger firms. “The first step is commitment and the second is the courage to change. Then, capability and confidence will follow. Too many firms hesitate to take steps one and two. They tend to focus on the capabilities. QuickBooks Connect will introduce you to peers and expertise that will help your firm advance.”

Another challenge large firms face is their service platform. While it can provide a great advantage, if professionals do not know or understand their platform and its add-ons and ecosystem, they will miss real opportunities to connect with and be a trusted advisor to their clients. However, once they understand the platform and add-ons, they get valuable experience that directly translates into delivering value to their clients.

Intuit’s focus is on educating and showing accountants how to get started by providing them with the information and resources they need to take the first step. Regardless of size, in order to stay future-ready, all accounting firms need to focus on moving their practice to the Cloud, transitioning to a value-pricing model and using social media and the web to grow their practice.

“If we can get firms to *do* these three things, they will be future-ready, and in a much better position to attract new clients and compete with their peers. We know this is what some firms are already doing, so it’s a matter of both keeping up and staying ahead,” said Boomer.

The first step to moving to the Cloud is for accounting firms, regardless of size, to move just one client to an online solution like QuickBooks Online. It may be tempting to try to do a mass transition, but if firms are able to move just one client, they will be able to see and compare the benefits, and then be ready for others to follow. Next, because of the efficiency and speed that the Cloud provides, billing by the hour does not make much sense anymore. Shifting to a value-pricing model with one client will enable firms to be paid for the services they provide, not for how long it takes them to complete tasks. Just as with the Cloud model, start by shifting one client to a value-pricing model before moving every client to this model.

Leveraging higher-level services such as strategic planning, CFO services, payroll and real-time accounting information will position firms to make a seamless transition to value-pricing. Intuit has lined up several expert speakers at QuickBooks Connect to share how they are successfully providing these services to clients, as well as how to create a niche practice.

Once clients are both in the Cloud and on a value-pricing model, it is time for accountants to focus on growing their practice, and one of the best and most cost-efficient ways to do so is through their website and social media.

“It’s important for accountants to remember to commit to change when getting started. Once they do, they will see just how efficient they will be and how much sense it makes to be paid for the trusted advisor and consultant services they provide. Additionally, clients very rarely walk through a firm’s lobby these days. They search for firms online, and whatever comes up – pictures, videos, links – will be their first impression,” said Boomer. “Accountants want to grow their firm while maintaining margins so offering a menu of services is important. At QuickBooks Connect, accounting professionals will learn how to package, price and delivery compliance, strategic and performance based services.”

Intuit also wants to teach accountants the best practices of SEO and SEO marketing to help them accurately capture the personality of their firm in their online presence. The top three and most common networks professionals and firms join are Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. While each network is slightly different and has different strengths and weaknesses, firms should approach them the same: actively participate

in the conversations taking place around them and start and lead their own. Sharing knowledge will help establish professionals as experts within the industry.

Intuit has also developed a way for accounting professionals and small businesses to continue to connect, learn and have important conversations on the newly launched OWNIT.com community. At OWN IT, the more than 57,000 registered small business and accountants in firms of all sizes can share information, learn from each other as well as connect to and help small businesses.

“There seems to be a barrier between large and small firms where they think they can’t learn from each other. However, they are both dealing with similar issues such as talent development and succession planning,” said Boomer. “Through this network, they can help each other, and also help small businesses looking for advice and counsel.”

The Accounting Track at QuickBooks Connect will help accounting firms begin the transition to become a firm of the future, as well as address how to save time, grow and overcome obstacles many firms face. In addition, QuickBooks Connect will feature inspirational main stage speakers from the world of business, including Jessica Alba, Bill Rancic, Brian Grazer and Robert Herjavec, who will share their unique perspective on overcoming barriers and becoming successful in business. Interested firms are encouraged to register multiple professionals for QuickBooks Connect. Attendees will collaborate with others from their firms as well as learn more about Intuit’s add-on applications.

To register for the event, go to www.quickbooksconnect.com.

Firm Management • Software • Technology

CPAPA is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors.

© 2023 Firmworks, LLC. All rights reserved