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for People®



# A small, powerful accounting firm

## About the company

Powerful Accounting is a nationally recognized accounting, tax, and QuickBooks® consulting firm that specializes in small- to medium-sized businesses. CEO Dawn Brolin, CPA, CFE, is the author of *The Designated Motivator*, a practical guide for high-performing individuals, and a highly sought-after speaker who has been named one of Accounting Today's "Top 100 Most Influential People in Accounting" three years in a row.

## "We're moving everyone to ADP"

When you first get started in business, you kind of do anything to make money. In the beginning, Powerful Accounting was offering bookkeeping and in-house payroll services. But I quickly realized that payroll was not my friend. It ties you down—every quarter, you have to make sure those tax returns are completed and that they're done correctly and all the payments are being made. If you're doing payroll in multiple states, you've got to know the ins and outs of every local, city and state tax. And then there's all the compliance headaches! I realized years ago that I didn't want to be an expert in payroll.

For a long time, I was referring my clients to whatever payroll service made the most sense for their needs and accounting software. We mostly lived in the Intuit ecosystem. But we would run into problems with support. Most payroll products don't have great support—this is not a secret. But the reality is, notices for payroll are inevitable, and when the client gets a notice, they come to me—not the payroll provider. If the provider doesn't have a centralized location for handling notices, it becomes a nightmare for the accountant. With Intuit, all you can do is email the notices, and they end up in a black hole somewhere, and it practically takes an act of Congress to get somebody to give you an answer.

## Quick Facts



Dawn Brolin, CPA, CFE  
CEO

Name	Powerful Accounting
Industry	Accounting
Established	2011
Employees	4
Headquarters	Windham, CT
Website	Powerfulaccounting.com



**Business challenge:** With a staff of only four, Dawn Brolin doesn't want to spend her company's time doing payroll for clients but does want to make sure they are well taken care of.



**How ADP helped:** ADP® Accountant Connect<sup>SM</sup> lets Dawn outsource her clients' payroll without sacrificing control, and the ADP Accountant Revenue Share Incentive Program provides her with ongoing revenue to compensate for whatever time she dedicates to it.

“The more I got to understand ADP, the more I could see how much they cared about their customers and their people. That meant a lot to me.”



Meanwhile, the client keeps getting notices, which makes me look bad. And like everybody, I don't like to look bad in front of my clients.

When I started meeting people at ADP, I was immediately struck by their culture. Culture is so important to me, because my clients are like my children. If I'm going to hand my clients over to a payroll provider, I need to know they're going to be in good hands. The more I got to understand ADP, the more I could see how much they cared about their customers and their people. That meant a lot to me. Then I saw how strong their customer service was and all the dedicated programs they had for accountants, like their **Accountant Revenue Share Program** and Accountant Connect, and I was sold. I told my staff, "We're moving everyone to ADP."

### **A one-stop shop for HR and compliance**

For my clients, one of my favorite things about ADP is their HR resources. Historically, HR for my clients was non-existent. They don't even want to spend the money to talk about it. But whether it's a retirement plan or the Employee Handbook Wizard or the Pay-by-Pay<sup>®</sup> program for Workers' Comp, ADP is a one-stop shop for all their HR and compliance needs. It's like an extension of my company.

I also like that I can set up RUN to protect my clients from themselves. If they have someone who normally works 20 hours, and one day they enter 30 hours for that person, RUN will stop them and double check that they aren't making a mistake. A lot of the other platforms, they just don't care. "Oh, you don't have a withholding number?" They're just like, "Oh, whatever," and they move on. ADP allows you as the practitioner to be involved, to say, "Okay, let's set up some protection around these danger zones." Or if a client tells us they just set up a new employee and they want us to double check their withholdings to make sure they did it right, I can jump in there and check. It gives us flexibility but also enough control to make sure things are not going to get all messed up on the client's end, because that's the biggest nightmare.

If you're in the accounting business long enough, you'll eventually get visited by sales reps from every payroll provider on earth. But Paige, my ADP rep, was the first one to ever get to know me and build a relationship. And that makes a big difference. I don't want to have to call a 1-800 number or go online for everything. I want a person that's going to help us through it. Paige understands my business, and my clients know that I trust her, so I can hand them off to her with confidence. That's the most important thing, right? I'm not saying, "Someone from Gusto will be contacting you." I'm saying, "You know Paige. She's my girl. She's gonna help you out." She's essentially our payroll administrator, and I don't pay her anything.

## ADP programs that directly benefit my firm

For my firm, the Accountant Revenue Share Program is a big deal and a huge part of the reason I now prefer to work with ADP. Yes, ADP is handling payroll for our clients. But the clients still expect the accounting professional to manage it. And believe me, the client doesn't want to pay us anything to deal with payroll, because they're saying, "Well, I already pay ADP. Why do I want to pay you?" And that totally makes sense to me. So, ADP acknowledges that by sharing revenue with the people who give referrals, because they know that we're still in the game. They know that the clients are still going to come to us before they're going to call 1-800-ADP. With the revenue share program, we can at least have some sense of compensation for the work we end up doing. And with that money, I can do things like buy all my staff a new computer or give out unexpected bonuses. "Here's \$2,000, go on a weekend vacation." That's our fun money.

When it comes to HR and payroll, **Accountant Connect** is the hub of my business. Nobody else is offering anything like it. Sure, other companies have a portal where you can see all your clients, but the usability of Accountant Connect is unlike any other tool I've seen. It has Compensation Benchmarking, so I can advise my clients on what they should be paying themselves. If one of my clients gets a notice, I can submit a Service Request on their behalf, and someone from ADP's Accountant HelpDesk gets right back to me. I can ask ADP to pay out a bonus but not do any of the withholding. Accountant Connect provides a one-stop shop to do everything I need for that extended arm of my business, and it doesn't cost me anything.

We had a client who, prior to using ADP, had been doing all her payroll journal entries manually into QuickBooks. Once we switched them to ADP and connected her company to our Accountant Connect dashboard, we were finally able to map her payroll from ADP to import into QuickBooks, and then we replaced all those manual entries so her books were 100% clean for tax prep. Your staff can do these types of things without you getting involved, and if they need help, ADP support is right there.

And now ADP has added client onboarding to Accountant Connect, so I can get new payroll clients started myself when needed. If I've got a newly formed S corp with just one employee, I'm just going to go in there and get it started, because I just want to get it done. It just makes the process a little bit faster in some of those quick-hit scenarios.

“ I don't want to have to call a 1-800 number or go online for everything. I want a person that's going to help us through it. My ADP rep understands my business, and my clients know that I trust her, so I can hand them off with confidence. ”



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## It's like having a division of your company that you don't have to pay for

Look, there are accountants who love doing payroll and make a ton of money with it. That's great. It's why ADP has its wholesale platform, **RUN Powered by ADP® Payroll for Partners**. But for us, because we're small, we just don't want to get tied down. As tax preparers, we're already responsible for enough compliance work. And now with the government constantly making changes to payroll and all the new rules around paid sick leave, don't we have enough to keep up with? I don't care if you're a bookkeeper, a tax preparer, or an auditor. Those IRS fines are expensive, and you only get one abatement! Why do you want that pressure on yourself?

With ADP, I'm earning a revenue share to compensate myself for the payroll tasks that I do have to deal with on occasion. It's like having a division of your company that you don't have to pay for, manage, or even monitor. I'd rather focus my attention where I can make the most difference for my clients, and let ADP handle the stuff that they're the best at.

To learn more visit: [adp.com/accountant](https://adp.com/accountant)



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