

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**President's  
Message:**  
The REAL  
Candidate for  
Change

**Don't Call Me Bob:**  
The "Do's and  
Don'ts" at Michigan  
CFO Associates

**Get Your 2009  
Budget Process  
Started Now:**  
A Recap of Tools &  
Tips for Getting Your  
Budget Done

**Tech Tips:**  
Practical Tools You  
Can Use Everyday

**What's  
Happening?**  
Exciting news at  
Michigan CFO  
Associates,  
including an  
upcoming Book  
and TV appearance.  
Check it out!

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE THE REAL CANDIDATE FOR CHANGE



A quick Google search on "Candidate for Change" will bring up just about every candidate that has ever run for any office for any party, including both of our 2008 Presidential candidates. "Change" is a buzzword that almost anyone can attach themselves to.

Not wanting to miss out on the "Change" bandwagon, I've decided to hold my own election and run as the Candidate for Change for Metro Detroit Small Business Owners. Now you won't see me running any attack ads - partly because I'm not sure who I would attack. No, instead you will see me spreading the message of what we do -- not what someone else didn't do -- to create positive change. I'm talking about financial changes that will make businesses consistently profitable.

Many small businesses are stuck in old ways of thinking. "That's the way we've always done it" is a red flag that your business may need a "Candidate for Change". I know that some owners have become numb to the idea of positive change from financial people after hearing lots of promises with little results. And many owners are not aware of resources available today that weren't available even a few years ago, via outsourcing. This includes what we at Michigan CFO Associates do, but also other areas - I.T., H.R., even accounts payable. Ultimately, better results come through positive change.

As your "Candidate for Change", the bad news is that under my plan you will pay more taxes. . . . because you will make more money. I've provided some information on my "candidacy" in the article below entitled "[Don't Call Me Bob](#)". Another big part of my plan involves setting and achieving targets, which is discussed in the 2nd article "[Get Your 2009 Budget Process Started Now](#)". And you can read a more comprehensive version of my plan in the new book "[30 Day Total Business Makeover](#)", in which I've been featured as a co-author (see "[What's Happening](#)" for a special offer on the book.)

But the change I'm most looking forward to right now will come just after the polls close, when thankfully, this election season will come to an end and we can stop watching millions of dollars getting flushed away in an endless barrage of useless ads. That's a change we can all embrace.

Happy Voting Day,



Todd Rammler, CMA, MSA  
President

**P.S.--** If you happen to know a young, attractive "unknown" who would make a good running mate. . . give me a call.



# DON'T CALL ME BOB: THE DO'S AND DONT'S AT MICHIGAN CFO ASSOCIATES

Over the past 4 months or so, I've been a little bit surprised by one question that seems to be coming up when I get into deeper conversations with people. And the question is this:

"So what exactly is it that you do, anyway?"

Similarly, when tax season comes around, I always get this: "So this must be your busy season, eh?"

Sometimes I just scratch my head and wonder. . .

Now I can understand if I'm talking with someone I just met, someone who I don't know very well, a new prospective client, or anyone else who hasn't yet heard my schpeel at least a few times. But these questions are coming from people who've known me for a while. Including my own family.

Most people who've met me or know me might refer to me as "the CFO guy". What that means, they're probably not real sure.

My uncle amuses himself by referring to me as "Robert", the fancier version of Bob from Accountemps. And, my own PARENTS asked if we could do their taxes (we don't do taxes).

So it occurred to me: perhaps the message about what we do is not very clear. Or, perhaps some people don't really care. (I know you're thinking "You're getting warmer"). In any case, I'm going to provide a concise description here. . . although I may need to start with my own family circle and work outward from there.

So let's start with what we DON'T do:

1. We don't do taxes. Not corporate, not personal, not MBT. No tax planning. We rely on reputable CPAs to do this.
2. We don't do bookkeeping.
3. We aren't a competitor or a fancier version of that Bob from Accountemps guy.

With the majority of our clients:

1. The client's bookkeeper does day-to-day accounting (A/R, A/P, Payroll)
2. The outside CPA does tax planning & returns
3. Michigan CFO assists the business owners with tools and strategies to make more money.

In short, we help businesses make more money by doing what a CFO at a large company would do – on an outsourced basis. These are things that all businesses should be doing, but most smaller businesses aren't doing. This includes things like:

- \* Margin analysis by product/customer/industry
- \* Pricing strategies
- \* Breakeven analysis
- \* Financial projections
- \* Assisting with banking relationships & securing financing
- \* Growth/expansion planning
- \* Cost cutting strategies
- \* Cash management

I often tell business owners that we "fill the gap between their bookkeeper and CPA". And there most certainly is a gap.

Take a look at the diagram below, which hopefully spells it out a little clearer. Then call me when you need your taxes done – but call early if it's in "the busy season".

-“Robert”

*Todd Rammler is a CMA not a CPA and he and his staff don't do taxes. Their busy season is all year 'round.*



# GET YOUR 2009 BUDGET PROCESS STARTED NOW

Last year at this time, I outlined the case for budgeting in the newsletter. Because this is the height of budget season, I've included a link to that article below, which is titled "See the Future. . . and See it Now!"

<http://www.michigancfo.com/about/archive/fall2007.html>

If you're relatively new to the newsletter you should check it out, and even if you've read it previously it's a good refresher.

Also, last year at this time I introduced the budgeting tool XLprojectionPRO which I spent 2 years developing. This is a great system for a user with solid accounting and Excel knowledge. It is available on the web at [www.XLprojectionPRO.com](http://www.XLprojectionPRO.com).

---

## TECH TIPS:

### PRACTICAL TOOLS YOU CAN USE EVERYDAY

If you're like me, technology creates an emotional love/hate relationship. My tech knowledge teeters between just enough to solve a problem and just enough to really screw something up.

Occasionally I come across some very useful tools that actually do make technology a little easier - usually from someone who witnesses my struggle and feels pity.

Last year after a particularly frustrating evening with my home PC, I unplugged it, carried it out to our deck, and hurled it off the deck and into the middle of the back yard. I let it sit there for a week or so to make sure that it was further damaged by either rain, lawn sprinklers, or. . . dog urine.

I believe I taught that machine a lesson.

I share that story with you to let you know that I wouldn't include anything below that might drive you to similar behavior. So here we go:

**Lookout.** This is a search utility for MS Outlook users. I installed it at the suggestion of a friend thinking I would rarely use it. A few days later, I could not find an old email, so I put it to the test. It is 100 times better (unscientific study) than Microsoft's search feature in Outlook. Not only is it much, much faster, it actually locates the files you're looking for. I now use it regularly, and would have to say it's a terrific tool. It's also very simple to install. To download it click:

<http://www.box.net/encoded/11574427/134330521/e3b9b69a08d3b1a3b94d5cacf2495cd8>

**Dim Dim.** If you conduct web meetings or webinars occasionally, this is a good alternative to WebEx or GotoMeeting. It's free if your meeting/webinar is for 20 or fewer participants. [www.dimdim.com](http://www.dimdim.com).

**MS Office 2007 to 2003 file converter.** Most of our clients are still using Office 2003, but a handful use 2007. So we occasionally get documents emailed in 07 format that we can't open. This utility allows you to convert an 07 file to 03 format. It was forwarded to me by a client that was tired of me saying "Can you re-send it in 2003 format?" Download link is:

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=941B3470-3AE9-4AEE-8F43-C6BB74CD1466&displaylang=>

If you come across any "must have" utilities you'd like to share, please [email me](#) and we'll include them in future issues.



# THE OLD WAY

## Internal Bookkeeper:

Day-to-Day Transactional work  
-A/R & A/P  
-Payroll  
-Cash



## Outside CPA:

Annual Tax Returns  
-Fix Financial Statement Errors  
-Put in GAAP format  
-Prepare Tax Returns



## Result:

-Financial statements corrected  
3 months after Year End  
-GAAP presentation is useless  
for internal decision making  
-No analysis or interpretation  
until the info is ancient history  
-Owners feel frustration and  
helpless to get the information  
needed for effective decision  
making

## Bookkeeper:

Day-to-Day Transactional work  
-A/R & A/P  
-Payroll  
-Cash



## Outsourced CFO:

Monthly Financial Analysis  
-Organize data for clear understanding  
-Establish monthly routine for bookkeeper  
-Creation of written targets for deliberate  
achievement using projections  
-Monthly financial review with owners  
-Cash Planning  
-Coordination of Tax work with CPA



## Outside CPA:

Annual Tax Returns  
-Proactive Tax Planning  
-Quick turnaround of Year End  
Financials  
-Prepare Tax Returns

# THE NEW WAY: UTILIZING AN OUTSOURCED CFO

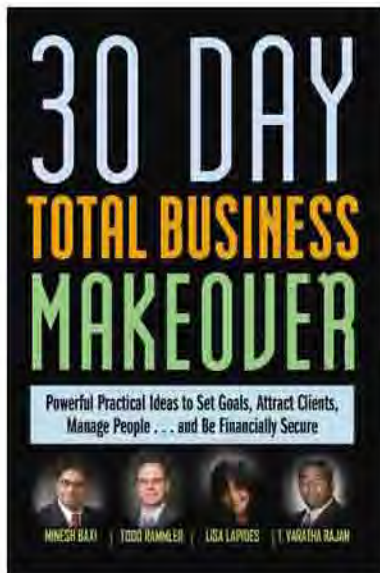


## Result:

-Accurate Financials every month  
-Clear understanding of what's driving  
profit/cash flow – every month  
-Ability to make changes to achieve  
profit objectives  
-No uncertainty as to how much profit  
you'll have by the end of the year  
-No major Year-End adjustments from  
CPA  
-Quicker turnaround of annual tax  
returns  
-Peace of mind, no longer "hoping"  
for positive results but working a plan with  
an experienced CFO

# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

## EXCITING NEWS AT MICHIGAN CFO ASSOCIATES!



**Upcoming Book:** I have been featured as a co-author for a new book entitled "30 Day Total Business Makeover" in which I will be highlighting the strategies we use every day to assist clients. In addition to the financial side, there will be contributing experts from other fields offering their strategies for the total business makeover.

The book is expected to be released in late December and will retail for \$20. If you would like to pre-order a copy, I will make it available for only \$10, but you must email me with your request before 11-15-2008.

**TV Appearance:** In mid-September I taped a half hour interview with Tara Kachaturroff, host of Michigan Entrepreneur Television. The program is designed to support and build entrepreneurship within the local community as well as throughout the State of Michigan.

The interview is scheduled to air:

**Tuesday, November 11th at 11:00 a.m. and  
Thursday November 13th at 6:30 p.m.**

Michigan Entrepreneur Television can be seen in Bloomfield Hills and Bloomfield Township on Channel 15 and Birmingham, Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, and Franklin on Channel 18.

For more information visit [www.michiganentrepreneurtv.com](http://www.michiganentrepreneurtv.com).

**Radio Interview:** We are currently in the process of scheduling a radio interview on **WWJ Newsradio 950**. More info to follow on this.

### Michigan CFO Associates

44056 Mound Road Suite 104

Sterling Heights, MI 48314

(586) 675-7605

[www.michigancfo.com](http://www.michigancfo.com)