

NUMBERS & SENSE

The Official Publication of CPB Canada - The National Certifying Body for Bookkeepers in Canada | Q1 2026

The Future of Bookkeeping

Building High-Performing Teams Offshore and at Home

Caffeine, Chaos and Clients
Five Tips to Turn Tax Time Into Coaching Opportunities

Boundaries in a Client-First Industry
How Clear Limits Support Better Work and Sustainable Service

Surprise! 10 Practical Ways Bookkeepers Can Use AI
It's Not Just for Writing Emails



CERTIFIED
PROFESSIONAL
BOOKKEEPERS
OF CANADA

get nnected

by Intuit QuickBooks



Get Connected with your community!

Join us for Get Connected, QuickBooks' annual must-attend event for accounting professionals. Build meaningful connections, collaborate with industry experts, and discover the latest innovations in QuickBooks on the Intuit Platform.

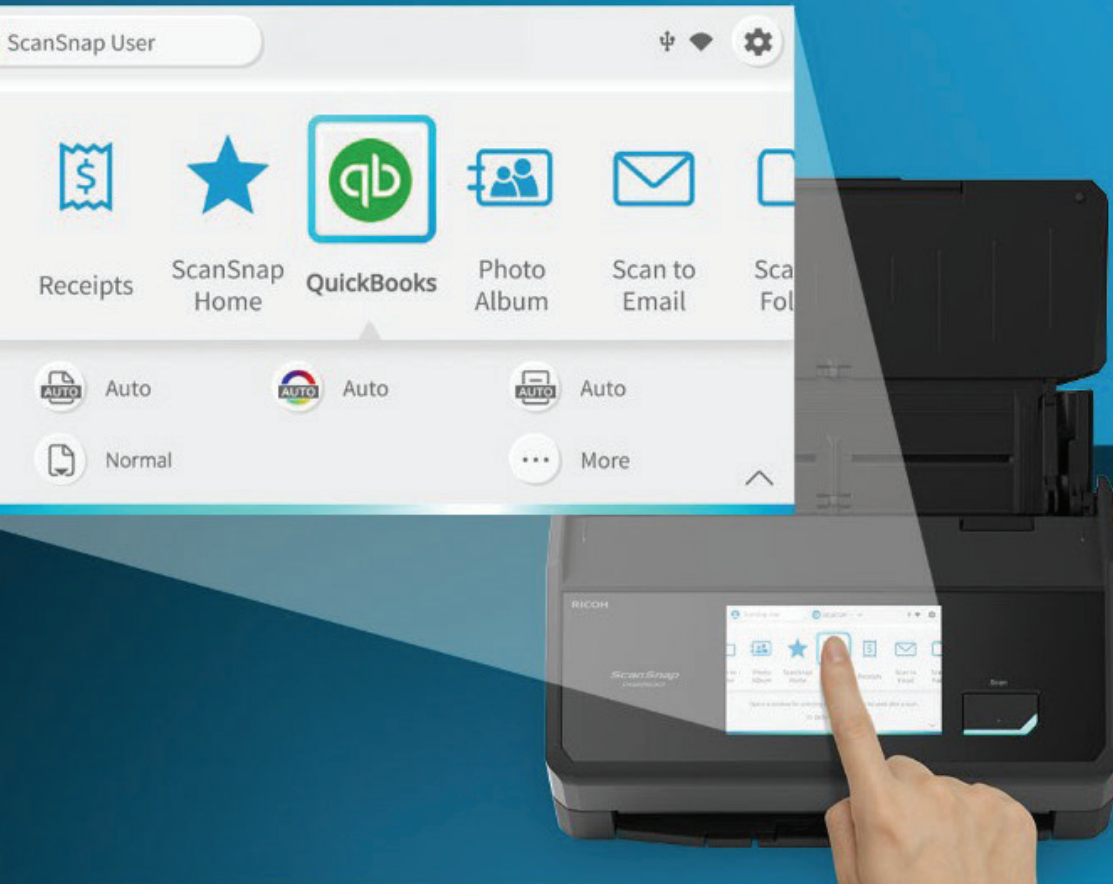
Find an event in a city near you:

- Laval: May 14, 2026
- Calgary: May 25-26, 2026
- Toronto: June 17-18, 2026





ScanSnap
iX2500
Receipt Edition



Wrangle your receipts.

The new **ScanSnap iX2500 Receipt Edition** continues to set the standard for ease, efficiency, and image quality with exclusive invoice and receipt processing features.

Scan receipt data directly into an existing **QuickBooks®** account and streamline your experience with the customizable touchscreen.

[SCANSNAP.CA](https://www.pfu-ca.ricoh.com)



Note: QuickBooks® software, service and/or subscription are not included with purchase.

ScanSnap and the ScanSnap logo are registered trademarks of PFU Limited. QuickBooks® is a registered trademark of Intuit Inc. Other product names are the trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies. Specifications are subject to change without notice. Visit the PFU Canada Inc., a Ricoh company, website for more information.

<https://www.pfu-ca.ricoh.com> © PFU Canada Inc. 2026



ignition[★]

Reclaim time. Unlock your revenue.

Ignition helps accounting and bookkeeping firms reclaim time, profitability and cash flow. Automate proposals, billing, payments collection and workflows in a single platform.

★★★★★ Based on thousands of reviews



“Ignition was a game changer for Brigade. Not only did Ignition make our billing process so much more efficient, we also have an organized proposal process and standardized services and fees. I highly recommend giving Ignition a chance and making your life easier by worrying less about how you are going to get paid.”

Nely Oakes, Brigade Bookkeeping



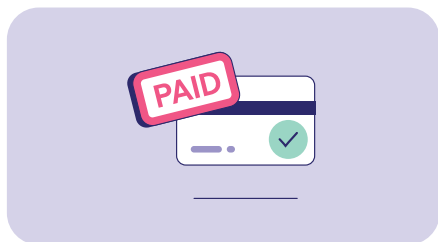
Reclaim time

Ignition makes it easy to engage clients with online proposals and engagement letters that are simple to prepare and send in minutes.



Reclaim revenue

Engage clients with a clear scope of work, fees and payment terms from day one. When the scope changes, simply adjust your services or bill for ad hoc work.



Eliminate accounts receivable

Ignition collects payment details upfront in proposals to ensure you get paid. Once clients sign, we'll also automate invoicing and payment collection.

Over **1.5 million**
clients engaged

Over **3.2 million**
proposals accepted

Over **8.2 million**
payment transactions



Getting started is simple and free. See why thousands of accounting, bookkeeping, and professional services businesses use Ignition to grow their business.
Start your 14-day free trial.

Simplify Your CAS Stack Manage Every Client in One Place

- ✓ Access on the go with mobile app
- ✓ Streamline your workflows and tasks
- ✓ Collect data with customizable forms
- ✓ Spend less time following up with clients
- ✓ Organize and share documents securely
- ✓ Send email and chat from within the app

Basil is a one stop shop for all my accounting records, maintains all my eSignature needs, and provides a task management tool. The software team at Basil is very knowledgeable, kind, and considerate. I like that I can call for service and get a live human being who is very knowledgeable about the product and then provides a solution to the issue that I might be facing.

- Lola D. of Accounting Made Easy

Have Questions?  855.448.7269  [GETBASIL.APP](https://www.getbasil.app)

SCAN QR CODE



FOR FREE TRIAL

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Cover Story



18

The Future of Bookkeeping Building High-Performing Teams Offshore and at Home

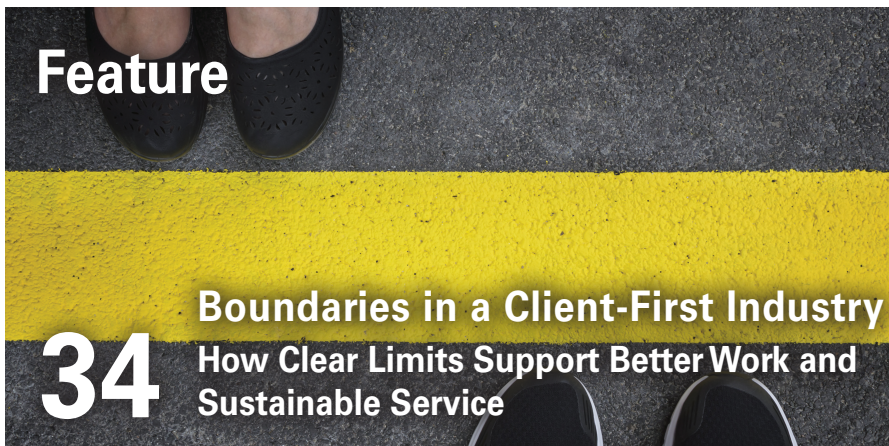
Feature



28

Caffeine, Chaos and Clients Five Tips to Turn Tax Time Into Coaching Opportunities

Feature



34

Boundaries in a Client-First Industry How Clear Limits Support Better Work and Sustainable Service

Feature



38

Surprise! 10 Practical Ways Bookkeepers Can Use AI It's Not Just For Writing Emails

NUMBERS & SENSE

VOLUME 5 / NUMBER 1 Q1 2026

Published for



**CPB
CANADA**

**CERTIFIED
PROFESSIONAL
BOOKKEEPERS
OF CANADA**

594-1000 Innovation Dr., Ottawa, ON K2K 3E7
Phone: 1-866-616-4722 | info@cpbc.ca | www.cpbc.ca

Chief Executive Officer
Rick Johal, CAE, MPA

Numbers & Sense magazine is published four times per year in print and digital format for the Certified Professional Bookkeepers of Canada (CPB Canada).

Published by

davis
media company

63 Albert St., Ste. 601, Winnipeg, MB R3B 1G4

Phone: 888-705-8870

Email: sean@davismediaco.com
www.davismediaco.com

President
Sean Davis

Vice-President and Publisher
Jay Cumming

Vice-President of Sales and Marketing
Kara Di Paolo

Managing Editor
Naomi Lakritz

Account Executives
Melissa Chisholm
Keli Tomlinson

Marketing Assistant
Gisselle Ferrer

Design and Layout
Sivananthan Kannan

© 2026 THE DAVIS MEDIA COMPANY INC.

All rights reserved. The contents of this publication may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the publisher.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed by the authors and/or editorial sources contained in *Numbers & Sense* are those of the respective parties and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the publisher of *Numbers & Sense*.

Table of Contents Photos:

© Zoomik/shutterstock.com

© PeopleImages/shutterstock.com

© Natasa Adzic/shutterstock.com

© dodotone/shutterstock.com

© AYO Production/shutterstock.com

© ronstik/shutterstock.com

© temp64GTX/shutterstock.com

© ImageFlow/shutterstock.com

© Fit Zstudio/shutterstock.com

Publications Mail Agreement # 43361037

Return undeliverable

Canadian addresses to

The Davis Media Company Inc.

Please recycle where facilities exist.





It's not just a payment. It's a cash flow decision.

Your clients rely on you to help keep their business moving. But when cash is tight, even the best plans fall apart.



Telpay helps bookkeepers take the guesswork out of payments —

So your clients can schedule with confidence, and you can support them with the visibility and control they need to stay cash flow positive.

With Telpay, you can:



Upload invoices and auto-create payments — no duplicate entry



Schedule payments to match incoming revenue



Route approvals without sharing banking access



Batch CRA, payroll, and vendor payments from one dashboard



Cut hours from your weekly workflow



Let us show you what Telpay can do for you.

Let's Get Started

sales@telpay.ca
800-665-0302

Book a Demo

telpay.ca

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

DEPARTMENTS



CEO's Corner

8

Building a Future-Ready Foundation for Canadian Bookkeepers

Message from the Board Chair

10

Managing Stress During Tax Season

Tax Sense

15

The 2025 Federal Budget Strengthens Crypto-Asset Regulation, Taxation, Compliance and Enforcement

HR Sense

17

The HR Reset for 2026

Risk Sense

42

Safeguarding Your Practice With E&O Insurance

CPB Canada 2025-2026 Board of Directors



Melissa Lenos, CPB, PCP
Chair



Karolina Francis, CPB
Vice-Chair



Steve Camilleri, CB, CPB
Treasurer



Christie Craven, CPB
Director



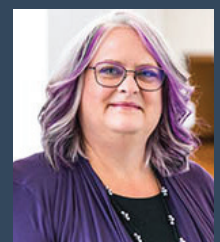
Rachel Devine, CPB
Director



Bonnie Jensen-Walker, CPB, PLP
Director



Kimme Lafayette, CPB
Director



Teresa Slack, CPB
Director



Kristin Thompson, CPB
Director



Joti Vallabh, CPB, CPA(SA)
Director



Diandra Whymns, CPB, PCP
Director



Margaret Wiltshire, CPB
Director



By Rick Johal, CAE, MPA
CEO
Certified Professional Bookkeepers of Canada

Building a Future-Ready Foundation for Canadian Bookkeepers

As the leading resource for Canada's bookkeeping community, CPB Canada is committed to meeting our members' current needs while proactively preparing for the future. Over the past year, we invested significant effort in overhauling our core technology infrastructure. This

strategic investment ensures CPB Canada remains at the forefront of professional associations and builds a foundation ready for the challenges ahead.

Our new technology environment rests on four interconnected pillars: a contemporary Association Management System

(AMS) powered by Salesforce, a modern credentialing tool powered by Credivera, a best-in-class Learning Management System (LMS) and a revamped corporate website. Together, these upgrades will transform our operations and, most importantly, enhance how we serve our community.



© ANEL ALJAGIC / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

The new AMS is the digital backbone of this transformation, replacing our outdated system and providing robust options to streamline membership renewals and communications. Through integration with tools like MailChimp, we can now deliver personalized, relevant information tailored to your interests, moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach. This shift enables our team to concentrate on what matters most: creating value for our members.

A major enhancement for your professional journey is the introduction of Credivera, a new credentialing tool. This platform simplifies the management of your certification and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) while offering verified credentials. This innovation, coupled with recent

policy changes, makes compliance easy and intuitive. Our CPB holders will have a verifiable record of their professional achievements, further elevating them in the marketplace.

To meet market demands, the association developed a new LMS. This dedicated e-learning platform will host our professional development offerings, including new and future courses, as well as our certification exams, providing a centralized, user-friendly hub for your professional development.

Finally, we are pleased to upgrade our corporate website, which will speak more directly to our identity and purpose while featuring new tools such as groups, discussion forums and an improved member directory, fostering a more connected and engaged community.

We recognize that change can be challenging, but these enhancements offer immediate benefits. Engaging with CPB Canada will now be a smoother experience — from application to renewal — providing easier access to educational content and more meaningful ways to connect. For CPB Canada, these upgrades expand our capacity for growth, optimize our functionality and elevate the standard of service we deliver.

Implementing AMS changes is the association equivalent of open-heart surgery, and we are proud to have successfully navigated this pivotal moment. By investing in critical infrastructure, we are not just keeping pace with change — we are leading it. CPB Canada remains the trusted home for bookkeepers across Canada. 🌟

IMAGINE... A CHAIR WITHOUT A DESK

Let go of the stress and embrace the relief.
We can help you sell your practice.
Contact us on [APS.net](https://www.aps.net)



Free Valuation



DELIVERING RESULTS - ONE PRACTICE AT A TIME

Sonia Albert sonia@aps.net 1 877 606-8622 - Alan M. Liverman alan@aps.net 1 514 819-8088

Message from the Board Chair



By Melissa Lenos, CPB, PCP
Board Chair
Certified Professional Bookkeepers of Canada

Managing Stress During Tax Season

Every year, the early stages of tax season bring a familiar wave of stress for firms, bookkeepers and clients alike. T slips fail to file correctly, system delays appear without warning and the Canada Revenue Agency takes Represent a Client accounts offline for additional days in 2026. These disruptions create uncertainty when precision and timeliness matter most. As professionals, we understand that our clients expect us to anticipate challenges before they

arise, and our team members rely on us to create an environment where planning is not optional but essential.

Successful firms follow a simple cycle: we learn, plan and execute. This rhythm is the backbone of our work and it becomes even more critical as external pressures mount. The tax landscape is evolving and expectations on firms grow with it. Clients want faster turnaround, more accurate reporting and seamless communication. Team

members want clarity, structure and tools that enable them to perform at their best. Meeting these expectations requires more than technical knowledge. It requires operational resilience.

Technology plays a central role in that resilience. It stores our passwords, generates our two-factor authentication codes and houses the systems we use to process, reconcile and report financial information. We rely on it to move documents, track workflows and maintain



© NATEE MEEPIAN / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



© BLACK SALMON / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

compliance. In many ways, technology has become the silent partner in every bookkeeping and accounting practice. When it functions well, it enables us to work efficiently and deliver exceptional service. When it fails, the entire operation can come to a standstill.

Downtime is not merely an inconvenience. It is a direct hit to productivity and revenue. When systems go down, billable hours vanish. Deadlines become harder to meet. Staff lose momentum and clients lose confidence. Even a short disruption can create a ripple effect that lasts for days. In 2026, the firms that will thrive are those that treat technology not as a background tool but as a critical component of strategic planning.

Building resilience requires proactive thinking. Firms must evaluate their current systems, identify vulnerabilities and invest in solutions that reduce risk. This may include stronger authentication processes, more reliable document management platforms or back-up

systems that ensure continuity when primary tools fail. It also requires clear communication with clients so they understand the realities and the steps being taken to protect their information and maintain service quality.

Early tax season stress will always exist, but it does not need to control a well-prepared firm's workflow. With thoughtful planning, strong technological infrastructure and a commitment to continuous improvement, bookkeepers and accounting professionals can navigate the challenges ahead with confidence. The goal is not to eliminate every obstacle but to build a practice that remains steady, even when the unexpected happens. 🌈

LIVE & ON-DEMAND COURSES.
EXPERT CANADIAN INSTRUCTORS.
PRACTICAL, REAL-WORLD APPLICATION.

A trusted leader in online CPD since 2003



BEHIND EVERY CONFIDENT CLIENT IS A BOOKKEEPER WHO STAYS CURRENT

Staying ahead of tax updates, reporting requirements and regulatory changes is crucial. AJAG delivers practical, compliance-focused professional development designed for Canadian accounting and bookkeeping professionals.

No fluff. No theory-heavy lectures. Just clear instruction you can apply immediately in your client work.

Our full 2026 course schedule launches this May.



SCAN OR VISIT [AJAG.CA/BOOKKEEPERS](https://ajag.ca/bookkeepers) TO LEARN MORE



Five ways bookkeepers can pick a secure technology partner

As a bookkeeper, you're entrusted with some of your clients' most critical and personal data – a responsibility we know you don't take lightly! But with cybersecurity threats (and the best practices to protect against them) evolving so rapidly, it can be hard to know what to look for in a partner beyond a promise that they'll safeguard your clients' data.

If you're looking to dig a little deeper, here are five key security features that'll help you evaluate how well you can rely on your technology partners to keep your and your clients' information safe and secure.

1. Whether or not data stays in Canada

As part of their work with you, your partner will inevitably end up transferring data that contains personal information to a data centre for storage or processing. And while the physical location of that data centre may not seem relevant to your consideration process at first glance, it's actually an important consideration from a privacy and liability perspective.

In Canada, different industries and organizations are governed by federal and/or provincial privacy

legislation, all of which have stringent requirements for data protection, including those around transferring data across borders.

A bookkeeper risks not only losing client trust, but also being fined with hefty penalties if they fail to ensure personal information is appropriately safeguarded in accordance with applicable Canadian law when transferring data across Canadian borders. Accordingly, teaming up with a partner that stores data in Canadian data centres may assist you in complying with Canadian privacy legislation.

2. Whether or not data is encrypted, regardless of its status

Encrypting data is one of the best ways to keep it from being accessed by unauthorized users. It essentially renders your clients' information useless to anyone who tries to access it without the highly-protected encryption key that "unlocks" (or decrypts) the data.

To best protect your clients, your partner should be adhering to the highest industry standards for data encryption – whether that data is at rest or is being communicated or transferred. Ideally, each of your clients' databases should be fully and uniquely encrypted.

3. Whether or not application security has been considered at each stage – from development to daily monitoring

Application security shouldn't be an afterthought! Any potential partner offering built-in-house software solutions should have application security baked into the development process and rigorously, repeatedly tested from day one. That way, by the time it makes it to the end user (that's you!), you can feel confident that it's passed tests administered by both humans and machines under all sorts of conditions – no stone unturned.

But like we said earlier, the landscape of cybersecurity changes lightning-quick... so it's equally important that application security is frequently tested and protected even after a solution's already been launched. Look for a partner who does both!

4. Whether or not network activity is top of mind

Similar to application security, your partner should also be judicious when it comes to the monitoring, testing and protection of their own network. They should have a knowledgeable team of security experts and partners of their own who assist with assessing the state of their network security and applying upgrades wherever needed. Don't be afraid to ask questions about how they manage this within their own business.

5. Whether or not multi-factor authentication is available

Yes, we can hear your groans of impatience from here... and yes, we know that multi-factor authentication (MFA) adds a step. But by requiring anyone on your team who accesses your clients' data to verify their ID through more than just a username and password, your partner is safeguarding this information on your behalf that much more effectively. We promise – it's worth the additional few seconds that it'll take to log in! Look for a technology partner that offers or mandates MFA as part of their login process.

Remember: in the world of cybersecurity, it's always better to be proactive than reactive. Your clients depend on you to keep their data safe, and the right partner can help you do just that.

And in the meantime, check out Payworks' comprehensive **Security Best Practices EBook** for guidance and easy tips on how you and your team can help safeguard your client's data (and your own!) with confidence.



Payroll shouldn't put your clients at risk.

Errors. Deadlines. Compliance stress.

As an accountant or bookkeeper, your reputation depends on accuracy.

When payroll systems fail, you're the one fixing filings, chasing support, and calming worried clients.

Evolv prevents the problems before they happen.

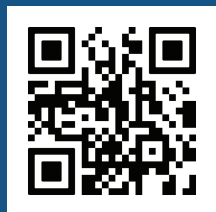
Accurate runs.
Built-in compliance.
Automated workflows.

So payroll just simply works the way it should.



Switch to Evolv today.

Start in minutes or connect with our team.
Scan the QR code to get started.



The 2025 Federal Budget Strengthens Crypto-Asset Regulation, Taxation, Compliance and Enforcement

By David J. Rotfleisch, CPA, CA, JD

Canada's 2025 federal budget significantly escalates its regulatory and enforcement approach to crypto-assets. Beyond deferring the Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework (CARF), the budget introduces a long-awaited legislative regime for fiat-backed stablecoins and channels substantial new resources toward enforcement, signalling the government's intent to bring digital assets fully under financial oversight.

Bookkeepers and accountants play a critical role in helping clients navigate these changes, particularly when it comes to accurate record-keeping and compliance reporting.

Strengthening Reporting — CARF's Legal Foundation

The budget formalizes plans to implement the OECD-aligned CARF by introducing draft legislation

that would add a new Part XXI to the *Income Tax Act*.

Crypto-asset service providers (CASPs) will face extensive reporting obligations, including the collection of identity and transaction data on "reportable persons" — such as names, addresses, dates of birth and transaction-level information — and filing annual returns with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Transactions subject to reporting include crypto-to-fiat trades, crypto-to-crypto exchanges and large-value payments or transfers.

Although CARF's official effective date is delayed to January 1, 2027, the draft legislation anticipates that CASPs will begin due diligence and data collection as soon as 2026. This early compliance period gives



David J. Rotfleisch

service providers time to prepare internal controls, data systems and onboarding procedures.

Accountants and bookkeepers need to ensure that all client transactions, across multiple wallets and exchanges, are accurately captured

to support future CARF reporting requirements.

Regulating Stablecoins

Budget 2025 introduces the first legislative framework for fiat-backed stablecoins issued by non-prudentially regulated entities.

Under this regime, issuers must maintain robust reserves, implement formal redemption policies and establish risk-management systems. They are also required to protect user data and meet national-security safeguards. Amendments to the *Retail Payments Activities Act* bring payment service providers that use prescribed stablecoins under federal oversight.

The stablecoin legislation is paired with targeted funding to support regulatory operations. The Bank of Canada will oversee reserves and compliance with prescribed standards, creating a structured and secure pathway for stablecoin issuance and use in Canada's payments ecosystem.

Accounting professionals should be aware that stablecoin transactions will also be subject to tracking and reporting requirements, emphasizing the importance of capturing all stablecoin movements in accounting records.



© INSTA / PHOTOS SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



© MOJO CP / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Enforcement and Compliance Initiatives

Budget 2025 signals a stronger enforcement posture for digital assets. Funding is allocated to expand the CRA's Digital Compliance Division and develop blockchain-forensic capabilities. The government also proposes to establish a financial crimes agency this year to consolidate expertise in combating financial crime, money laundering and illicit finance.

The combination of expanded reporting, enhanced CRA capabilities and additional enforcement resources equips authorities to identify, investigate and deter non-compliance more effectively. Bookkeepers will need to maintain precise and thorough records to ensure clients' crypto activity can be supported in case of CRA review or audit. This includes reconciling all transactions from multiple exchanges, wallets and other platforms.

Taxation of Crypto-Assets

Canada continues to treat crypto-assets under general income tax principles. How the CRA taxes a crypto transaction depends on the taxpayer's activity.

For individuals holding crypto as a long-term investment, gains or losses from disposition are generally treated as capital gains or losses, with 50 per cent of any gain included in income. Conversely, for taxpayers who trade crypto frequently or operate a business dealing in digital assets, profits may be treated as business income, fully taxable in the year they are realized.

Mining income is subject to tax, but the characterization will depend on the exact circumstances of the activity. Staking rewards and airdrops continue to be included in income when received.

Accurate record-keeping is critical for all these activities. Bookkeeping professionals must ensure that cost bases, transaction dates and values are correctly tracked across all crypto wallets and exchanges. This is essential for calculating gains or losses correctly, reconciling accounts and supporting future reporting obligations under CARF.

For corporations dealing in crypto-assets, long-term holdings are generally treated as capital property, whereas active trading or business

operations generate income taxed at corporate rates.

Bookkeepers play a central role in capturing and maintaining reliable accounting records that enable correct tax treatment and facilitate compliance with evolving reporting standards.

David J. Rotfleisch is the founding tax lawyer of Rotfleisch & Samulovitch P.C., a Toronto-based boutique tax law and corporate law firm that operates Taxpage.com, a website with vast tax articles and videos. He appears regularly in print, radio and TV. With over 40 years of experience as both a tax lawyer and a chartered professional accountant, he has helped startup businesses, resident and non-resident business owners and corporations with their tax planning, will and estate planning, voluntary disclosures and tax dispute resolution, including tax audit representation and tax litigation. Most recently, he has launched CryptoTaxLawyer.com to help cryptocurrency traders proactively deal with their tax obligations to the CRA and help victims of cryptocurrency scams and schemes deal with their losses. 🌟

The HR Reset for 2026

By Anna Ali, CHRL, MHRM

The start of a new year is when energy is high, and people are moving quickly to lay the groundwork for year-long success. The first quarter is a great time to harness that energy into assessing the HR infrastructure that will carry you through the best of times as well as the potential challenges. It is the moment to strengthen the foundation before the year gets busy, unpredictable and even potentially messy at times.

For business owners and sole practitioners, strong HR practices need to be less about trends and formality and more about foresight, agility and business strategy. What you put in place now will determine how well your business absorbs pressure later.

The most common risk for all businesses is outdated policies and employment agreements. Many organizations rely on agreements and policies that are outdated and fail to accurately reflect their landscape. This becomes especially risky when navigating employee exits, remote/hybrid work arrangements, sick time, accommodations, AI usage and social media or confidentiality.

Ask yourself whether your policies and employment agreements would survive scrutiny and actually hold up if you had to enforce them tomorrow. If there's uncertainty, then the risk is imminent and requires attention. Policies and outdated employment agreements that sit untouched often create more exposure than protection.

Accommodation requests are becoming more complex and common. Employers are seeing an increasing number of requests tied to mental health, caregiving

responsibilities and non-visible disabilities. The mistake many businesses make is assuming accommodation means unlimited flexibility.

Accommodation is actually about understanding what you are legally required to do, what is reasonable for your business size, respectful dialogue, the employee's needs and transition back to work. When handled well, accommodation builds loyalty and retention and promotes a culture of well-being. When handled poorly, it becomes both a legal and cultural landmine.

Performance management is not a once-a-year conversation. If the only time performance comes up is during an annual review, you're already behind. Employees want clarity, coaching and reinforcement early and often. They want to know what matters, what success looks like and how they will be measured.

Use this time to set development goals, explore priorities, align expectations and commit to when/how feedback will be shared. Regular check-ins reduce surprises and prevent performance issues from escalating quietly.

AI is part of your business whether you planned it or not. Employees are already using AI tools to draft emails, manage tasks and solve problems. The real risk is not AI itself; it is silence and a lack of guidance.

Be clear with employees about which AI tools align with business needs and investment, acceptable use, what information should never be entered into AI systems and how



Anna Ali

various data will be protected. Clear guidance now prevents awkward conversations, security concerns and costly mistakes later.

Termination preparation is essential. Economic uncertainty and pressures to operate in a leaner way

have not disappeared, and some businesses may need to make difficult decisions this year. What often trips employers up is not the decision itself, but poor documentation, inconsistent treatment, past condoned behaviours or emotional and rushed conversations.

Not seeking expert legal advice in order to understand legal obligations, especially in high-risk termination situations, can quickly turn a necessary decision into a costly one. Set in motion a plan to clean up documentation, ensure termination clauses are up to date and practices are grounded in due process and defensible if needed.

HR in today's world goes beyond checklists and compliance; it is about clarity, foresight and consistency. Businesses that invest in their foundation early will spend far less time managing crises later and position themselves as engaging and rewarding workplaces.

Anna Ali is the senior director of HR services at MaxPeople. As a highly experienced HR consultant, Anna partners with clients to deliver comprehensive HR support and strategic advice across all aspects of human resources. If you're ready to strengthen your HR foundation for the year ahead, MaxPeople can help. To learn more, visit maxpeoplehr.com

The Future of Bookkeeping

Building High-Performing Teams Offshore and at Home

By Amanda Mungal

Why This Matters for Our Profession

Anyone who knows me can tell you that I have both struggled with and become a passionate advocate for how growing globally COULD look. Our community is having a lot of conversations about talent shortage, capacity, margin pressure and how we will continue to deliver world-class work when labour and technology costs keep rising and

the talent pipeline isn't filling fast enough. Offshoring often gets put forward as the easy solution.

Our journey started due to our multi-service offering that included reception and virtual assistant services as well as bookkeeping. The inclusion of those other services made our profit margins razor-thin to non-existent. We needed to find a way to continue building a people-first, ethical company offering great

services to our clients AND keep the lights on.

Often when people talk about offshoring, they focus only on the bottom line and assume offshore talent is cheap, plug-and-play capacity that should instantly integrate and function without friction. I mean, numbers are numbers, right? To be honest, we had a little of this thinking going into it, too. The problem is, it's not that easy. When it



© JONNO ERASMUS / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

doesn't go smoothly, the frustration gets placed on the people instead of the system.

The early days of exploring how to build an offshore team were loaded with misguided expectations that it would be easy. I had to shift my mindset and rethink what "local" really meant. It was about learning how to grow great Canadian jobs while also investing in an equally strong offshore team. One of our greatest challenges, even within our own organization, was helping people move beyond the idea of offshore staff as interchangeable labour and toward seeing them as integral members of the team.

Early on, someone even advised us when we were frustrated, to tell our team offshore: "Get with the program or we will move to a different country." That mindset, the belief that offshore workers are disposable, is still incredibly common across all industries.

It might be common. But it does not support loyalty and quality nor does it build long-term capability. This isn't about replacing Canadian jobs. It's about expanding what is possible when we choose to build global teams in a positive way.

Our Journey and Mindset Shift

When we began exploring building a team in Nigeria in January 2022, we took our time. I talked to multiple business owners who had already built offshore subsidiaries. The overwhelming advice was consistent: start with someone you deeply trust.

That piece of advice was foundational. Trust isn't fluffy. Trust is an operational advantage. As luck would have it, we had a built-in unique strength; our operations manager in Canada is Nigerian. She understood the work culture, the context, the language nuance and the lived reality of both our team and clients in Canada, and our potential team in Nigeria. Through her, we were able to hire her lifelong friend,

an experienced accountant, as our first team member. We didn't start with a stack of generic resumes. We started with one trusted human relationship.

I would like to share some of our learnings in building out our offshore team in the hopes of expanding our conversation and our understanding of what a global team could look like.

The Fear Beneath the Surface

Looking back, the biggest barrier was never skill, talent or work ethic. It was fear. Fear showed up differently in different places. In Canada, some members of our team were quietly worried: "What does this mean for my job in the future?" When people are worried about being replaced, they naturally protect their territory, ideas and workflows. Collaboration becomes guarded.

In Nigeria, the fear came from a different cultural context. With such a large population and intense competition for stable employment, workers are conditioned to never show weakness. Many people have multiple side gigs. Mistakes or asking for help can feel dangerous. Calling in sick could feel risky. We later learned some employees worked the day after a family crisis because they were afraid asking for time off would cost them their jobs.

Fear made problems invisible. And invisible problems grow into expensive problems. When we finally understood this, we knew we had to make psychological safety a key part of our strategy. Because you cannot build trust on top of fear; you cannot build mastery on top of fear. And you absolutely cannot build loyalty on top of fear.

The Culture + Expectation Gap

The next barrier was the expectation mismatch. Our Canadian team was used to open communication, surfacing issues early, saying "I'm stuck" or "I need help."

They assumed those norms were universal.

Our Nigerian team wasn't. Due to the labour market in Nigeria, the norm was: be invisible. Don't slow down the system. Don't make mistakes visible. Don't stand out.

This resulted in people saying they understood when they didn't, hiding mistakes and not asking for help. Or, when they found a "safe" person (someone they felt they could trust), they would abdicate all of their own thinking and drown that person with questions. Those early days were full of miscommunication simply from not understanding each other.

We worked to normalize asking for clarification, sharing confusion early and we taught (and demonstrated) that mistakes were signals, not punishable offences.

I cannot tell you how many team meetings we had, talking about the importance of asking for help, raising mistakes, training people on how to delegate and how to ensure their message was understood. At times, I felt like a broken record. It was long and tiring and at times frustrating work, but the prize — a truly global team — was worth it.

Education First: Building Capability, Not Just Capacity

Once we understood the challenges, we shifted everything toward education. We built our own in-house training database focused on the uniquely Canadian aspects of bookkeeping. Every bookkeeper on our team takes the CPB Canada entry-level bookkeeping competencies quiz as a baseline. We also created our own internal exams to extend these standards. We wanted a professional, recognized benchmark to anchor around; not just internal trial and error.

We invested in soft skills too, because technical competence is not enough. We teach how to write great emails, prepare for meetings, delegate effectively, communicate



What Every Professional Services Firm Can Apply Now

These are three practices any firm can use right now:

1. Start small and start with trust. One person. Or one ethical partner. Trust is the multiplier.
2. Normalize mistakes and name them quickly. This builds a learning culture instead of a fear culture.
3. Choose a living wage, not minimum wage. Retention is the real ROI.

The Future of Our Profession

Our profession's future will not be defined by who can find the cheapest labour, but by who can develop the strongest talent. Technology will keep accelerating. Margins will keep being tested. Globalization is not going backwards. But we get to decide how we participate in it.

Offshoring can be a race to the bottom. Or it can be a race to the top — a model where dignity, education, belonging and true partnering are the way we scale.

We've realized that many people approach offshoring as if they're adding a cog into a machine, and when that cog doesn't fit perfectly, they blame the part instead of the system. The truth is that people aren't cogs. They're complex, talented, creative humans who need to be part of a culture that values them.

If we lead this shift, we can define what ethical global collaboration looks like in bookkeeping by modelling what global prosperity, built with integrity, can look like.

Amanda Mungal is the founder and CEO of It's Your Time Business Services, where she leads global support teams and modern bookkeeping solutions for growing businesses. With a focus on sustainable systems and people-first operations, Amanda helps companies scale by combining ethical practices, thoughtful leadership and practical support to help businesses grow responsibly. 🌱

with clients and escalate problems properly. Everyone completes professional development activities each month.

In 2023, we hired Lazaruk Consulting to deliver monthly psychologically safe communication training for our entire team. This included skill-building around asking for help, naming challenges early, preventing stuckness and building collaborative language across cultures.

We hold regular one-on-ones with every team member, not as status checks but as two-way conversations with shared accountability and goal setting. Education became the foundation of belonging. When people grow and feel valued, they stay.

Living Wages as a Profit Strategy

When we set compensation for our Nigerian team, we looked at what experienced bookkeepers earned locally. Then we looked at real-world cost of living (internet, transportation, rent, food, professional development, family responsibilities). From there, we used doubling to tripling the average wage as a guideline for determining a fair starting point, then adjusted based on role and experience.

In Canada, we are Living Wage Certified through the Living Wage Canada network. So extending that model globally wasn't a nice gesture. It was alignment. And here's the part many firms don't expect: paying a living wage actually improved our margin; retention skyrocketed. When people can live,

they can think. They can collaborate. They can problem-solve. They can take ownership. And they don't leave every six months.

Living wages reduce churn, and churn is the biggest hidden cost in offshoring models. In most offshore markets, employee tenure often averages around six months. By contrast, our annual churn sits at approximately 5.6 per cent, more than six times better than the industry norm. That difference isn't luck; it's the outcome of education, belonging and paying people fairly.

Happiness as an Operations Strategy

Operational happiness matters. I assumed a standard nine-to-five equivalent would be the best working hours for our offshore team, and I didn't want to force anyone into late-night work. But the team told me they preferred starting later (12 p.m.–8 p.m.) because Lagos rush-hour traffic can take two to three hours each way. By shifting schedules, they gained life back and we gained collaborative overlap with Canada — a perfect win-win.

When life happens, we insist that people take time. This is still not common in many labour markets with high replaceability conditioning. Allowing humanity is not weakness. It is strength. When I visited Nigeria last January and met the team in person, all of this was confirmed. Our team is made up of extraordinary people, deeply committed to our clients and to building something meaningful with us.



wagepoint ›

Same friendly payroll you trust. Just reimagined.

Payroll that works for bookkeepers –
and the clients who count on you.

You might notice something new – we’ve refreshed our look.
What hasn’t changed? Our promise to make payroll simple,
friendly, and reliable, for you and your clients.



Built for
bookkeepers.



People-first
support.



Simple for clients,
easy for you.



Canadian payroll,
done Right.

Book a demo today ›



*You were built for **bigger things***

Not busy work.

Another late night.

Another lost hour.

Another admin task.

You can think of 1,000 better ways to spend your time. Let Dext bookkeeping automation software help you get back to what really matters - supporting your clients and moving your business forward.

***99%+ accuracy** that supports reliable, confident conversations.*

***Automation** that frees up time without compromising control.*

*Tools that help you **deliver more value**, more consistently*

***Join over 700,000 businesses** making things easier with Dext!*

Trusted by firms. Valued by their clients.

Visit www.dext.com today to sign up for a free trial.



#BuiltforBiggerThings

Dext
By IRIS



Are you empowered to scale customer growth and service excellence?

A checklist for success

Today, growing your accounting practice and managing client expectations in a digital age goes beyond number crunching. It requires adopting smart, technology-driven strategies to modernize your practice, scale, and expand your scope.

With the right approach, accountants can excel at every stage of client engagement, from refining tax strategies and improving financial reporting to advising on long-term planning.

To achieve this, it's essential to evaluate key aspects of your practice, such as the tools you use, the support you receive, and the opportunities available for growth. Consider the following questions to assess whether your practice is optimized for success:

Do you use the right finance software or suite of applications?

Leveraging robust practice management software helps streamline workflows, improve efficiency, and free up more time to focus on delivering value.

Beyond that, integrating the right solutions for your clients—covering accounting, billing, expense reporting, and inventory management—empowers them to gain real-time financial insights, automate routine

tasks, and make smarter decisions.

A well-designed software ecosystem drives better outcomes for everyone involved, including your client's clientele.

Do you proactively engage and educate your clients?

Scaling your practice isn't just about the tools you use. It's also about how you connect with and empower your clients. Personalized, proactive communication builds trust and loyalty, whether through regular check-ins, timely tax alerts, or early identification of risks and opportunities.

Education adds even more value. By offering webinars, workshops, and financial planning resources, you help clients make confident, informed decisions. A strong technology partner can amplify these efforts by providing tools, materials, and collaborative opportunities, such as co-hosting educational events like industry-specific or client-focused webinars.

Does you get and offer priority support?

Priority support from your technology partner ensures quick resolutions and keeps businesses on track, especially during busy

periods like tax season. It empowers you to deliver exceptional service and client satisfaction. This level of support strengthens your brand image, builds client loyalty, and positions you as a trusted advisor.

Even better, having a dedicated account manager you can rely on for tailored guidance ensures you're always equipped to handle challenges effectively.

Do you get opportunities to network and grow?

Building a strong network is essential to expanding your practice and maintaining a competitive edge. Events, webinars, and online communities provide opportunities to connect, exchange insights, and build relationships that lead to collaborations, referrals, and a deeper understanding of market trends.

Your technology partner should also enhance your visibility. Being listed in a global directory or participating in co-branded initiatives enhances credibility, expands your network, and positions you as a trusted advisor while ensuring long-term growth.

Do you continuously learn and keep up with industry updates?

Exclusive training, webinars, and early access to updates keep you informed on industry trends and best practices, enabling you to implement tailored solutions for your clients.

These improve client outcomes and allow you to offer higher-value services, increasing revenue per client. Direct interactions with product experts and exclusive events ensure you're always ahead of the curve.

Does your software ecosystem make it easy for clients to migrate and scale?

The software ecosystem you use and recommend should empower your clients to scale seamlessly, regardless of their current size or stage of growth. It should offer flexible entry points, pathways for expansion, customization, and integrations with the tools they already rely on (whether for banking, shipping, payments, communication, or anything else).

A well-integrated system not only positions your clients for sustained growth and success but also fosters trust and satisfaction, leading to increased client retention rates.

Use these questions as a checklist to evaluate and optimize your practice. By focusing on technology, client experience, and continuous learning, you'll position yourself as a trusted advisor and drive measurable success for both your clients and your firm.

Zoho is here to help you check all the boxes. With access to powerful business finance and operations solutions, extensive training, exclusive events, and personalized support, Zoho empowers you to grow your practice, expand your customer base, and enhance client satisfaction.

Contact us today to learn more about the Zoho partner program.



Why Bookkeeping Is Becoming a Tech-First Profession

For decades, bookkeeping has been viewed as a detail-oriented, transaction-based profession — one built on accuracy, consistency and trust. While those fundamentals remain unchanged, *how* bookkeepers deliver their work is evolving rapidly.

Today, bookkeeping is no longer just about knowing debits and credits. It is increasingly about systems, workflows and technology. In fact, bookkeeping is quickly becoming a tech-first profession, and those who embrace this shift are gaining a clear competitive advantage.

The Growing Complexity of Bookkeeping Work

Modern bookkeepers are managing far more than monthly

reconciliations. Many now juggle:

- Dozens (or hundreds) of clients
- Multiple deadlines across payroll, sales tax and year-end
- Ongoing document requests
- Constant client communication
- Collaboration with accountants and tax professionals

Relying on memory, spreadsheets, email threads and disconnected apps simply doesn't scale in this environment. As client expectations rise and regulatory pressure increases, the margin for error continues to shrink.

Technology is no longer a "nice to have" — it has become a core part of professional competence.

Clients Expect Speed, Clarity and Transparency

Clients today are accustomed to real-time access, instant updates and organized digital experiences in nearly every area of their lives. They expect the same from their financial professionals.

From a client's perspective, professionalism now looks like:

- Clear visibility into what's being worked on
- Fast responses to document requests
- Fewer repetitive questions
- Confidence that deadlines won't be missed

Bookkeepers who rely on manual tracking methods often struggle to meet these expectations,

not because they lack skill, but because their tools are working against them.

The Shift from ‘Doing the Work’ to ‘Managing the Work’

One of the biggest changes in bookkeeping is the growing importance of practice management.

As firms grow, the challenge is no longer just completing tasks — it’s knowing what needs to be done, when and for whom. This requires:

- Centralized client information
- Clear task ownership
- Deadline tracking
- Organized document management
- Visibility into work in progress

Tech-first bookkeepers recognize that strong systems reduce mental load, prevent missed deadlines and free up time for higher value work.

Technology as a Risk Management Tool

Technology isn’t only about efficiency — it’s also about risk reduction.

Missed deadlines, lost documents and miscommunication can damage client relationships and professional reputation. Centralized systems create:

- Clear audit trails
- Task history and accountability
- Organized client records
- Consistent processes across all clients

In an industry built on trust, these safeguards are becoming essential.

Why All-in-One Platforms Are Gaining Momentum

Many bookkeepers currently rely on a patchwork of tools: spreadsheets for tracking, email for communication, cloud drives for documents and separate apps for tasks and reminders. While this approach may work early on, it often leads to inefficiencies and blind spots as practices grow.

This is why the industry is seeing increased interest in all-in-one practice management platforms designed specifically for bookkeepers. These tools aim to bring clients, tasks, deadlines, documents and communication into a single workspace — reducing friction and improving clarity.

Platforms like Bookwits, for example, are built around real bookkeeping workflows, helping professionals manage their entire practice in one place rather than jumping between disconnected systems.

Tech-First Does Not Mean Less Personal

A common concern among bookkeepers is that technology may make their services feel less personal. In reality, the opposite is often true.

When systems handle organization and tracking, bookkeepers can spend more time on:

- Client relationships
- Advisory conversations
- Strategic support
- Growing their practice intentionally

Technology removes chaos — not the human element.

Preparing for the Future of the Profession

As bookkeeping continues to evolve, tech literacy will become just as important as technical accounting knowledge. The most successful bookkeepers will be those who:

- Embrace systems early
- Invest in tools built for their profession
- Design practices that support growth without burnout

Bookkeeping isn’t losing its human touch — it’s gaining the structure needed to thrive in a more complex, fast-moving world.

The future of bookkeeping is not just accurate — it’s organized, visible and tech-first.

Ready to bring clarity and structure to your bookkeeping practice?

Bookwits is built specifically for bookkeeping workflows — helping you manage clients, tasks, deadlines and documents in one organized workspace.

Visit www.bookwits.com to learn more.



BOOKWITS

Simplify Work. The Canadian Way.



© ALPHASPIRIT / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Caffeine, Chaos and Clients

Five Tips to Turn Tax Time Into Coaching Opportunities

By Taunya Woods Richardson

Tax season is here and for accounting professionals across the country, that means caffeine, chaos and clients who suddenly “just found” a year’s worth of business receipts in their winter jackets.

You’re exhausted. They’re exhausted. Everyone’s just trying to survive the storm. But here’s what most accounting professionals miss: this is actually the most powerful prep season of the year because it’s in the few golden weeks that follow filing that your clients will need you most.

This is the moment when founders finally stop believing their business will magically clean itself up next year. It’s when they sit with their tax bill, their cash flow hangover and the quiet panic of non-existent profit and whisper the words every accounting professional knows well: “I never want to go through this again.”

That moment cracks open the door to real behaviour change if you’re ready for it. The challenge? By April, most accounting professionals are too burnt out to walk through that door. That’s why a little

strategic prep in Q1 can turn Q2 into your most impactful, profitable and transformative season with clients.

Here are five tips to help you lead — not chase — those game-changing conversations.

1. Capture the ‘Never Again’ Moments

Every spring, I hear the same confessions from founders, not once, but dozens of times:

- “Oh my God, I paid how much in interest and penalties?”

- “Why do my financials state a profit, but my bank account is empty?”
- “I work way too hard to get paid this little.”

After 15 years in entrepreneurial and behavioural finance, I can tell you with certainty that when a founder is emotional, they are coachable. When they’re comfortable, they’re not. So, when you hear your clients’ flare-ups, don’t gloss over them. Capture them. These aren’t complaints — they’re invitations on where you can coach them.

Start a simple “Never Again” list in your CRM or notebook. Jot down the exact phrasing, the tone, the frustration and the disbelief that your client shares with you. Come May, you’ll have a list of conversation starters that cut straight to what matters — their behaviour, their blind spots and the changes that will actually shift their bottom line.

2. Flag the Data That Tell the Real Story

You’re not helping build forecasts right now; you’re putting out fires. But as you close each file, take two minutes to flag one or two data points that will matter later.

Across thousands of founders, I see the same gaps again and again when it comes to data:

- **Income not broken down by revenue stream.** They don’t know which offerings actually drive sales. **Red flag.**
- **Direct costs not tied to each revenue stream.** They can’t see which services are profitable or quietly bleeding the business. **Red flag.**
- **Merchant fees buried under bank charges.** A margin-distorting mis-categorization that hides real costs. **Red flag.**

Here’s the kicker. When a business isn’t tracking these things, the void is its own alarm bell.

You can’t make solid financial decisions without these data. Flag the reports or the missing data while you’re already in the file. Don’t trust your finance-fried brain to remember in May. These visual proof points become the bridge between “what happened?” and “what needs to happen next.”

3. Plan Your Time

If I had a dollar for every accounting professional who said, “I swear I’ll follow up after tax season this year,” I’d have a lovely lake house paid off already. The pattern is universal: April ends → you collapse → the moment passes → clients slide back → next year repeats itself.

Let’s break that cycle. Right now — not in April — block time in your May and June calendar for the pattern-busting, behaviour-shifting coaching conversations your clients need.



Smart. Simple. Canadian

- All-in-One Practice Management
- Canadian-Focused
- Streamlined Workflows
- Centralized Communication
- Deadline Tracking Made Easy
- Document Sharing & Organization
- User-Friendly Dashboard
- Trusted by Canadian Professionals
- Secure & Reliable anywhere.

Take Control Today – Start Your Free Trial
bookwits.com

SCAN TO BOOK
A DEMO



Sage

A great bookkeeper needs **great** **bookkeeping tools**

Whether you're trying to grow your practice or simply handling the day to day, we know you need to be at your bookkeeping best to help your practice perform.

That's why **Sage for Accountants** has all the tools you need to automate daily tasks and free up time to focus on what matters.

From accounting to HR and payroll tools, Sage has everything you need to help you improve productivity and manage clients while growing your practice.

So add a new tool to your practice toolbox and get **everything you need all in one place.**



**Scan
to learn
more**



Call them what you like:

- Post-tax strategy sessions
- “Never again” conversations
- Profit planning reviews

Even a handful of protected 60-minute windows will change everything. When the filing dust settles and your founders are finally ready to act, Future You won't be scrambling. You'll be prepared, confident and positioned as the leader they trust.

4. Create a Three-Question Script That Sparks Change

Your founders don't need a pitch — they need a pathway. Create a simple three-question script you can rely on when you reach out:

1. “What part of this year's tax prep felt hardest or most frustrating?”
2. “What would you like next year to look and feel like instead?”
3. “Would you like me to show you a framework that can help make that happen?”

These questions shift the energy instantly. They move a founder from shame to possibility, from overwhelm to agency. I've used a version of this for years and the response is almost always the same. A breath. A pause. Then: “Yes, please.” That's when transformation begins.

5. Bring a Visual Framework (This is where you shine as a coach)

When a founder says, “I can't do this again,” you need something simple, visual and grounding, especially when emotions are high and the red flags are piling up. This is where a framework like The Cashflow Canvas™ becomes a quiet superpower, not as a pitch, but as a road map.

A strong visual gives your client a clear picture of what you've been tracking — the patterns, the pressure points and the “never again” moments that need to be organized



into a cohesive plan. It also helps you show, in real time, how these issues have been playing out beneath the surface.

The Cashflow Canvas™ walks them through the eight essential building blocks of a financially healthy business: where the leaks are, which margins need reinforcing, why cash evaporated despite good revenue and what needs to shift to prevent a repeat performance next year.

It's in the few golden weeks that follow filing that your clients will need you most.

You don't need a full budget or forecast in that moment. You just need to show that a clear, structured, coach-supported path exists and that you're ready to guide them along it. When you bring the red flags, the pain points and the visual roadmap together, something powerful happens. Your founder feels deeply: “They heard me and they know how to help.”

This season, don't just file the past. Shape the future. Tax season

will always be chaos. Founders won't magically get organized (a founder can hope). But the moment the dust settles, they're finally ready to hear you.

The post-tax window is short, sharp and powerful. If you're prepared, you can turn their pain into progress and their panic into a plan. This is where accountants and bookkeepers stop keeping books and start changing the game.

So this Q1, between the late nights and the bottomless coffee, carve out a moment to prepare your own “Never Again.” Because when founders need you most, you'll be ready and that's when real transformation begins.

Taunya Woods Richardson is the founder of Nail The Numbers and the creator of The Cashflow Canvas™. With over 30 years in entrepreneurial finance, she helps founders and the professionals who support them build clear, practical financial plans that strengthen both confidence and profitability. A trusted voice in financial empowerment, Taunya has worked with lenders, educators and economic developers across North America to help business owners build strong and stay strong. Download your free Cashflow Canvas™ Palette at www.cashflowcanvas.co 🌟



Go Beyond Bookkeeping. Become a Trusted Advisor.

Join the Zoho Finance Partner Program — built for modern Canadian bookkeepers ready for growth.



A Holistic and Powerful Zoho Finance Suite for You and Your Clients



*New in Canada



What's In It for You?



Strengthen Your Market Presence

- Access to full range of 60+ Zoho apps
- Co-branding & marketing opportunities
- Listing in Zoho's global partner directory



Build Deeper Expertise

- Comprehensive product training & certifications
- Early access to new releases and updates
- Ongoing enablement resources



Dedicated Support

- A partner manager by your side
- Free migration assistance for you and your clients

Ready to Grow Your Practice?



Scan the QR code to join our partner program

bookkeepers@zoho.com



I tested Zoho out for Cofinia and was so impressed that I switched my bookkeeping clients to Zoho Books. Also, becoming a Zoho partner helped me scale my business, with Zoho now contributing to **35–40% of our revenue.**

— **Marie-Andrée Giroux, President,**
Cofinia Conseil Inc., Canada



Boundaries in a Client-First Industry

How Clear Limits Support Better Work and Sustainable Service

By Carole Blackburn

Accounting and bookkeeping professionals are often drawn to their work because of their commitment to accuracy, reliability and service. Clients depend on them to manage important financial details, meet deadlines and provide clarity, often during stressful or uncertain times.

In this kind of client-facing, high-responsibility work, a client-first mindset makes sense. It reflects care, professionalism

and integrity. Yet over time, many professionals notice something else taking shape: longer workdays, fewer natural stopping points and a quiet expectation to be always available.

Without clear boundaries, even the most dedicated professionals can find themselves mentally depleted, less focused and stretched thin. From a wellness and leadership perspective, boundaries are not a sign of

disengagement or reduced commitment. They are an essential support for clear thinking, consistent performance and long-term sustainability.

When Client-First Slowly Becomes Always On

In service-based professions, over-extension rarely happens all at once. More often, it builds gradually. A message answered late in the evening. A request

handled “just this once,” a habit of checking email during personal time. Individually, these moments don’t raise concern. Collectively, they can create a constant state of mental alertness that is difficult to turn off.

For professionals whose work requires precision and sound judgment, this ongoing cognitive load can take a toll. Interruptions become more frequent, focus becomes harder to sustain and fatigue sets in. Over time, this affects not only well-being but also the quality and consistency of the work itself.

Common Boundary Pressures in Accounting and Financial Roles

While roles and environments vary, many accounting and book-keeping professionals describe similar challenges:

Constant accessibility: Digital tools make it easy to be reached at any time, creating unspoken expectations around rapid response.

Expanding responsibilities: Tasks slowly extend beyond agreed-upon scope, often without discussion or adjustment.

Predictable high-pressure cycles: Month-end, year-end and tax season place repeated strain on energy and capacity.

Emotional weight: Clients’ financial stress can spill into conversations, leaving professionals carrying concerns that extend beyond the workday.

None of these challenges is unusual, and none reflects a lack of professionalism. They



© DESIGNWORLD387 / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

are signals that boundaries may need attention.

Practical Ways to Introduce Healthier Boundaries

When professionals think about boundaries, they often imagine rigid rules or difficult conversations. In practice, the most effective boundaries tend to be far quieter and far more sustainable. They are often built into how work is structured, communicated and concluded each day.

Start with Clear, Predictable Communication: Clarity is one of the simplest and most effective boundary-setting tools. When clients know what to expect, and how and when communication happens, it reduces uncertainty on both sides. Professionals who establish consistent response windows often find that urgency decreases naturally, without needing to say “no” more often.

Use Structure to Create Breathing Room: Structure is not restrictive; it’s protective. Clear workflows, shared timelines and centralized systems reduce the mental load of keeping everything in your head.

When work is organized and visible, it becomes easier to step away at the end of the day without carrying unfinished tasks mentally into personal time.

Protect Focus as a Finite Resource: Focus is one of the most valuable assets in precision-based work. Scheduling uninterrupted time for detailed tasks isn’t about productivity — it’s about quality and risk management. When focus is protected during the workday, work is completed more efficiently, reducing the tendency for tasks to spill into personal time. This creates clearer boundaries between work and life, allowing professionals to disengage more fully and return to their work rested and mentally sharp.

Build a Deliberate End of the Workday: Many professionals finish their day physically but remain mentally on. A short closing routine — reviewing priorities for tomorrow, shutting down systems or stepping away from the workspace — creates a clear transition from professional responsibility to personal life. This small habit supports better rest and clearer thinking the next day.



CPB
CANADA



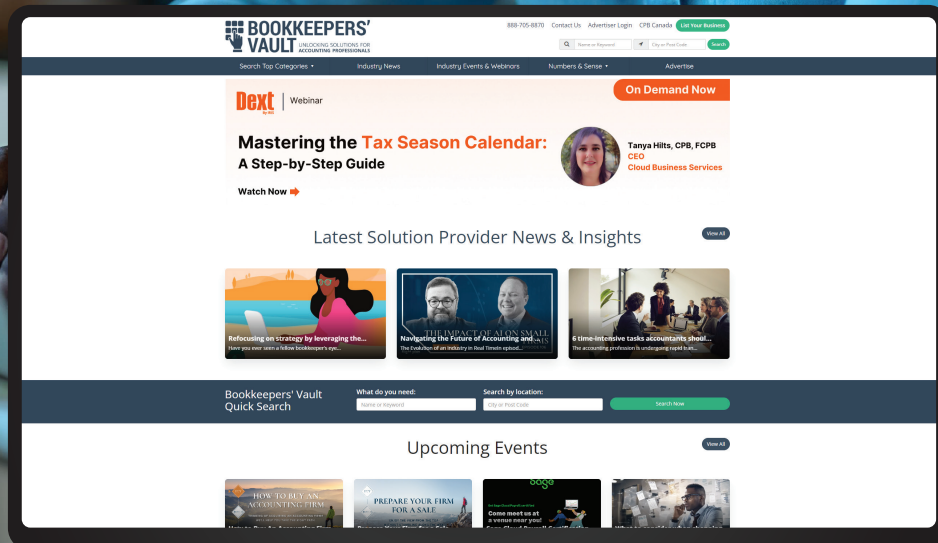
BOOKKEEPERS'
VAULT UNLOCKING SOLUTIONS FOR
ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALS

The vault stays open! Visit bookkeepersvault.com for expanded company profiles, live updates, upcoming events and the newest accounting solutions—all year round.



EXPLORE TODAY

bookkeepersvault.com





Recognize That Boundaries

Are Dynamic: Boundaries will flex during busy seasons and that flexibility is part of professional life. The goal isn't a rigid balance, but conscious adjustment. What matters is recognizing when short-term intensity becomes a long-term pattern. Regularly revisiting what feels sustainable allows professionals to recalibrate, recover between peak periods and prevent chronic over-extension.

The Leadership Role in Boundary Culture

Boundaries are often shaped by example. When leaders routinely work late, respond after hours or operate in constant urgency, those behaviours can quietly become the standard.

Leadership that supports sustainable performance tends to:

- Set realistic expectations around availability;
- Encourage focused, uninterrupted work;
- Address workload concerns proactively; and
- Model healthy transitions between work and rest.

These practices help create clarity, psychological safety and trust — conditions that support both people and performance.

Reframing Boundaries as Part of Client Service

Boundaries are sometimes misunderstood as limitations. However, clear boundaries function as frameworks that support reliability and professionalism.

When accounting professionals protect their time and mental energy, clients benefit from clearer communication, more thoughtful decision-making and fewer errors. Boundaries don't reduce the service quality; they help stabilize it.

From a wellness and leadership perspective, boundaries are one of the most practical tools professionals can use to maintain effectiveness in demanding roles. Recognizing boundaries as a support for service quality naturally invites a practical question: Where might one small adjustment make the biggest difference?

A Simple Place to Start

Before the next busy cycle begins, consider identifying one boundary that has quietly loosened. Whether it's response time, workload scope or the way your workday ends, re-establishing a single boundary can often restore more clarity than trying to change everything at once.

Accounting and bookkeeping professionals are entrusted with critical financial responsibilities. That trust depends not only on technical expertise, but on clarity, consistency and sound judgment. Boundaries help create

the conditions needed to deliver high quality, workday after workday, season after season. They protect focus, reduce mental fatigue and support better decision-making in roles where accuracy matters.

Boundaries also extend beyond the workday. When professional limits are clear, individuals are better able to be present in other areas of life, whether that means family responsibilities, personal health, community involvement or rest. These aspects of life are not separate from professional performance — they sustain it.

In a client-first industry, boundaries are not a barrier to service, but a foundation for doing meaningful work well while remaining healthy, engaged and capable over the long term.

Carole Blackburn is a life, wellness and leadership coach who works with ambitious women in high-responsibility roles to create balance, clarity and sustainable success in life and work. Carole supports clients in strengthening boundaries, prioritizing well-being and leading with confidence through demanding seasons. Learn more at www.caroleblackburn.com 🌟



Surprise! 10 Practical Ways Bookkeepers Can Use AI

It's Not Just For Writing Emails

By Gabrielle (Arielle) Smith, CPB

In *NUMBERS & SENSE*, Q2 2023, CPB Canada published an article about how AI is not here to replace bookkeepers — it's here to empower us. That message resonated with a lot of us in the industry. But let's be honest. Beyond the hype, many bookkeepers are still wondering what AI can actually do in our day-to-day work.

This article is a practical follow-up to that conversation. These aren't abstract or futuristic ideas — they're real things I use AI for every week in my bookkeeping practice. Think of this as your behind-the-scenes look at how a certified professional bookkeeper is leveraging AI as a tool to save time, reduce

mental load and increase effective hourly rates (which ultimately raises net profit).

If you're curious about how to integrate AI into your workflow, here are 10 use cases that might surprise you, and not one is about writing emails or generating social media posts.

1. Create QBO Diagnostic Reports From Loom Videos or Voice Notes

This has been a game-changer for onboarding new clients. I'll open their QBO file, hit record on Loom and talk out loud as I go through the reconciliation summary, chart of accounts, P&L and balance sheet:

"Why are there negative payroll liabilities?"

"Why is Undeposited Funds still sitting here from last year?"

Then I paste the transcript into ChatGPT, which turns it into a clean, professional diagnostic report I can send to the client. It clearly outlines the issues and clean-up scope, making the quoting process faster and more accurate.

The video does the convincing. Clients can see exactly what I see, which builds trust and shows the true extent of the work needed. It also shows them the value I bring to the table in spotting problems quickly, explaining them clearly and mapping out a plan to fix them.

💡 **Prompt to try:** “Turn this Loom video transcript into a diagnostic report I can send to the client, summarizing issues, clean-up scope and next steps.”

2. Summarize Year-End Notes for Accountants or Clients

You know those internal notes you keep in your head while working through a file? Things like: “They changed payroll providers in May,” “They bought a vehicle in Q3 — check CCA Class 10” or “Ignore GL 2700 — it’s legacy.” Maybe you also made mental notes about which items were coded to Furniture and Fixtures and want to flag any potential reclassification. Instead of trying to remember it all or typing everything up at the end, I use voice-to-text in ChatGPT throughout the process. AI turns my messy notes into a clean, structured summary that I send to the accountant for year-end, or to the client for offboarding. It’s fast, clear and consistent.

3. Translate Official Letters (Like From Revenu Québec)

Sometimes, clients forward you mail from Revenu Québec that’s entirely in French. If you’re not bilingual, AI can help translate the letter and summarize whether it’s just an info update or something urgent like a collections notice. It saves me from having to ask the client or their accountant, “What does this say?” and lets me respond faster, with more clarity and confidence.

4. Cut Down Research Time for Client Questions

Clients constantly come to us with tricky questions:

“Can I write off this laptop?”

“What sales tax rate do I charge my client in B.C. if I’m in Ontario?”

“How do I register for PST in B.C.?”

“When do I need to register for EHT in Ontario?”



Instead of digging through Google and government websites every time, I use AI to pull together accurate, province-specific information fast, including links, eligibility rules and step-by-step instructions. I’ve even used it to help write client-facing instructions for how to register for accounts like PST, EHT or WSIB. It saves me time and gives clients clear answers without back-and-forth.

💡 **Tip:** You can also ask AI to draft short, client-ready email instructions based on the answer it gives you.

5. Help With Journal Entries When You’re Unsure

Maybe you’re unsure how to close out prior period dividends to retained earnings, or you’re second-guessing how to record depreciation or where exactly the FX gain or loss should go. Instead of trying to find answers on Google, asking around in Facebook groups or digging through old training notes, you can use ChatGPT to talk it through. Describe the situation and it’ll suggest a journal entry and explain the debits and credits behind it. It’s a fast way to get unstuck, especially when you’re working solo and just need another brain to bounce off.

6. Review the Balance Sheet and P&L at Year-End

Before I send off files to a client’s accountant or finalize a year-end, I’ll often ask AI to help me review the financials. I usually export the P&L and balance sheet from QuickBooks online as a PDF and simply ask, “Do you see anything that looks off here?” AI can help flag things like negative AR, unusually high expenses or strange balances in retained earnings. It’s not perfect, but it acts as a second set of eyes and can help you avoid embarrassing handoffs or missed issues.

7. Support Payroll Compliance By Province

Payroll rules vary across Canada and even seasoned pros can get tripped up on things like stat holiday pay, vacation calculations, overtime rules or issuing severance pay, especially since severance pay is different from termination pay. Overtime thresholds and calculations can differ by province and it’s not always easy to keep track. AI can instantly pull the correct Employment Standards info based on the province and employee type. It’s saved me from diving down rabbit holes through dense government PDFs more times than I can count.



© TAPATI RINCHUMRUS / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

8. Write SOPs, Training Docs and Staff Instructions Instantly

As your practice grows, clear documentation becomes essential. I use ChatGPT to turn my Loom videos into polished SOPs that my team can follow. I recently took a 63-step process for creating a custom report in Excel for a client, recorded it in Loom and used ChatGPT to condense it into a clean, easy-to-follow, 24-step SOP. Whether it's documenting how to process Shopify payouts or reconciling Stripe fees, I just talk through the workflow, drop the transcript into ChatGPT and get back a properly formatted SOP ready to use for delegation.

💡 Prompt to try: "Turn this Loom video transcript into a step-by-step SOP for junior staff. Include bullet points, clear headings and a summary checklist at the end."

9. Fix Excel or Google Sheets Formulas When You're Stuck

We all work with Excel or Google Sheets, whether for custom reports, Shopify payout breakdowns or client-specific trackers. I use ChatGPT to fix broken formulas, write complex ones like XLOOKUP, IF or ARRAYFORMULA, and even explain what each part of a formula is doing. I've used it to match SKUs exactly across datasets, clean up messy data using functions like LEFT and troubleshoot those "why won't this

SUMIFS work?" kind of problems. It's saved me countless hours of trial and error, especially when I'm too busy to troubleshoot line by line.



AI turns my messy notes into a clean, structured summary that I send to the accountant for year-end, or to the client for offboarding.



10. Draft Engagement Letters and Proposals Faster

Use ChatGPT to write a first draft of your engagement letter template, then have a lawyer review and finalize it. That way, you're not reinventing the wheel or going back and forth on legal language every time (and the less time your lawyer spends, the less you'll pay). Once you have that base template, AI can help you fill in the client-specific details: services, deliverables, timelines and scope of work. With a few quick edits at the end, 90 per cent of the work is done — and you're not stuck starting from scratch.

Use AI as Your Assistant, Not a Replacement

I'm not using AI to replace critical thinking and I still double-check everything. But I am using it to speed up the low-value, time-consuming parts of my workflow and that has made a noticeable difference in how I run my practice. Whether it's prepping a diagnostic report, cutting down research time or documenting client handoffs, AI lets me do more in less time, with less brain drain.

And that's the key: AI doesn't replace the relationship-building, strategic thinking or deep context we bring as bookkeepers. But it can take some of the load off, especially the repetitive, research-heavy or formatting-heavy tasks.

If all you've been using AI for is writing emails, this list is a great starting point to branch out and tap into its full capabilities. AI can do a lot of the heavy lifting in your practice, from documentation and diagnostics to research and reporting. Start with just one task, like summarizing your year-end notes or fixing that formula that's been driving you nuts. You'll be surprised how much time it saves once it's part of your workflow.

This isn't an exhaustive list of how I use AI; it's just a starting point. I use it for much more than this, across almost every part of my workflow. The more you experiment, the more you'll see how powerful it can be when used as a true assistant in your practice.

Arielle Smith immigrated to Canada in 2019 and, along with her husband, Jason, co-founded Fix My Books, a bookkeeping firm that earned the CPB Canada 2023 New Firm of the Year award. A certified professional bookkeeper (CPB), she has received numerous accolades, including recognition on Forbes' 30 Under 30: Finance list. Arielle is passionate about supporting immigrants in launching their own businesses and advocating for younger professionals to enter the bookkeeping field. 🌟



The Human Spirit Behind Modern Accounting

Small businesses are vital to the strength and resilience of society. They include family-owned restaurants, independent contractors, health-care clinics, construction firms, daycare centres, wellness studios and many more essential businesses. At the centre of each of these businesses is a trusted relationship: the human connection between business owners and their accountants.

At CoralTree, we built Basil to strengthen that human connection – not to replace it.

While AI is transforming industries, the most promising future isn't one where human professionals are replaced by automation. It's a future where accountants use great AI tools to heighten the human spirit that is the key to serving clients effectively. That's why Basil is designed with the team-oriented accounting firm in mind: a well-designed, all-in-one platform that supports your core services, improves collaboration and enhances your unique expertise.

Basil includes collaboration features like file sharing, electronic signatures, email integration, task

management and chat. It also includes AI copilots to help you deliver more value in less time – without compromising the personal attention your clients rely on. These copilots assist with document summarization, preparing documents for signature, creating tasks from emails, answering questions about your data and more. Copilots can help accounting firms enrich their workdays and scale to new heights.

What AI can't do is build lasting, foundational trust. That kind of trust comes from real human relationships that are grounded in experience, empathy and a genuine desire to help others succeed. Human accountants can use their instinct to offer unique solutions to business problems and then walk alongside business owners to see them through. Automated tools can't offer a comforting phone call or thoughtful encouragement when someone is feeling overwhelmed. And they won't offer subtle experiences like a celebratory dinner after a big win at the end of a tough quarter that you helped your client push

through. Shared human experiences will always deepen relationships and build loyalty.

Basil isn't about chasing automation for its own sake. It's about intuitive, powerful tools that help accountants reduce tedious work, drive revenue and deliver high-value results that clients appreciate. With Basil, accountants can spend more of their time doing what they do best: giving advice, solving problems and building lasting trust. By combining the efficiency of AI with the empathy of humans, Basil offers the best of both worlds to its users.

The future of accounting belongs to those who lead with both technology and heart. If you're a firm that believes in the power of human connection, Basil is here to help you succeed. Visit www.getbasil.app to find out more. Our team would love to share our vision of how we can help your firm.





Safeguarding Your Practice With E&O Insurance

By BMS Canada Risk Services Ltd.



You double-check, triple-check and still mistakes can happen.

Bookkeeping is built on accuracy and trust, yet no professional is immune to human error.

Imagine this: you misclassify a few transactions, and the client uses those reports to apply for financing. When the lender spots discrepancies, the deal falls through and suddenly, the client is pointing fingers. Even if you acted in good faith, the financial and reputational fallout can be significant.

Errors and Omissions (E&O) insurance addresses this reality. Rather than assuming mistakes are inevitable, E&O coverage acknowledges that professional risk exists in any advisory or technical role and

provides a financial and procedural safety net when allegations arise.

What is E&O Insurance?

E&O insurance, also referred to as professional liability insurance, protects bookkeepers against claims alleging financial loss caused by a negligent act, error or omission due to their delivery of professional services.

These claims don't require intent, misconduct or even proven fault. In many cases, a client may simply believe that an error occurred or that advice or services fell short of expectations. The cost of responding to these allegations can be significant, regardless of the outcome.

E&O insurance provides coverage for claims alleging professional negligence, including those arising from mistakes or oversights. It covers legal defence costs, as well as settlements or court-awarded damages, where applicable.

For bookkeepers, E&O insurance is a core component of professional risk management.

When Might a Bookkeeper Turn to Their E&O Policy?

While professional liability risk exists across many industries, bookkeeping presents a distinct set of exposures. The work is highly detail-driven, and even small discrepancies can have consequences. Third parties such as lenders, tax authorities,

auditors and investors often rely on financial records prepared by bookkeepers, which can increase the impact of an error.

Common scenarios that may lead to an E&O claim include:

- Incorrect financial statements relied upon for financing, budgeting or business decisions;
- Payroll errors resulting in penalties, interest or employee disputes;
- Missed deadlines or incorrect filings with tax authorities;
- Errors in account reconciliation or expense categorization; and
- Miscommunication regarding the scope of services or client responsibilities.

As a bookkeeper's client base grows, so does exposure. Taking on more clients or working with more complex businesses increases both workload and risk. E&O insurance is not about expecting errors; it's about being prepared when something goes wrong.

Case Study: A Bookkeeping Error with Real Consequences

To understand how E&O insurance works, here's another example:

A bookkeeper is hired by a small retail business to manage monthly reconciliations and prepare financial reports for year-end review. Due to a data entry error, several transactions are misclassified, resulting in overstated revenue figures. The client relies on these reports to apply for financing.

During the lender's review, discrepancies are identified, triggering an audit. As a result, the financing offer is withdrawn. The client alleges that the inaccurate financial statements caused them to miss a critical business opportunity and files a claim against the bookkeeper seeking compensation for financial losses.

Even if the bookkeeper acted in good faith and without intent to



mislead, they still face legal defence costs and the stress of managing a professional liability claim. With E&O insurance in place, the policy can respond by covering defence expenses and supporting the claims process, helping protect both the bookkeeper's finances and professional reputation.

CPB Canada Members – We've Got You Covered!

Given these risks, having coverage designed specifically for bookkeepers matters. As a member of CPB Canada, you have access to E&O insurance through BMS. The program is designed specifically for professional bookkeepers and reflects the profession's realities.

What Sets the CPB Canada E&O Policy Apart from Others?

The CPB Canada E&O program includes a range of protections.

Key features include:

- Flexible limit options available up to \$5 million per claim and in the aggregate;
- \$50,000 for disciplinary legal expenses, covering costs to respond to a complaint or

investigation by CPB Canada's Ethics and Discipline Committee;

- Court attendance costs of up to \$500 per day to help offset lost income or expenses if attendance at court or formal proceedings is required;
- \$75,000 for reputation management, assisting with costs to repair professional reputation following a claim or complaint; and
- Automatic 12-month extended reporting period if you retire or discontinue practice.

The CPB Canada insurance program helps ensure members have access to coverage that aligns with professional responsibilities and is competitively priced when compared to stand-alone policies.

Understanding Claims-Made Coverage

Having coverage is imperative but understanding how and when to report a claim is just as important. The CPB Canada member E&O policy operates on a claims-made basis, meaning coverage is triggered when a claim is reported during the policy period, not when the work was originally performed.



© GORODENKOFF / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Timely reporting is critical. Early notification allows insurers to respond effectively and provide guidance before a situation escalates.

You should contact the insurance adjusters if:

- A client alleges a financial loss related to your work;
- You receive a demand letter, legal notice or lawsuit; and
- You become aware of an error that could reasonably lead to a claim.

When reporting a claim, you will typically be asked to provide:

- Your certificate of insurance;
- A description of the services provided;
- Details of the alleged error or issue;
- Relevant correspondence or documentation; and
- Dates, parties involved and any known financial impact.

Crawford & Company (Canada) Inc. handles claims under the CPB Canada policy. Claims can be reported by phone at 1-877-805-9168 or by email at BMSclaims@crowco.ca.

Claims Support You Can Rely On

One of the most valuable aspects of CPB Canada's member E&O insurance is access to experienced claims professionals. When a claim is reported, the insurer works with legal counsel and claims specialists who understand professional liability matters specific to bookkeeping and financial services.

Support may include:

- Guidance on how to respond to allegations;
- Appointment of legal defence counsel;
- Negotiation and settlement management; and
- Ongoing communication throughout the claims process.

This professional support is often just as important as the financial protection itself. BMS also works alongside CPB Canada members to answer questions, provide guidance and help navigate the insurance process in co-ordination with the insurer.

Protecting Your Practice Today and Tomorrow

Bookkeeping is a profession grounded in accuracy, integrity and

accountability. Errors & Omissions insurance helps ensure that a single allegation doesn't derail the career you've worked hard to build.

For CPB Canada members, access to a dedicated insurance program means you are not navigating professional risk alone. Whether you are an independent bookkeeper, operate a small firm or are expanding your services, E&O coverage is a foundational element of a sustainable practice.

As your services evolve, it's important to periodically review your coverage to ensure it continues to reflect your professional responsibilities. A BMS broker can help you do this anytime.

For insurance-related questions or to discuss your individual practice circumstances, CPB Canada members can contact a BMS broker at 1-844-200-7140 or by email at cpb-canada.insurance@bmsgroup.com.

BMS Canada Risk Services Ltd. (BMS) is a national insurance brokerage providing tailored coverage and risk management solutions for professionals across the country, including the CPB Canada program. Please note that the examples used in this article do not represent actual claims or insureds. The scenarios described above are included to provide examples of common circumstances, allegations and outcomes for claims involving CPB Canada members and associates participating in the insurance program. This article is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as being advice or exhaustive. BMS makes no representation, warranty or guarantee that use of this information will prevent damage or reduce your premium. Your insurance contract always prevails, so please consult it for a complete description of coverage and exclusions. Certain conditions, restrictions and exclusions apply. 🌟

Easy, breezy bookkeeping

Reclaim your time
(and your spark)
with Payworks.



Payworks



Celebrating Two Decades

as Canada's trusted partner

Elevating Canadian accounting & tax firms
with full-suite outsourcing services



50+

Years of Industry
Experience

200+

Trusted by CPA
Firms Worldwide

1500+

Team of Experienced
Professionals

99%

Client Retention

Your trusted partner for:



Bookkeeping



Compilations



Tax Return
Preparation



Audit &
Assurance

Why our clients love us:

40-50% reduction in operating costs

Technology-agnostic – integrated across your
existing tools, software, and AI platforms

Scalable team for busy tax season, year-end, and peak demand

Flexible engagement models

Why professionals trust us



SOC 1 TYPE II
SOC 2 TYPE II



GDPR READY



27001-2022



9001-2015

Email: marketing@datamaticsbpm.com

Website: www.datamaticscpa.com

