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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR:

This month brings to an end my term of service as chair of the PCPS Executive Committee. It has been a great pleasure—and a privilege—to serve as chair over the last three years. I have had the opportunity to meet and work with some wonderful fellow CPAs. And I have been proud to be a member of an Executive Committee that has committed itself to serving our members and helping them enhance their professionalism and their practices.

We have taken many steps during the last three years to provide valuable services to members, and I hope that you take advantage of all of them. For example, this month you should be receiving your reports from the PCPS/TSCPA National MAP Survey, which puts together the most comprehensive body of benchmarking data available to local and regional CPA firms today. This is a very popular PCPS practice management resource and a value that surely justifies the cost of membership by itself. But it is only of many tools available to members. Among the newest PCPS member benefits are the online monthly Practice Management Forums, information sessions presented by top consultants to the profession covering common practice management problems. In addition, this month we are introducing *Seasonality Success: Winning Strategies for Profitable Firms*, a new quarterly e-newsletter with great advice on tackling busy season challenges (see "Letter from the VP" for more information). These free member benefits join a long list of other PCPS resources for members.

David Morgan of Lattimore, Black, Morgan & Cain in Brentwood, Tennessee—the current vice chair of the PCPS Executive Committee—will now take over as your new chair. He is a dedicated professional and committee member who will maintain the high standards you have come to expect from your PCPS membership. I wish him and my fellow committee members the very best as they continue to serve our members. And to my fellow PCPS members, I want to express my appreciation for the opportunity to serve you as chair. It has been a wonderful experience.

All the best,  
Richard J. Caturano, CPA  
Chair, PCPS Executive Committee

## LETTER FROM THE VP:

Busy season can be a tremendous challenge for CPAs in smaller firms, but it also represents a wonderful business opportunity. As practitioners begin to prepare their firms for the coming season, PCPS is launching a great new **free** resource for our members—*Seasonality Success: Winning Strategies for Profitable Firms*. This quarterly e-newsletter on making the most of busy season will be distributed to members during the coming month. Each issue will introduce great ideas from successful practitioners or top consultants to the profession in four key practice management areas: Positioning; Client Strategies; People; and Systems and Processes. Every article will contain a wealth of tips to help make your practice more effective and efficient, along with an action agenda containing steps that PCPS members can implement in their own practices.

For example, one important piece of advice in the Client Strategies column in the inaugural issue is to stop letting clients dictate busy season procedures. Many practitioners have excellent internal processes in place, but they don't set standards on what they will accept from clients or enforce deadlines for submitting documents. If they do have standards, clients may not be adequately aware of them. An article in the first issue examines this problem and offers hands-on solutions for tackling it.

Is your firm Nordstrom, Target or Wal-Mart? This month's Positioning column tells why it's important to know where your firm stands in the market, and highlights the best ideas for setting fees and packaging services accordingly in order to enhance efficiency and profitability during peak season. The People column describes successful steps for lowering busy season stress—and thereby enhancing your chances at holding on to your best people. The Systems and Processes column looks at two firms' completely different but equally successful approaches to scheduling client meetings, and offers great tips on managing workflow. There's also an update on software that helps create order by making it easier to sort and retrieve client information.

At PCPS, our goal is to help make practicing CPAs and their firms more successful. I am very excited about this new resource that members can use to achieve that goal.

Best regards,  
Jim Metzler, CPA  
AICPA Vice President, Small Firm Interests

### **An In-depth Look: The Firm Size Network Groups**

The next meetings of the PCPS Firm Size Network Groups will be taking place soon, so don't miss your opportunity to share ideas and information with practitioners from firms like yours.

*The Large Firm Network Group*, for firms with 25 to 49 CPAs, will meet October 30 and 31 at the AICPA's New York office. The guest speaker for the meeting will be Jennifer Wilson from ConvergenceCoaching, LLC. Topics to be covered are:

- New partner sources for your firm.
- Managing conflict successfully.
- Practicing in concert—gaining partner and firm alignment.

AICPA President and CEO Barry Melancon will address the group on the second day.

*The Medium Firm Network Group*, for firms with 10 to 24 CPAs, will meet November 6 and 7 at the Marriott Renaissance Charleston Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina's historic district. The guest speaker for the meeting will be Daniel D. Morris, founder of the VeraSage Institute, a think tank dedicated to teaching value pricing, customer economics and human capital development to professionals and businesses around the world. The meeting will be based on his course, *Human Capital, not Human Cattle (People Are Not Resources, They Are Volunteers)*.

*The Small Firm Network Groups*, for sole practitioners to firms with nine CPAs, have launched a new group due to popular demand. Existing members of the Small Firm Network Group will meet in San Diego on November 2 and 3. For new members, there is a meeting in San Diego on October 30 and 31. Both groups will discuss leadership development and staff training and receive a technology update from Jeff Lenning, CPA/CITP. Other topics of discussion will include news on multi-state licensing and a review of the results of the 2006 PCPS/TSCPA National Management of an Accounting Practice (MAP) Survey.

To learn more, go to <http://pcps.aicpa.org/Membership>.

### **October PCPS Practice Management Forum: "Performance Evaluations That Work!"**

The next free online PCPS Practice Management Forum, "Performance Evaluations That Work! The Power of Communication," will look at how to craft a worthwhile performance evaluation system and implement it successfully. This live, interactive PowerPoint presentation will be given by Mark J. Koziel, CPA, AICPA Senior Technical Manager—Firm Practice Management/PCPS, who will also answer member questions at the end of the session. The Forum will take place on October 18, from 2 to 3:30 EST. PCPS members will receive e-mailed invitations to register before each forum, so don't miss your chance to sign up.

The next forum, "Pricing on Purpose—Implementing Value Pricing in Your Firm," presented by Ron Baker, best-selling author of *Professional's Guide to Value Pricing*, *The Firm of the Future*, *Pricing on Purpose*, and *Measure What Matters to Customers*, will take place on November 14, from 2 to 3:30 EST.

### **Special Member Discount on Marketing Forum**

PCPS members will receive a discount when they register for the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Accounting Firm Marketing Forum, which will take place on November 9-10 in New York. This popular conference, which is sponsored by PCPS, offers practitioners the opportunity to learn cutting-edge practices and progressive marketing techniques that can help them grow their firms, increase profitability and enhance credibility. Hot topics to be covered at the conference this year include:

- Selling a firm's key niches.
- Revolutionary technological advancements.
- Effective pitching to the media.
- Best prospecting practices.
- Attracting and retaining professional staff.
- How to deliver world-class client service.

For more information: <http://www.northstarconferences.com/conferences.asp?code=6CACT01>

### **Enhanced Staff Training Resource**

Practitioners seeking a convenient, cost-effective education resource for staff can turn to the AICPA's completely revised Staff Training Series (No. 738258hs), which is designed specifically for small to medium-sized firms. The audio and video courses offer convenient and thorough self-paced learning for firm members at three levels—basic, intermediate and advanced—as well as CPE credit. For more information:

[https://www.cpa2biz.com/landing/staff\\_training\\_level\\_1.htm](https://www.cpa2biz.com/landing/staff_training_level_1.htm)

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