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comes up wanting, it's likely that your firm will as well. Remember, for many of your potential clients, their first impression of your firm will be via your website.

**Mary Girsch-Bock** • Dec. 18, 2019



Web visitors make snap judgements in under 5 seconds, and if your web design comes up wanting, it's likely that your firm will as well. Remember, for many of your potential clients, their first impression of your firm will be via your website. They

won't be walking into your office to assess your competency. Instead, they will sum

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Here are a few things you can do to keep visitors engaged on your website and ensure a favorable impression:

- Make sure your website loads fast. No one will stick around to see your great web design if it takes more than a few seconds to load.
- Give them a reason to stay on your site – and to return. Keep content fresh, change out photos and banners periodically, and get rid of out-of-date materials. If your website always looks fresh, your visitors will know you care about the impression you make, and that should carry over to their desire to interact with your firm.
- Keep your visitors engaged. Offer a free download, an online calculator, a free newsletter, or even a short eBook that they can download. Give them something to sign up for. Signing up is the first step to future engagement.
- Make your firm offerings clear. Now is not the time to be modest. Do you offer same-day appointments? Do you offer a free consultation? Display those offers prominently. If the details are buried under a ton of content, no one will take the time needed to find them. Give potential clients a reason to click on that Contact Us button.
- Mobile-friendly matters. More than 50 percent of first-time visitors to your website are likely accessing it from their cell phone. You can have the best web design in the universe, but if it doesn't show up well on a mobile device, this can deter possible clients.

Fortunately, you don't have to learn web design in order to have a beautifully created website. In fact, there are a variety of website design applications that take the complexity out of web design, making it easy to create and manage your website. These do-it-yourself applications include:

- [AccountantsWorld Website Relief](#)
- [Integer from Tenenz](#)
- [CCH Site Builder from Wolters Kluwer](#)

- [CPA Site Solutions](#)

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- [CPAsites from CPAsites.com](#)
- [GetNetSet for Accounting Firms](#)

Don't become a bad statistic because your website isn't up to today's demanding standards. Instead, use the tools and resources available in the applications above to help you create an informative, engaging website that visitors will choose to explore and return to again and again.

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### **Editor's Note:**

In many of the reviews included in *CPA Practice Advisor*, the product reviewed is recommended for a particular firm size. In the majority of instances, this information comes directly from the vendors themselves, as many of the software products on the market today are created with a particular end user in mind. However, when that information is not immediately provided, this recommendation can be derived from a variety of things, including the following:

- **Product plan options** – If a product offers scalability and a choice of several plans, that usually indicates that it's suitable for firms of any size. However, a single plan option with few add-on features usually means that the product will perform better for smaller firms or businesses.
- **Multi-user capability** – some applications offer limited user options. If this is the case, the product is typically better suited for smaller firms, since they will have a smaller number of users.
- **Price points** – pricing can sometimes play a role in determining the size firm a product is best suited for. For instance, while per-user pricing is an affordable option for firms with 10 or less users, it can quickly become a sticking point for firms with upwards of 50 users.

- Features – the number of features available in an application is often directly

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determine whether any product is suitable for your firm. We just try to point you in the right direction.

Firm Management

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