Presented by:
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CPA Mutual RRG
Alachua, FL



### **Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management**

"I don't give anyone advice only my opinion"

John Wooden

What if the facts don't support the Claim?

"Facts are stupid things."
Ronald Reagan





"If the facts don't fit the theory, change the facts." Albert Einstein



"Get your facts first, and then you can distort them as much as you please." Mark Twain

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### **Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management**

### Post Enron

- CPAs in the cross hairs
- Increase in litigation and settlement cost
  - Fewer motions granted for summary judgment
  - Impartial juries?
- Legal System
- Current Economic Climate

### What risks/cost are you trying to manage?

- Professional and firm reputation
- Money
- Insurability
- Time

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# Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management Professional and Firm reputation The long and short of it was that generally accepted accounting principles weren't as generally accepted as I thought.

Claim Stats (05/24/2012)	Total Pd and Incurred		Number of claims/In cidents	
Acct Services	\$7,375,421	4.77%	290	13.97%
Audits	\$ 77,029,520	49.78%	471	22.69%
Business Advice	\$844,961	0.55%	52	2.50%
Compilations	\$ 7,716,305	4.99%	116	5.59%
Data Processing	\$388,396	0.25%	17	0.82%
Fiduciary	\$2,719,029	1.76%	60	2.89%
Investment Advice	\$4,997,255	3.23%	57	2.75%
Litigation Support	\$848,116	0.55%	43	2.07%
MAS	\$2,885,468	1.86%	20	0.96%
Reviews	\$ 10,740,007	6.94%	93	4.48%
SEC	\$5,654,801	3.65%	27	1.30%
Tax	\$ 33,543,027	21.68%	830	39.98%
Totals	\$154,742,306		2,076	

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# Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management Money

Audit		Tot	tal Paid and Incured	\$ Percentage	Claims/In cidents	Claim Percentage
A/R		\$	1,221,675	1.6%	13	2.8%
GAAP Dep	t	\$	672,031	0.9%	7	1.5%
GAAS Dep	t	\$	4,092,137	5.3%	30	6.4%
Failure to	detect	\$	45,745,964	59.4%	121	25.7%
going cond	cern	\$	1,843,321	2.4%	12	2.5%
imp inv ev	al .	\$	2,505,048	3.3%	21	4.5%
other		\$	5,552,407	7.2%	173	36.7%
% of Comp	oletion	\$	88,213	0.1%	1	0.2%
Related Pa	arty	\$	2,706,480	3.5%	8	1.7%
Und/Over	Liab	\$	12,602,245	16.4%	85	18.0%
		\$	77,029,520		\$ 471	

"WSJ: Is it an auditor's job to try and find fraud?

Mr. Nally: Absolutely. We have a responsibility to perform procedures that are detecting fraud just like we have responsibilities to perform procedures to detect errors in financial statements."

"WSJ: You seem pretty certain, but the firms as a whole often eschew some responsibility for finding fraud, especially in court?

Mr. Nally: The audit profession has always had a responsibility for the detection of fraud.

Accounting's Crisis Killer, Wall Street Journal, 23 Mar 07, p. C2.

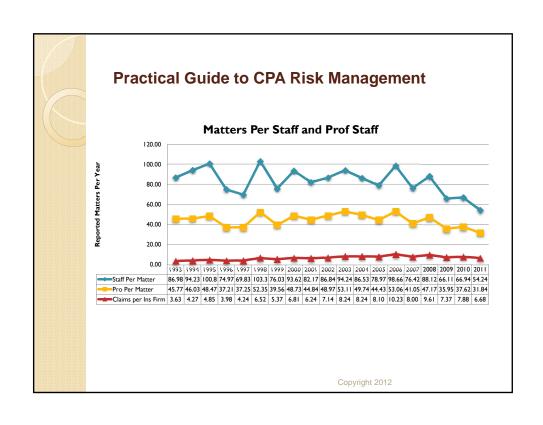
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# Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management Money

				Claims	Claim	
	То	tal Paid and	\$	/Incid	Percent	
Tax		Incured	Percentage	ents	age	
Bus Improper advice	\$	6,409,964	19.1%	99	11.9%	
Business Other	\$	3,275,645	9.8%	141	17.0%	
Business Prep Errors	\$	4,578,259	13.6%	112	13.5%	
S Corp Errors	\$	1,018,381	3.0%	37	4.5%	
Timely Filing Errors	\$	1,026,572	3.1%	34	4.1%	
Pers-Estate Tax	\$	4,388,711	13.1%	85	10.2%	
Pers - Imp Advice	\$	5,006,880	14.9%	86	10.4%	
Pers - Other	\$	3,670,978	10.9%	80	9.6%	
Pers Prep Errors	\$	2,655,114	7.9%	103	12.4%	
Pers - Timely Filing	\$	1,512,523	4.5%	53	6.4%	
	\$	33,543,027		830		

### **TAX CLAIMS**

- Improper or insufficient advice on §1031 exchanges
- Improper or insufficient advice on estate tax planning and late 706 filing
- Failure to advise on additional state filing obligations
- Improper or insufficient advice on §475 elections
- Missed credits/deductions after statute of limitations expires



## Insurability

<u>Limits</u>

Per claim and aggregate Noncumulation of limit provision Prior Acts Date

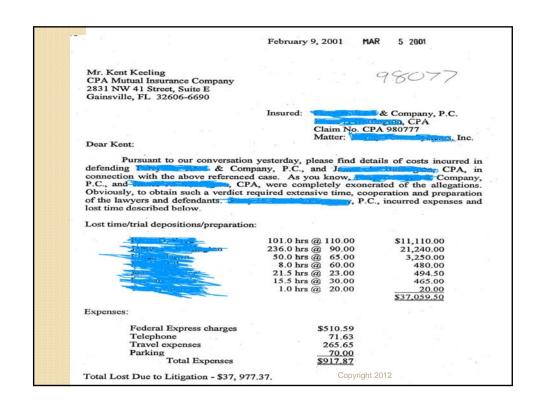
<u>Deductibles</u>
 Per claim and aggregate
 Defense
 Indemnity

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# Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management Insurability POSTSCRIFT You have a pretty good case, Mr. Pitkin. Here much justice on you afford? Copyright 2012

### Time

- Average Litigation > 5 years
- Average Claim 3-5 years
- 3 Claims still open over 10 years



### KEYS TO REDUCE RISK EXPOSURE

- CLIENT SELECTION
- CLIENT RETENTION
- **COMMUNICATION**

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What can you do to help reduce problem clients?

- > Screen all Clients
  - Background checks
  - Credit reports
  - Criminal reports and DMV reports
  - Prior auditor inquiries
- Identify problem clients early:
  - Ask careful thorough questions
  - Be wary of fee resistance
  - Be wary of advice resistance
  - Trust Your Gut
  - Trust Your Staff

What can you do to help reduce problem clients?

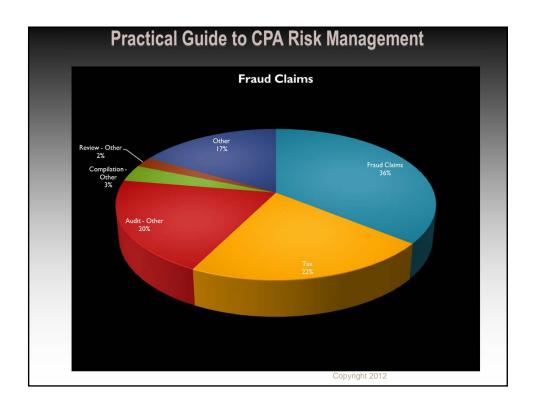
- Adopt client retention and acceptance policies and test your compliance – Rank your Clients
- · Receive adequate fees for the risk assumed!
- Monitor client specific industries and be aware of changes in economic cycle
- Provide for easy access to legal counsel assign "gate keeper"
- INDEPENDENCE/do not become an advocate
- Avoid complacency

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### **Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management**

Other Risk factors to consider relating to operating characteristics and financial stability – Identify Problem Clients

- Significant capital requirements
- Financials contain significant estimates involving highly subjective judgments or are subject to change in near term
- High vulnerability to rapidly changing technology
- High dependency on debt
- Unusually rapid growth
- Executive Compensation tied directly to operating results



"Crooks for clients Wimps for accountants" -Accounting Today

- Most frauds are found at relatively small companies -Median Assets -\$15.7m
   Median Rev - \$13m
- 83% involve either the CEO or CFO
- Key motivation Hype the stock price
- "Regional and local firms handle barely 10% of the nations audits but have 44% of the problem audits."
- "Big 3 unloading problem audits."

KPMG Study - Analysis of Global Patterns of Fraud

### Typical Fraudster -

- 36-45 yr old male
- Works in finance or finance related role
- Holds senior mgt position
- Employee of Company for >10 years
- Does not work alone
- Average time to detect fraud in 2011 is 3.4 years

### Motivational Factors -

- Greed
- Trying to meet company goals

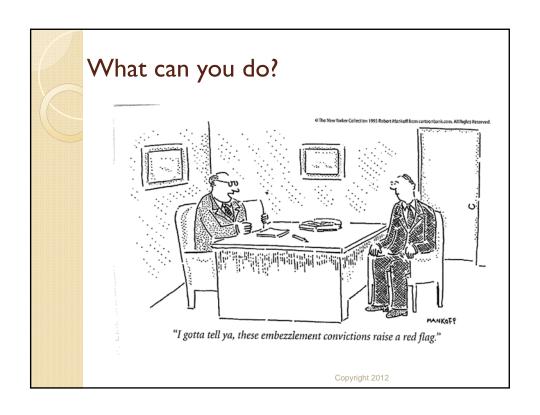
### **Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management**

### What Happens to Fraudsters?

- 51% are Prosecuted
- 98% Prosecuted are Convicted
- 31% of Those Convicted Are Sent to Jail

SO HOW MANY IDENTIFIED PERPETRATORS SPEND MORE THAN ONE YEAR IN JAIL???

**11%** 



What Else can you Do?

- > Professional Practices Dept
- > Revise partner compensation
- > Communication:
  - Internal
  - External

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Communication

- > Best policy is to refuse to provide them
- > Request client send directly to 3<sup>rd</sup> party
- Obtain written permission from client before disclosure

### **Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management**

### Communication; The Role of the Engagement Letter:

- Describes the scope of work to be done
- Explains limitations on the accountant's work
- Defines the client's responsibilities
- Describes fee arrangements and payment terms
- Satisfies professional standards
- Helps protect the accountant from unwarranted litigation
- Communicates in plain English!

### **Engagement Letters and Lessons Learned:**

- Avoid engagement creep (or de-creep)
- Be very careful when coding time
- Familiarity breeds complacency
- Communicate ALL issues in writing
- Consider having the client initial important clauses
- Consider who signs the engagement letter
- Consider who receives the engagement letter

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## OTHER TIPS FOR DRAFTING ENGAGEMENT LETTERS

- Involve Legal Counsel in Developing Your Engagement Letters
- Periodically Evaluate any Changes in the Law Governing Engagement Letters
- Ask your Malpractice Carrier
   Subpoena coverage clause
   Limitation of liability and Indemnification agreements
   "Stop Work" clause

### **Engagement Letters**

### Subpoena Coverage Clause:

In the event we are required to respond to a subpoena, court order or other legal process for the production of documents and/or testimony relative to information we obtained and/or prepared during the course of this engagement, you agree to compensate us at our hourly rates, as set forth above, for the time we expend in connection with such response, and to reimburse us for all of our out-of-pocket costs incurred in that regard.

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### Protect Your Firm with Indemnification Clauses

Protect Your Firm with Indemnification Clauses

You may ak yourself. "Do! result) need to get this engagement letter signed?" That server is no emphate." "The Tend on.

It can be a server of the control of the contro

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CPA Mutual Insurance Company of America Risk Retention Group 11801 Research Dr., Alachua, FL 32615-6818 800-543-3029 www.cpamutual.com

What I worry about?

- Estate tax returns Trustee Engagements
- Bankruptcy Trustees
- The economy/Credit crunch Audit fees under pressure
- New legal theories: i.e. "Deeping Insolvency"
- "kids" doing audits
- Electronic Discovery/Digital Files

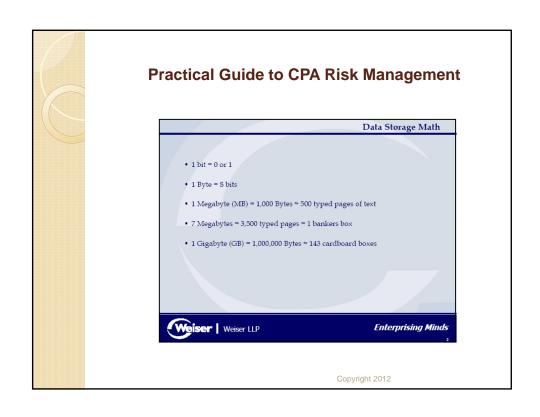
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### Defense Nightmares!

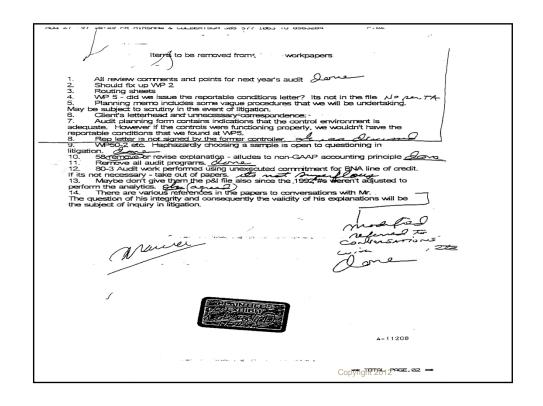
- Experience/Supervision
- IM: hey dude...the senior running this job is an idiot! Lol





### **Practical Guide to CPA Risk Management** Data Storage Math (Con't) Device Capacity Boxes Laptop Hard Drive 40 GB 5,714 DVD 4.7 GB 671 700 MB CD 100 Camera Card Thumb Drive 2 GB 286 USB Watch 256 MB USB Knife 256 MB 36 USB Pen 512 MB 72 4 GB 571 Web Storage (i.e. AOL) 285 2 GB 55.424 GB 7,914 Weiser | Weiser LLP Enterprising Minds Copyright 2012

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### WRAP UP

- > CLIENT SELECTION
- > CLIENT RETENTION
- > COMMUNICATION
- ➤ BE PRO-ACTIVE

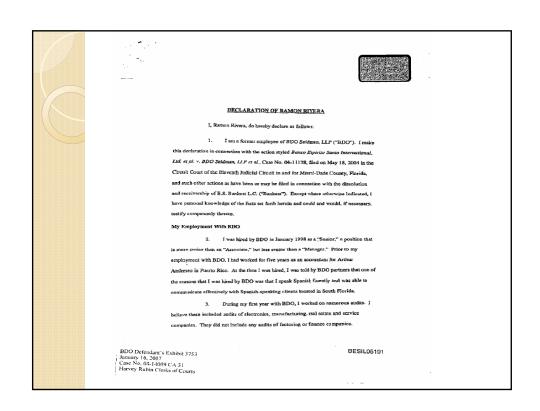
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### **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

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Bill Thompson
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800-543-3029
www.cpamutual.com



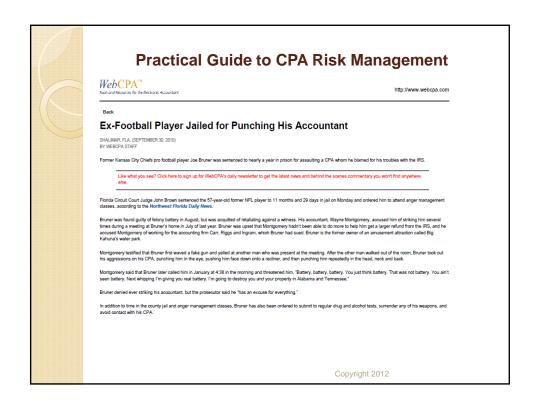
NEW CLIENT	ACCEPTANCE FORM		
Client: 6000	Year er	d:	
Completed by:	Date:		
INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be co before accepting a historical financial engagement, or an MAS engagement. Ba Company or Individual Data Sheet.	statement engagement, a	forecast or projection	
ACCEPTANCE QUESTIONNAIRE:		Yes No	
<ol> <li>Is there any reason to doubt the in</li> </ol>	tegrity of the company's		
management or officers?  2. Are we aware of any independence	problems or conflicts of		
interest because of relationships with 3. Are we aware of any fee collection p	roblems?		
<ol> <li>Does the fee arrangement violate Professional Conduct related to inde</li> </ol>	pendence?		
<ol><li>Is the expertise necessary to pe beyond our capabilities?</li></ol>	erform the engagement		
<ol><li>Is the staffing commitment required capabilities?</li></ol>	by the job beyond our		
<ol><li>Are there disagreements with accounting principles?</li></ol>	he present firm over		
Were any unusual matters noted financial statements?	on their most recent		
Is there anything about the engage undue exposure to third parties uncomfortable about being associate	or causes us to be		
COMMENTS: - A "yes" response does should be rejected. However, for any "ye explain the steps that we plan to take substantial fee deposit before work can sta	s" responses, indicate the na to mitigate the situation, e.c	ure of the problem and , closer supervision, a	
CONCLUSION: We should accept ☑ or a	not accept  the engagemen	-	
Engagement principal:	Date:		
Concurring principal:	Date:		

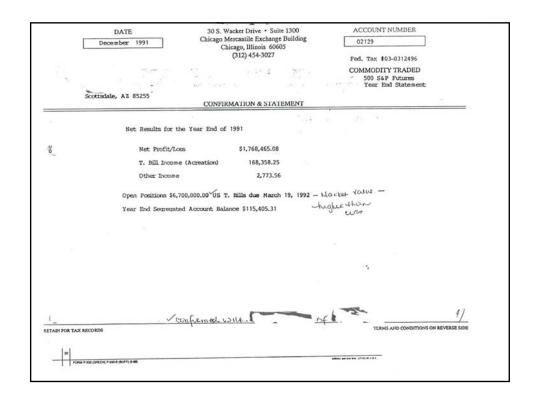


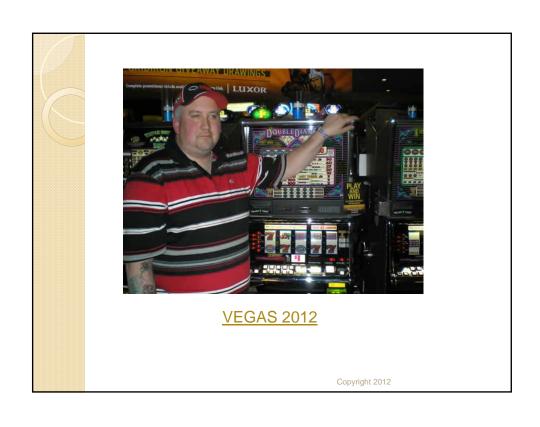
. . . . necessary in order to conduct the audits in accordance with generally accepted auditing 16. Mr. Pariapiano still refused to produce the necessary records. In all of my years of experience as an auditor, I had never encountered a client that refused to provide patently relevant information. Accordingly, when Mr. Parispiano declined to provide Capital's records, I instructed my staff to discontinue work on the sadit, not to report to Bankest the following work day, and to stop incurring time on the Bankest audit until further notice. BDO's Reaction to the Work Stoppage 17. Immediately after my conversation with Mr. Parlapiano, I called BDO's Miami offices. I discussed the details of my conversation with Krith Ellenberg, the Concurring Review Partner on the audit, since Sandy was not in the office that afternoon. Mr. Ellenberg agreed that BDO could not continue without the information requested from Bankest, namely the Capital records, and further agreed that it was appropriate to stop the audit. Accordingly, and counter to customary practice, BDO did not work on the Initial Audit over the weekend. 18. On Monday, I met with Sandy Lenner and Keith Ellenberg to discuss further the conduct of the Initial Audit and Mr. Parlapiano's refusal to permit BDO to access Capital's records. To clarify these matters, and in attempt to preserve the client relationship, we together contacted Mr. Perlapiano by telephone. Sandy was the principal speaker for BDO. BESIL05196 Copyright 2012

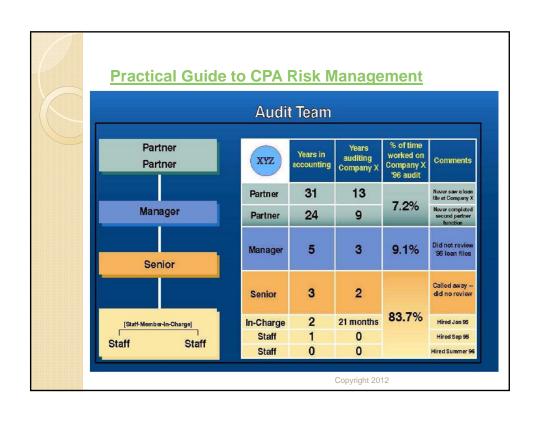
24. Following the meeting, Sandy came to my office and informed me that BDO would be continuing the audit. He told me that because I had not been in Miami for long, I did not understand that Mr. Parlapiano was an important person in the community. He said that he had known Mr. Parlapiano for many years and that they had developed a good professional relationship. He also noted that as a Manager, I should be looking for ways to bring in new business, and suggested that working for Bankest could lead to other work, through Mr. Parlapiano, the Orlanskys and affiliates of Bankest. He said that as time went on, I would better understand the management of client relationships.

25. Because BDO's practice was that a Manager acted at the direction of the Engagement Partner, I proceeded to complete the sudit according to Sandy's instruction.









"To be independent, the auditor must be intellectually honest; to be recognized as independent, he must be free from any obligation to or interest in the client, its management, or its owners.

Independent auditors should not only be independent in fact, they should avoid situations that may lead outsiders to doubt their independence."

AU §220 - Independence



## Recent Headlines from "accounting Today"

- "City Sues Accounting Firm over Bungled Audits" -06/11/12
- > "BDO to Pay \$50M for Tax Shelter Violations" 06/13/12
- > "Mayer Hoffman McCann to Pay \$300,000 Penalty for Municipal Audits" 06/04/12
- ➤ "Appeals Court Slaps Accounting Firm for Tax 'Screw Up'" 05/29/12
- > "PCAOB Sanctions Firm and CPA for China Audits" 05/23/12
- ➤ "Securities Class-Action Filings over Accounting Increase" 05/22/12