



NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

Release Date: November 1, 2007
Release Number: 07-75

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SBA TO PROVIDE SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE TO AMERICA'S CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

WASHINGTON -- Today the U.S. Small Business Administration announced it will partner with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) to train owners of small accounting firms on SBA products and services. SBA and AICPA have signed a Strategic Alliance Memorandum to share resources to help start, maintain and expand small businesses.

"America's accountants are an important part of the small business community so it is important to integrate SBA's resources with AICPA's," SBA Administrator Steve Preston said. "By working together, we can help more accountants start their own businesses, strengthen existing small accounting firms, and assist accountants who advise small business owners."

"We are very pleased with this alliance because it will help the great majority of CPAs who serve small businesses in America and further strengthen CPAs in their role as trusted advisers to small business leaders," said AICPA President and CEO Barry Melancon. "What we do really complements what the SBA does to promote small businesses, which are the engine of the U.S. economy. We are natural partners."

The SBA and AICPA alliance will accelerate the start-up of small accounting firms through training and outreach services. SBA will provide AICPA with timely information on the agency's programs, services and resource partners, advise them on events that will advance their mission, provide speakers at AICPA events, invite them to SBA-sponsored events, provide a hyperlink from SBA's Web site to AICPA's Web site, and assign a point of contact to serve as a liaison between SBA and AICPA.

As part of the pooling of resources, AICPA will cooperate with SBA and its resource partners to provide information to members about its businesses development programs and services, disseminate current SBA news and information, make an effort to provide speakers for SBA-sponsored events upon request, and provide a hyperlink from AICPA's Web site to SBA's Web site and assign a point of contact to serve as a liaison between AICPA and SBA.

This agreement, the first of its kind for SBA and the accounting sector, was implemented today and will last for two years. It was spearheaded by Regional Administrator William Manger of Region II located in New York City, NY.

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