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Gail Perry • Jun. 26, 2017



I travel to a lot of conferences in and related to the accounting profession: national, state, local, user – some are large (the largest was last year's Sage Summit which touted 15,000 attendees), some are quite small (150 is about the smallest I've attended) – and I'm happy to report on them here, and let you appreciate the events vicariously while you save your money and time and stay at your office.

But if you want to be truly tuned in to what is happening in our profession, I

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accountants and it's the senior partners who often get to attend the conferences. Slowly, though, there are more and more younger accountants venturing in to the events, learning and sharing their own experiences, and helping to shape the profession.

Second, the education is getting a facelift. I'm seeing more classes that provide take-this-and-run-with-it practical tools for growth instead of that 30,000 foot overview of the profession as a whole.

Third, you'll hear from nationally known key-note speakers and other professional presenters who have exciting messages to share with you.

Most important, conferences provide a place where you can meet others who are like you. Other accountants who have businesses similar to yours and who have faced the same problems that you have. Accountants who are happy to talk about ideas and solutions and even collaboration that can help all of you. You'll see accounting firms and other businesses that can be held out as role models for efficiency, use of technology, recruiting, retaining staff, sustainability, success planning, and you'll have the opportunity to talk with members of these firms about the challenges they faced and the ways they overcame those challenges.

In addition, you'll find that many of the speakers at accounting conferences are the thought leaders of our profession. They are helping to steer this great vessel on which we're all riding, and you'll discover that they are approachable. You can have one-on-one conversations and build relationships with the leaders who are making a difference every day in the profession.

So, you see, the cost of admission doesn't just buy you the chance to tick some boxes on your annual CPE chart. While there's plenty of CPE available, there is so much more going on at accounting conferences, and you can be a part of it.

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