

Accounting Firms

Overview

Accounting firms handle two types of clients, corporate clients and individuals.

Firms that handle corporate clients primarily handle their tax audit work. These clients should be worth tens of thousands of dollars to the accounting firms. Keep in mind they do not usually do the everyday bookkeeping for their client. That is handled internally by someone on the company's staff.

Small accounting firms that work with individuals are primarily handling their annual income taxes to be filed every April. These individual clients are typically only worth a couple hundred dollars each year.

Corporate accounting firms are your prime target. There are two different types of accounting firms, the large, multi-office accounting firms with numerous partners (E&Y, Deloitte, PricewaterhouseCoopers, KPMG...) and smaller local or regional firms that may have 5-10 partners, usually individuals who have broken off from bigger firms to start their own companies.

Why They Buy Tickets

Accounting firms typically don't have employees that are labeled 'salespeople'. However, accounting firms do indeed sell. The firm's partners are responsible for maintaining relationships with existing clients and developing new business. Keep in mind the partners aren't cold-calling prospects. New business many times comes from referrals.

For example, an existing client would recommend someone to the firm. The partner might suggest a dinner or sporting event between the three in order to get to know the prospect in a non-business atmosphere. This is much like a salesperson at a more typical corporation inviting out a prospect they are trying to close.

You can follow the same sales presentation process as you do for a company with salespeople. Each partner would receive one game a month to develop relationships with a new prospect and one game a month to strengthen relationships with existing clients.

Decision Makers – Who to talk to...

Each partner will have a hand in the decision since they share in the firm's profit and loss. Essentially, they vote on all major expenditures. It's critical to find a partner who is a sports and entertainment fan that understands doing business this way. Like you were instructed in "Getting the Appointment", start with the Managing Partner or the top local executive. Stay away from the office manager. They are incapable of making a decision and will only provide information to the partners as their job requires and won't make any sort of recommendation to buy.

If you find a partner enthusiastic about using your team's tickets to help drive business, they will take it to the weekly partners meeting to discuss the idea. You should ask to be able to present but these meetings are usually closed door. At worst, you have to make the partner you're talking to give you what their recommendation will be. Then find out how often a partner's recommendation is agreed upon by the other partners. This will give you a sense of how likely you are to get a sale.