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Jean Caragher • Apr. 29, 2019



If you're like most small firms your marketing activities were placed on the back burner while you studied the TCJA and translated the new law for your clients this tax season. Take a breath – or a well-deserved vacation – and then dust off your marketing plan to update your goals and strategies.

According to [Gear Up for Growth: The Marketing Trends Manual for Accountants](#) three of the top marketing activities that firms with 2-50 professionals plan to increase are:

- Networking

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than none.

Depending upon the number of referral sources in your network you'll need to add attendance at networking functions to your plan.

In [The Sales Bible](#), author Jeffrey Gitomer recommends we ask ourselves:

- Where do I network now?
- Where should I network?
- Where do my best clients network?
- What are three organizations I should investigate and possibly join?
- How many hours a week should I network?
- Who are five prime people I want to meet?
- What are my first-year networking goals?
- Do I have the networking skills I need?
- Do I have networking tools?
- Who is great at networking that I can call and get help from?

Networking is a long-term marketing strategy. Done consistently it will result in increased visibility and new business leads.

Upgrade Your Website

According to research conducted by Greenfield Belser, 76 percent of survey respondents say they are likely to be influenced by the quality of professional service firm websites. Fifty percent put professionals on their short list based on the information included on the websites.

Clients, prospects, referral sources, employees and potential employees – basically everyone responsible for the success of your firm – are visiting your website. Here are seven suggestions for upgrades:

1. Check for broken links and fix them. Broken links – the ones that bring you to a

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5. Optimize page speed according to Google, so percent of mobile site visitors leave a page that takes longer than three seconds to load.
6. Add landing pages to promote specific services, events or offers. A landing page is any page on the web on which one might land that 1) has a form and 2) exists solely to capture a visitor's information through that form.
7. Include a call-to-action on every page, including blog posts. A call-to-action is an image, button, or message that calls website visitors to take some sort of action.

This list is not comprehensive but provides a good start.

Boost Your Social Media Profile

When it comes to social media there are many options: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Google+, you get the idea. It's important to create a realistic social media strategy that supports your marketing goals and you are committed to updating.

Since LinkedIn is the most business-oriented social media platform let's spend our time today focused on it. Here are five LinkedIn profile updates to make right now to enhance your business development efforts:

1. **Headshot and Custom Background:** Your headshot needs to look professional with your face looking forward, making up about 75 percent of the frame. Replace your custom background with an image that reinforces what you want people to know about you. This image could promote your firm's brand, a marketing campaign, or event, for example.
2. **Headline:** Your headline needs to concisely communicate who you help and how you help them.
3. **Summary:** Like your custom background, your summary needs to tell readers what you want them to know about you. Focus on your target markets, areas of specialty and write it in first-person.

4. Custom URL: A custom URL will help to increase the overall visibility of your

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- Writing articles.
- Liking and sharing posts.
- Joining and participating in groups.

Increasing your networking, upgrading your website, and boosting your social media profile, three solid ways to revive your marketing efforts after tax season. Don't attempt to implement everything in this article at once. Rather, create a plan and execute one activity at a time.

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Jean Marie Caragher is president of Capstone Marketing, providing marketing consulting services to CPA firms. She is the author of *The 90-Day Marketing Plan for CPA Firms: How to Create the Roadmap for Your Firm's Growth* and *Gear Up for Growth: The Marketing Trends Manual for Accountants*. For more information contact her at 727.210.7306 or jcaragher@capstonemarketing.com.

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