CPA
Practice Advisor

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Will Frei

Director of Social Media and Content Strategy

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read?

These days my reader apps are far more indispensible than any single blog or site. Apps like Pocket and Feedly give me news and industry insights from the best sources across the web in a single location.

In what ways have you contributed to your firm/company to make it better?

My mission is to make Avalara the go-to source for transactional tax education and news. As many accounting pros know, businesses struggle with compliance in this area (whether they realize it or not). I drive our strategy for producing and publishing web and social media content that makes this thorny topic easier to understand for both accountants and their clients. I also once ate a habanero pepper on video to help explain Texas sales tax law.

In what ways do you participate in the professional community to change/improve the accounting profession?

I start with listening, drawing on social media conversations and interactions with the community to understand top accounting trends and concerns. I use this data to inform the content we publish for the community. The goal is to learn from the community and, in turn, be a source of education on transactional tax.

In what ways do you participate in your local community to help others?

I volunteer with Kids in Concert, a music education organization that offers children, irrespective of income, the opportunity to learn to play an orchestral instrument, participate in musical ensembles, and share music with members of the local community.

What changes do you foresee in the accounting profession of the near future (3-5

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My plan is to play a larger role in shaping the types and quantities of content Avalara produces over time, continuing with a strong educational element. In this way, I'll be helping accounting professionals better understand the nuances and breadth of transactional tax.

What is your career philosophy?

Find exceptional role models, work hard *and* smart, and trust yourself.

Describe one person who has been an important mentor to you and how that person helped change your life.

My Mom, Patti Cotton. I watched her go from serving as an office assistant to assuming the role of chief development officer for a five-hospital health-care system in five years. She did all of this while raising three kids, and now has a successful executive coaching practice to help female executives succeed in leadership. My Mom showed me how much you can achieve when you don't see giving up as an option. She's the real deal.

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