



Looking for an Anchor in a Stormy Sea? Shore up the Foundation, Stay Alert for Opportunity.

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The news is unsettling these days: the economy, bailouts, business failures, fair value accounting, and disaster recovery. Much of this drama is swirling around issues of valuation, liquidity, damages, and perhaps fraud; these are matters with which we have some familiarity. I notice the calls from clients are more frequent; they are asking for advice and a translation of the day's headlines. This is an opportunity to extend your reach, tell people about what you know, start a blog, post on your website, call a local reporter or write an editorial, or speak to a local group. I recently watched this unfold for a friend and had one of those "aha" moments. Here is another way to use the media to spread a message besides the usual press release. It's not complicated: choose a topic and take action. Start with your local paper, make the topic something you feel comfortable with and have some energy around, ideally connected to a recent headline. My friend wrote about veterans issues, one of his passions. Since the publication, he has received weekly responses from people in his community. He reconnected with some "dead" prospects and made some new ones. All for a few hours of "thinking time" and at no charge to him. He plans to follow up with another article about another topic he cares about: his commercial real estate business. I think he is hooked—last week he was on local talk radio. If you have been thinking about writing, remember that NACVA has your very own Dave Dix, found at DaveD1@nacva.com, to help you get started. I am told it is surprisingly simple to get on the radio; I'll let you know when I learn more. Meanwhile, go register at the NACVA Speakers Bureau.

I've been reaching out to other membership organizations around the country to pitch the idea of collaborating with NACVA chapters. Sometimes it seems it takes a while to get responses. Often, I find that my best efforts to communicate the "mutual benefit" are lost on the target; lately it seems that people are too busy running hard to step back and think about the new idea. It's a time of mergers, restructuring, and belt tightening. . . uncertainty. It is also the time to redouble our marketing efforts and strive to think outside the box and remember the basics. Recently, I asked a new acquaintance at a networking event, "How can I help you?" After listening to his story, I realized we shared some common challenges in businesses that, at first, did not seem all that similar. We found a common thread: we both want to build business partner relationships for our "components" (that's industry speak for chapter). So, we begin a dialogue that covers a range of possible collaborations. This reminded me to stay ready, with open ears and an open mind for the next opportunity. This is a process and takes more time than I expected. Such is marketing, to be successful; it must never stop, especially when the storms come. If you have not defined your plan, pick up a copy of "No More Cold Calling" or attend one of the webinars available through NACVA. JoAnne Black has written an easy to read "guide" to get you started on the path to referral marketing. With assignments at the end of each chapter, it is a good way to put your plan together and into action or to teach staff how they can support firm efforts. Now, I have to retrieve my copy of the book, which has disappeared into my husband's office.

A fellow member and chapter president recently reported of a success of his persistent efforts to reach out to the legal community. After months of offering expertise on a "list serve" he received a request for paid

services on a litigation matter. The lawyer chose him because he had served the group, knew his craft and was diligent at helping others. "How can I help you?" came to mind. It also reinforced the idea that the way to raise awareness in the community is to provide knowledge to those who want it. This year I have seen an increase in the number of remote CPE/CLE offerings, online and in webinar format, targeted to the legal community about valuation and forensic issues. The delivery model makes sense: "in the comfort of your own office" is a strong draw. To capture some of this opportunity, the state chapter committee is putting together the first "seminar in a box" for state chapter use. Our goal is to make it easy to take your valuation expertise to the referral sources, the legal community. We have a team working on the project; if you would like to participate, e-mail me at SimoneH1@nacva.com. We hope to test it before year-end and make it available for use at the chapter level in 2009.

As I speak to leaders around the country, I hear one consistent theme: Case Analysis "rocks." This is an offering that can be shared more widely, as many of our members have not had access to a "live" session. If you'd like to take part in such a round table discussion and your chapter is not offering it, find a boardroom, invite a few colleagues, and send me or NACVA's Executive Director Pam Bailey an e-mail at PamB1@nacva.com. We have a turnkey package for under two hours that is a nationwide favorite.

Congratulations to the new chapter leaders who are reaching out and staking new ground. In upstate New York, the Carolinas, Arizona, Texas, Pennsylvania, and others there are meetings coming together and new seeds being planted. Our new chapter leaders' calls have been a good exchange of information. With so much collaboration between NACVA, state societies, and other organizations, there is an unprecedented number of offerings and opportunities for all of us. What a great time to be a part of the organization. Chapters are also forging new partnerships sharing information and talent, saving hours of time and raising the quality of meetings. After months of planning, the final state chapter agenda for 2008 is finally coming together. Along with some excellent work by Pat Perzel, Darrell Dorrell, Kristopher Boushie, and Dermot O'Neill in forensics and litigation, the Internal Revenue Service will be addressing a popular topic, "*What the Valuation Professional Must Know in Practice before the IRS.*" It promises to be an opportunity for chapters to end the year with a bang. This is the ideal event to invite professionals who are aligned with our practices and begin to build relationships that will lead to mutual benefits down the road. To find your local meeting, visit www.nacva.com or call or e-mail your chapter officers to learn when and where your chapter is hosting this meeting. There's still time to put it all together for December. It should be big, so consider pitching in with the preparations and planning. Take on the press contacts, arrange the venue, host the speaker(s), or sponsor the event. These are all helpful and short-term commitments that can benefit not only your chapter but also your business network. Certainly the chapter leaders will welcome another set of hands. If it goes well, we'll do more programs like this. Remember, without your help, none of this is possible. Together we can continue to be the premiere membership organization serving the consulting disciplines. Thank you to all, whose hard work and dedication to the State Chapters and members of NACVA make this possible.

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Local state chapter events provide members valuable opportunities to: (1) promote CVAs, AVAs, CFFAs, and NACVA within the community, (2) create a platform to network and develop mentoring relationships with other members, (3) deliver relevant industry-related information and educate members on the range of support available as benefits of membership, and, (4) receive economical CPE on timely and relevant topics pertinent to valuation and litigation forensic services.

I encourage NACVA members to take advantage of these opportunities, sharing ideas and educating one another on current issues facing the business valuation, litigation, and financial forensics/fraud consulting communities. To help facilitate and address such issues, NACVA provides presentation materials for three half-day state chapter meetings each year on topics of current interest.

Contact your local state chapter president to let him/her know of your interest in attending a meeting, being a presenter, or assisting in preparing the materials for a future meeting.