



# YOUR ACCOUNTANT'S ROLE IN END-OF-YEAR



It's traditional to have your accountant look over all your firm's financial statements at the very beginning of the year-end process. One reason is to spot and correct classification errors, such as rent posted as telephone. Another equally important reason is to take advantage of your accountant's expertise in finding reclassifications to help reduce your tax bill and to ensure compliance with all tax issues.

You might also consider meeting with your firm's accountant intermittently through the year, perhaps quarterly or even monthly if your goal is to take some of the chaos out of yearend, or to fully take advantage of your accountant's expertise without the pressure of yearend bearing down. Many firms spend dearly in added accounting costs each year because every piece of the year-end puzzle is pushed out to the frantic final weeks, days and even hours of the year-end procedure, when rush charges can accumulate rapidly and leave your firm with an extra expense you never planned for in budgeting.

If you're well-prepared at end-of-year and have closed the books each month, your accountant charges likely won't be much different for end-of-year service than they have been for getting help with end-of-month closeouts. It's even possible you'll save money over the year.

You're also more likely to have your accountant's full attention if you're not loading him or her down with everything at one time at the very last minute (never mind that your own attention span will be longer if you're not worried about every other detail still to be completed for year-end).

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*by Deborah J. Schaefer, CPA*