

6 Ways To Grow Your QuickBooks ProAdvisor Practice

Growing your business as a sole practitioner can be a daunting task. I know this all too well! When I started Fourlane in 2009, it was just me. When my husband Rob and I relocated to the Austin area from California, I didn't know anyone and I needed to grow my business. I can't claim to know everything there is to know about growing a business, but I can share with you several strategies that worked for me. I hope these will help you build your practice, too.

1. Ensure you are included on basic web listings. Start with the basics. Make sure your listing on the Find-a-ProAdvisor website is accurate and updated. Spend at least 10-15 minutes each day on LinkedIn finding people to network with – either CPAs, accountants or other business professionals who can refer you or with owners of businesses in your target market. Also, don't forget about Yelp!. Believe it or not, small business advisors, accountants and coaches get business off of Yelp! I did a quick search for ProAdvisors in my local area and only found nine on Yelp!, and only four of those have reviews.

2. Specialization. The smaller your target market, the easier it is to find clients. Specialization can occur by the industry you serve or the services you offer. For example, marketing yourself as a ProAdvisor interested in the real estate world, hospitality/restaurants or the medical industry is much simpler than marketing yourself as just a QuickBooks ProAdvisor.

Specialization makes referrals easier! Colleagues within the same industry know others within that industry, and ask around when they need help. At Fourlane, our initial specialization was helping other ProAdvisors with technically complex projects, such as software conversions, integrations and customization. This helped us narrow our audience. At first, I worked with ProAdvisors to take projects they weren't interested in doing, and because I didn't want to steal their clients, they trusted us to work with them.

3. Build relationships. Most of the referrals I get are from the same people, over and over again. Similarly, I frequently refer to the same people and companies.

Find the people who refer you; deepen those relationships and reciprocate the referrals if you can. Make an effort to keep in touch on a regular basis so you stay top of mind. Depending on your practice, referrals may come from a colleague who has already built a large business, a financial planner, an attorney, and maybe, a vendor or another loyal client. Remember, referrals can come from anywhere when you cultivate good relationships. However, building relationships is easier said than done.

Start with one person. It can be someone you've done business with, a client or perhaps a new contact. Schedule a face-to-face coffee, lunch or a call. Go in with the idea that you are building a mutually beneficial relationship that will take time to grow. Be clear on what you're looking for with this person, and likewise, offer only what you can provide. Follow up. Repeat.

4. Find the route to revenue. When I first started out, I took any project I could. As I got busier, I got more selective and smarter. I realized some projects are simply more profitable. As Fourlane got into the Intuit Reseller Program, I found that some products provide more revenue than others.

Selling QuickBooks Enterprise, for example, provides ongoing commission, so not only do I provide a great product for my clients, but I also get compensated for doing so. Take time to analyze your own business and determine what projects and products are more profitable for you.

5. Be consistent. Growing your business requires consistency. If you decide to network through a community organization, attend every meeting you can. If you are going to send a newsletter, send it regularly. People need to be able to find you when they are ready to hire an accountant; it is about their timeline, not yours. Being consistent increases the likelihood that you are in the right place at the right time.

6. Partner for profitability. Partnering can catapult your business, but there are risks. Find ways to create low-risk partnerships to improve your competitive advantage, marketing efforts and technology. Something as simple as a mutual referral agreement can really make a difference in growing your business.

Being in business for yourself isn't for everyone. Finding clients, not having a team of people to support you and making enough money turn off many people. Fourlane is always looking for ProAdvisors interested in becoming full-time employees and serving our clients. We hire ProAdvisors, train them on our processes, then provide the clients so all you have to do is the work.

Here are some of the benefits:

- **Clients.** We have clients throughout the country that would like to work with local ProAdvisors. We will provide the clients. You do the work.
- **Regular pay check.** With Fourlane, you'll have a consistent paycheck that you can count on.
- **Perks and benefits.** In addition full medical, dental and vision plans unlimited PTO, 401K match and flex schedules, our wellness plans allows employees to earn cash for exercising. We reimburse 100% for all courses and training. We also offer a longevity bonus at the one-year and five-year anniversary.
- **Commissions.** Sell Intuit products through Fourlane and receive commissions.
- **Support.** Our dedicated account managers will deal with the initial client consultations and sales process.
- **Technical chops.** We have in-house developers integrating software and adding functionality for our clients.
- **Best practices.** Our team has done thousands of implementations, conversions and integration projects. We'll train you in our processes, teach you about the products we recommend and share best practices so you can improve your skills.
- **Sales / marketing tools.** Our marketing team works hard to keep get high-ranking search results from Google, which increases our inbound leads. Our sales team is tasked with following up and closing the deal before you ever work with the client.

Here's what our partner, Clare Schulter of CBI Consultants in Phoenix, had to say: "Fourlane makes growing my business easier. By partnering with Marjorie and her team, I'm getting new clients and valuable training, while maintaining my independent practice. It's a no-risk and full-benefit proposition!"

About Fourlane

Founded in 2009 in Austin, TX, Fourlane is an award winning professional services firm that provides a wide range of business services & solutions with a strong focus on Intuit QuickBooks and financial process efficiency.

Fourlane has several Certified QuickBooks ProAdvisors on staff and has been awarded #1 Intuit Reseller Partner of the Year every year since 2010.

Get help with finding, implementing and optimizing the right QuickBooks solution for your business today.

Industry Experts

We have worked with QuickBooks within virtually every industry and have the experience to make it work for your unique business, including:

- Accounting
- Agriculture
- Construction
- Distribution
- Education
- Engineering
- Financial Services
- Government
- Healthcare / Medical
- Information Technology
- Insurance
- Legal
- Manufacturing
- Nonprofit
- Professional Services
- Real Estate
- Retail/Hospitality
- Telecommunications