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## BOOKSHELF REVIEW

Recommended Reading  
From the *JofA*

■ *Effective Websites for CPAs: Grow Your Practice and Profits*  
by Kristi Stangeland, CPA  
RJ Thompson Publishing, 2006, 177 pp.

Shortening the client development cycle is one of the most compelling reasons for a CPA firm to develop a Web site if it does not already have one, according to author Kristi Stangeland. Keeping clients abreast of change, increasing sales of services and generating qualified leads are a few others. Through a series of interactive worksheets, Stangeland helps other CPAs outline the most pertinent information a client looks for on a Web site.

The first goal is to identify the target market, then summarize the steps needed for client development and prospecting. Provide as much of the specific information a client would look for upfront. "The copy on your site should be written to, about and for (clients) alone." This not only decreases the length of the sales cycle, it gains the client's trust and establishes the CPA as a reliable authority, thereby increasing client loyalty, the author writes.

The completed exercises will provide the CPA with a comprehensive plan that a Web designer can then develop into a completed site. Following Stangeland's proposal process (and subsequent worksheet), readers will learn how to evaluate and hire qualified designers to build their Web sites.

Another key element to ensure client retention and satisfaction is the use of client-only sections and e-zines (electronic magazines). Stangeland categorizes the essential components of a custom-designed e-zine and illustrates how to make use of this great tool for promoting additional services, generating new client referrals and simply staying in touch with clients.

With so much information readily available on the Internet today, clients (and potential ones) are in a position to be more discerning than ever when it comes to choosing a CPA firm. Stangeland's strategy demonstrates how CPAs can proactively use that same technology to their advantage—through their own carefully planned Web site.

—by Loanna Overcash

