

> CATERING TO INTERNATIONAL CLIENTS' NEEDS

The Richmond, Va.-area firm Piascik & Associates continues to see remarkable growth in its service helping international companies opening business entities in the U.S. The Piascik Passport program is designed to address business and personal needs of executives and their families when dealing with relocation, says Steve Piascik, president and founder of P&A, one of the busiest niches of which is international taxation.

He cites language barriers, business tax and legal issues, time-zone differences, and cultural differences as among the many challenges for those relocating. Piascik Passport provides services from subletting an apartment to arranging for insurance and school enrollment for children, to arranging for transportation, hotels, and even groceries and doctor's appointments, among other services. Business-related services include subletting of office space, and arranging for meetings, payroll, Internet, phone, and cable service, mail processing and call answering (in the client company's native language, if need be).

"We literally take care of everything involved in setting up a company in the state of Virginia," says Piascik, who adds that the firm's service can sometimes also accommodate setting up businesses in other states, as well.

P&A's growing international practice spans seven countries and four continents, and the firm is engaged by other CPA firms across the country to handle international tax needs. Piascik himself also takes an annual trip to Europe, and says that a stop in Germany recently netted two new clients for the Passport service, which is offered only to existing P&A clients.

The service, which started after frequent requests from international clients, has some two-dozen clients, he says, most of which are establishing U.S. sales



Using the Media to Attract Clients

Starting a media campaign can be daunting and befuddling, but pinpointing your ideal client and pacing your marketing for such clients are the keys to success, according to Derrick Kinney, author of *Master the Media to Attract Your Ideal Clients* (published by John Wiley and Sons). Points to consider first when approaching a media campaign include:

- What is the one characteristic that makes you and your business unique?
- Define your ideal client by age, minimum investment levels, income levels, specific industries, and other appropriate details.
- List three clients you have now who fit in the "ideal" category.
- How did they become your clients?
- What media outlets would best reach your ideal clients?
- Which of your strengths could be leveraged into media activities to attract more people in the "ideal" category?

Following up on the answers to these questions should include a "10-day action plan" for media involvement, including performing the above research on your "ideal client," then collecting contact information from your local media. Then identify what outlets you want to reach, and, by day six, send introductory notes to your media outlets. "Repeat this step every two to four weeks," Kinney recommends.

By day seven, e-mail local media about breaking financial news, such as a Fed meeting or local economic report about to be released. Send this two to four hours before the event is to occur. On day eight, have color headshots taken of you, and write and edit a press release announcing an award you received or recounting something you've done. Mail this release and picture to your local "executives on the move" or "people" sections editor, Kinney advises, and repeat this step every four weeks.

On day nine, contact your local newspapers and specialized business newspapers about submitting a guest financial column that would be of interest to their readers. Tell them you'd like to know if they could run your article on a space-available basis.

Finally, on day 10, establish a spreadsheet to monitor your progress.

distributorships but who also include domestic companies looking to establish operations on the East Coast. "It really does strengthen the relationship," he adds, "and we've been getting one of these clients a month."

By way of fees, a virtual office but not a dedicated space runs a Passport client some \$400 a month, says Piascik. P&A charges \$85 an hour for ancillary services to facilitate a move. P&A also makes sure all international

clients have been credentialed by the government.

Passport is pulling its weight in a firm that has already experienced fast growth, says Piascik.

"When we started this service in 2001, we had one partner and seven employees. This July, we'll be bringing aboard our second partner, and we have 27 staffers," he says. Passport has also had to start a waiting list for clients who want office space.

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