

MOORE STEPHENS NORTH AMERICA, INC.

The Networker: Author's Guidelines

THE NETWORKER

Author's Guidelines

Background

The Networker is the Moore Stephens North America, Inc. (MSNA) membership newsletter that is delivered electronically on a quarterly basis. It's focus is to provide timely and relevant information covering such topic areas as practice management; practice development; interviews; legislation; new services; and other informative subjects.

As a departure from the past, news items about promotions or individual achievements – items that are more public relations in nature will now find a home on the MSNA website in a section called In the News. The reason for this is two fold: 1) Practitioners typically want information that they can employ in their firms, whether it is conducting an efficient paperless audit; how a cost segregation service can be offered; more effective marketing techniques; and how to establish an effective, sensible succession plan. If an article is particularly appealing in its client-centric approach, members can download an article template that can be customized with their firm logo and request the text from headquarters. The template will allow members to create high resolution .pdf files or reproduce in hard-copy to include in their marketing efforts.

The Approach to Delivery of the Newsletter

Newsletter articles of 1,500 words or more reflect the desire to include everything possible about a topic. This works for a traditional newsletter that the reader puts away in a briefcase or back in the “in-box” and reads when it's more convenient.

An electronic newsletter, on the other hand, should consider the reader's attention span and time constraints. If a topic requires extensive treatment, it can be presented in digestible chunks as either a monthly issue; or if the topic is critically important, a “Newsflash” issue can be used.

Sharing information through the Networker™ requires a tone and level that informs, instructs and provokes, without being dry and lecturing. Simply put: the Networker™ produces content that is written by CPAs for CPAs and firm support personnel. How the Networker™ conveys ideas may be compared to sitting with colleagues in a lounge after a day of conference sessions and exchanging ideas and opinions.

Readers always say they want to see examples. If, as the saying goes, a “picture is worth a 1,000 words,” so, too, is a good 75-word example. Tell a story as if you are speaking to a friend, associate or sibling about how to be successful. The Networker™ audience consists of people who know you. Just be clear, informative and conversational.

Information for Authors

Article content. Articles should be drafted to provide information that is relevant for everyone: managing partners; office PICs; practice leader partners; senior managers and managers on the partner track and staff that is looking to gain upward mobility. The articles will also be relevant for firm administrators, marketing directors, human resource directors and technology administrators. The Networker is but one of the many tools that will be used to share information, experiences, best practices and technical and industry knowledge. The following are examples of some of the elements that articles may contain:

- Improved and more efficient work processes
- Benefits of new tools, such as technology for both CPA firms and their clients
- Quality control methods
- Regulations in certain industries; pending legislation (tax, audit) and their impact
- Human resource administration; training and development; coaching
- Raising capital; helping clients identify new sources of funding
- Uses of mediation and arbitration
- Corporate governance
- Succession planning
- Valuation/Litigation – unusual assignments, complex analyses and approaches
- Forensic investigation
- Wealth management
- Employee benefits
- Hiring, recruitment and retention policies and practices

Length. Articles should be no longer than 500-700 words, although the majority of the articles should be in the 300-500 word range. If a topic cannot be given sufficient treatment in a short version and requires a lengthier article, the author should find a natural break point and serialize the article.

Writing Style. Write in an informal style, as if you were having a face-to-face discussion with a friend or colleague. Begin the article with one or two paragraphs that concisely summarize your topic. Use active verbs: Mary Smith developed the software application for the client. Avoid the passive approach: The software application for the client was developed by Mary Smith.

Keep the sentences simple and short without being choppy. Carefully review the article before you submit it and use the spelling and grammar check in conjunction with your own careful evaluation. Also, keep your paragraphs short but clear, and employ proper use of grammar, diction and punctuation.

Publication Checklist. A checklist should accompany each article submission (see checklist at the conclusion of guidelines). This form will help crystallize the author's thoughts and will assist the editors in assessing the breadth and depth of the subject as well as serve to justify publication of the article.

Article Tone. All articles must be non-promotional in nature and take a how-to, practical approach, outlining specific tips and strategies. Authors should write in an active voice, using a personal and direct tone. Include practical examples where possible. Try to avoid the use of "I" or "we." Should identifying certain products enhance the article, those products may be mentioned, but should be done sparingly within a broader context of the article. An exception, of course, is if the submission is a product review.

Subject Matter. Subjects of particular interest fall into various categories (not all inclusive):

Practical – These explain a business situation and steps that are taken to implement a solution. Explain solutions through case studies/summaries – real or hypothetical (client/company names are withheld at author's request) – or examples that illustrate and emphasize points made. Engagement and project checklists are also recommended.

Technical – These are based on research with resultant findings that reflect a market shift or changes in operational, strategic or financial practices of accounting firms. Examples: determining the value of stock options; employing performance metrics in determining executive compensation; and creating Six Sigma programs.

Engagement – How a firm has employed various managerial, operational and strategic techniques, such as outsourcing the internal audit function; implementing an effective fraud prevention program; and assisting a client with electronic data security and breach prevention

Professional Issues – These include actions of a regulatory or legislative nature that have been/will be taken, and the actual or potential impact on companies. These may, for example, include FASB's action on fair value accounting, how to recognize pension obligations on the balance sheet, or the differences between IFRS and GAAP.

Career Development – How to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of firm personnel through team building, training and 360-degree feedback; career advancement; or management and training techniques.

Trends and Developments – In discussing trends and techniques, there are three possible avenues –

- Topic may reside beyond the horizon. This is highly encouraged because it will engender reader attention and not only support the need for subsequent articles, but may also prompt communications between the reader(s) and the author.
- Topic with limited exposure. Another topic may involve tools or approach that have had limited exposure but firms have not had the impetus to embrace them. Introducing the benefits of adopting such tools or approaches enables the Networker to deliver immediate value.
- Topic with large exposure. A topic may have been given extensive treatment, but a completely different or unique angle is offered.

Article Submission

Completed articles should be submitted via e-mail with a file attachment in Word double-spaced in 10-point Arial font accompanied by a publication checklist. . Each submission should include a title page. Authors must include their address, phone/fax, title, company, brief biography (30 words or less), and contact information, including e-mail address. This information will appear at the end of the article so an interested reader-member can contact the author directly.

Authors may identify specific products or services that can explain the topic.

Articles submitted to the Networker™ are not on an exclusive basis. Members may wish to submit them to other publications. You should first check with MSNA headquarters to make sure that the other publication(s) is (are) acceptable to MSNA as multiple submission partner(s). If an article you submitted had previously appeared elsewhere, you must either own the copyright or have received permission from another publication to re-use the material prior to submitting it. You should indicate the name and date of the original publication.

The Networker authors will receive full by-lined credit. Authors have the right to use published articles in courses they develop, speeches or conference sessions they present, or for their own marketing or personal portfolios.

Once an article is accepted, the editor will contact the author to discuss changes, clarify points or seek resolution of outstanding issues. The editor reserves the right to alter the manuscript for clarity, conciseness and consistency. Submission of draft articles implies author agreement with this policy.

If your article can be tied to a topic, theme or related article on the editorial calendar, it may be used more promptly, such as when a topic ties into an upcoming special interest group conference. Other articles are published as space and issue balance permit. Generally, there is necessary lead time of one to two issues before an article can appear. Some time-sensitive features will be published sooner.

Footnotes should be held to a minimum. Tables and graphs should have titles which make it clear what they contain and should be numbered consecutively. Terms should be written out when first used along with their abbreviations, which can subsequently be used in place of the terms.

Illustrations are very helpful in improving an article's readability. Case study examples increase the practical nature of an article and help the reader to understand the critical concepts.

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of their material and have the sole responsibility for obtaining permission to reprint information (either an extract or in its entirety) from another source from which the original material was obtained. Appropriate attribution (publication name and issue) to the other source should accompany the information.

Compliance with Copyright Law

Rights. As previously mentioned, MSNA headquarters has the right to publish (or modify where necessary) any article submitted. Further, the MSNA will archive the material online on the website for not less than one year after publication. In addition, all newsletters are archived in their entirety “indefinitely.” Articles may be withdrawn from the website upon the author’s request after one year, but are not removed from the newsletter archive

Processing of Submitted Articles

All manuscripts are acknowledged upon receipt. Authors can expect to hear from MSNA headquarters approximately one to two weeks after acknowledgment. This response will either be acceptance without revision, a request for a rewrite or an explanation as to why the article has not been delayed for publication.

Once accepted, articles will be prepared for publication as part of the layout process. This may involve editing and shortening the article. Shortly before publication, the author may be contacted to elaborate on any open questions. Only minor amendments can be accepted at this stage.

Rapid two-way feedback is necessary between the author(s) and the editor. The editor will notify the author(s) as to the intended publication dates and strict adherence to deadlines is necessary for both parties.

Publication Checklist

Please consider these elements when developing your articles:

- √ Topic area (e.g. corporate, technical, professional)
- √ Title
- √ Author(s) name
- √ Why is the topic important?
- √ Level of information (i.e. basic, intermediate, advanced)
- √ Takeaway (i.e., what will the reader gain)
- √ Who is the audience (e.g. partners, IT/Tax/Consulting managers)?
- √ Is the topic addressed elsewhere? Y__ N__
- √ If yes where? Why would your article be different? What kind of new angle can you lend to it?
- √ Differentiation in your focus
- √ Submission (one article or a series)
- √ Expected article submission date

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