

Our Salute to the Numbers People

2021 Top Business Accountants

For entrepreneurs, their accountant plays an active part in the financial success of their businesses. The following accountants have proven their dedication to helping small businesses in St. Louis grow and have been named the Top Accountants for businesses in 2021. *In the following profiles, this year's top accountants share their wisdom for your business.*



Keith Slusser

Fick, Eggemeyer & Williamson, CPAs

Number of years serving business owners: 20

Motivation to help business owners:
Sharing my experience and knowledge to help others succeed.

Obstacles you help entrepreneurs with:
Helping business owners understand the intricacy and importance of keeping proper books.

Best advice for small business owners:
Accounting isn't glamorous, but keeping up-to-date books enables business owners to make informed decisions about the direction of their respective businesses. We advise clients to remain current on their accounting to make the best decisions.

Biggest mistake that you see business owners make:
Diverting attention away from what makes them successful. I see them start new businesses in different fields, and their successful business starts to suffer.



Debra J. Annis

Smith Patrick CPAs

Number of Years Serving Business Owners: 41 years

Motivation to help business owners:
I enjoy helping clients become more successful. I want them to have the financial understanding needed to feel confident and satisfied with how they're running their businesses. It's great to have the continuity of working with people for many years.



Obstacles you help entrepreneurs with:
I help entrepreneurs overcome obstacles with cash flow, planning, stability and growth. I encourage clients to discuss what is happening on the accounting side with me. Then we can analyze the situation and discuss what might be the best choice. When I'm involved on the front end, I can help clients avoid paying unnecessary tax while achieving their plans. To me, it's like solving a puzzle: putting together pieces to see the whole picture.

Best advice for small business owners:
I recommend meeting with your accountant at least annually, if not more often. Ask questions about what you can be doing better or differently. You want an accounting team that is focused on forward thinking to help your future. You want someone who is asking questions and making suggestions. Otherwise, if your tax preparer just takes whatever you give them, you're looking at the past.

Biggest mistake that you see business owners make:
The biggest mistake that haunts business owners is making a major decision without raising the issue with their accountant. This could be selling the business, mergers and acquisitions, vehicle purchases, equipment financing or payroll, just to name a few. By getting financial advice beforehand, owners can review all the options and might find a better approach. Doing so helps them avoid losing money, paying more taxes or being stuck in a structure that's unbeneficial. It's worth a phone call.

Brian T. Ostendorf

Conner Ash P.C.

Number of years serving business owners: 12 years public accounting; 4 years industry accounting.

Motivation to help business owners:
Helping them to accomplish individual and business goals.

Obstacles you help entrepreneurs with:
Developing and implementing business strategies in a tax-efficient manner.

Best advice for small business owners:
Do not lose site of the big picture.

Biggest mistake that you see business owners make:
Focusing on short term goals and sacrificing long-term opportunities.





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Congratulations to Debra Annis

Named one of St. Louis' **TOP ACCOUNTANTS**
 by Small Business Monthly

With your track record of helping businesses succeed,
 you've earned it. We're proud to have you on our team.



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“Customers gravitate to people who are
 passionate about what they’re doing.”

Vicki LaRose
 Civil Design

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