



# Creating Opportunity for Our Clients

## The Value of Valued Business Advisors

An Interview with Christine M. Anderson,  
Managing Partner, Baker Tilly



Christine M. Anderson

**EDITORS' NOTE** *Christine Anderson serves as the managing partner for growth and specialization and leads the firm's financial services practice. She has nearly 30 years of experience working within professional services and financial services organizations, including leadership roles in finance, operations, compliance and project management. Chris is a member of the firm's Management Committee and an ex officio member of the Board of Partners.*

**FIRM BRIEF** *Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP (bakertilly.com) is a nationally recognized, full-service accounting and advisory firm whose specialized professionals connect with clients and their businesses through refreshing candor and clear industry insight. With approximately 2,700 employees across the United States, Baker Tilly is ranked as one of the 15 largest accounting and advisory firms in the country. Headquartered in Chicago, Baker Tilly is an independent member of Baker Tilly International, a worldwide network of independent accounting and business advisory firms in 147 countries, with 30,000 professionals.*

### **You have a unique are of responsibility. What is your focus?**

As managing partner of growth and specialization, I oversee strategy development and execution of select practices that are undergoing substantial evolution and represent growth potential. Today, these include healthcare, financial services, manufacturing & distribution, risk, internal audit and cybersecurity and construction & real estate. I also oversee Baker Tilly's business development and marketing functions, focusing on our firm's client service and go-to-market strategies. This role allows me the opportunity to look across the firm and help connect and accelerate the great work we're doing for our clients in our regions, practices and service lines.

### **Baker Tilly has grown quickly and yet maintains an entrepreneurial feel. How ingrained is that in the firm's culture?**

Preserving an entrepreneurial spirit is extremely important to our firm. As any firm grows, it can be a challenge to stay nimble. This is something we keep top of mind in order to respond to client needs or market changes. The opportunity I have in my role is to enhance connectivity so the pockets of entrepreneurial spirit and development can take place without getting mired in too much bureaucracy. We have a relatively flat organization and that's intentional. This keeps our partners close to our clients – and that's what spurs their creativity and innovation. This is how we operate differently from other firms.

### **What makes Baker Tilly unique within this crowded industry?**

Technical skills are an expectation in this industry. Differentiation lies in advising our clients and helping them solve problems. We play a vital role in our clients' success as Valued Business Advisors by listening to our clients and really getting to know them. We understand what's important to them, we learn what they need and we pinpoint where we can really help.

We know we can't be everything to everyone. On occasion, we will bring in a business partner to provide a specific solution. That's how we keep our client first. As Valued Business Advisors we are well positioned to help our clients address business issues and capitalize on opportunities.

### **Is it important that Baker Tilly offer seamless service across all markets?**

Yes. For example, the financial services team that I work on is a national practice and our clients are national. Our clients expect a high level of specialization and expertise, so that requires our ability to collaborate. Collaboration is a core value of our firm – it's that important to us. We know we are at our best when we work together. This isn't something we hope will happen. We believe this is how we should work. And we expect this is how we will work – for the benefit of our clients and our team members.

### **What does it mean to have a culture of growth?**

We pursue growth to create opportunity for our people, our clients, our firm and our profession. If we're not growing, we're standing still. We focus on achieving sustainable growth, which is really about creating opportunities.

We've embedded growth – both organic and expansive – into our overall strategy. We choose growth to better serve our clients and stand out in our profession. And we choose growth to make a difference in our communities. ●