

Netwatch

By Jim Carroll

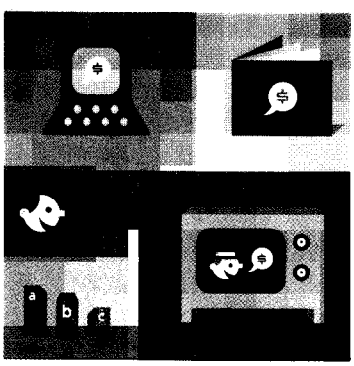
Your guide to business & accounting on the Internet

Get in the loop

As futurist Lewis Perelman said, "Learning is what most adults will do for a living in the 21st century." This is particularly true for chartered accountants, because our work — whether in industry or public practice — has become increasingly specialized over time.

To develop knowledge on an ongoing basis, we need to "learn how to learn" all over again. This process includes researching and keeping up to date with areas of expertise through industry-specific print publications.

The Internet can be a powerful ally to this end. Start by searching for the many newsletters, magazines and journals related to a particular industry or issue. You can often find these by turning to associations to see if they sponsor publications for their members (as the CICA does with *CAmagazine*).



An excellent launch point is the site for the American Society of Association Executives, which features a fabulous database of several thousand associations. Find the industry groups that are pertinent to your work and see if they have publications that focus on that industry. You might be lucky enough to find the publication's material posted online (again, as with CAmagazine.com), but if not, at least you can assess whether or not you want to subscribe. Unfortunately, the Canadian equivalent, known as the Canadian Society of Association Executives, doesn't provide a similar free searchable online database. But once you find a US association, you can use a search engine such as Google to find a matching Canadian association.

Also seek out non-association sponsored magazines. The Canadian Magazine Publishers Association's magazine database will help with a general search of Canadian publications. But to really hit paydirt, go to the mother of all searchable publications sites known as PubList. Here, you'll find particular topics or industry publications from some 150,000 worldwide sources.

From there, you will also find the PubList Table of Contents service, which allows you to search the table of contents of thousands of specialized journals — or be notified when new information appears. How does it work? Let's say you specialize in providing professional services to the oil and gas industry. Visit PubList TOC, and set yourself up so that as soon as publications such as *Oil & Gas Law and Taxation Review* or *Oil and Energy Trends* go to print, you'll get an e-mail with the table of contents. A quick scan, and you'll see if there are any articles of interest. You can even buy the specific article online.

Don't restrict yourself to mainstream publications — there are thousands of specialized print newsletters, some of which can be accessed online, as well as online publications called "e-zines." To discover any useful information within this treasure trove, do a search within Ezine-Universe.

Last but not least, seek out specialized industry portals (sites aimed at members of a particular industry) as they may contain daily or weekly summaries of relevant news stories. Paperloop.com offers a great example of this, but there are hundreds if not thousands of such online sites.

Jim Carroll, FCA, is a well-known speaker, author and columnist. Reach him at jcarroll@jimcarroll.com or log on to his website at www.jimcarroll.com

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC PUBLICATIONS

American Society of Association Executives
http://info.asaenet.org/gateway/OnlineAssocSlist.html

CMPA database of Canadian Magazines

www.genuine-article.ca

PubList www.publist.com

Ezine-Universe http://ezine-universe.com

PaperLoop Daily news
http://www.paperloop.com/news_index.fhtml