

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

BUSINESS JOURNAL

Mel H. Abraham

Director

Kaplan Abraham Burkert & Co.



The cliché goes that public speaking is the only thing people are more afraid of than death. But whoever first came up with that was clearly not referring to Mel H. Abraham, one of the nation's most prominent experts in the valuation litigation field.

"When I first got started in this industry, I didn't have any testimony experience and attorneys kept on telling me that without experience, they couldn't hire me," Abraham said. "I figured that by giving speeches and lectures on valuation, they'd be able to see the way in which I was able to give answers, and it worked to the point of where I was able to build up a national business and a national reputation."

Indeed, in addition to his \$1 million-plus yearly book of business he has created at his firm, Abraham is an author and nationally recognized award-winning lecturer, addressing professional conferences at the local, state and national level, speaking on everything from valuation, to health, to safety issues to self-empowerment.

As the public speaking has increased his stature in the industry, Abraham has been able to capitalize, taking on higher profile and more complex projects.

"I get out there. I write a lot, I speak a lot, I teach a lot and have educational products in the pipeline," Abraham said. "I've tried to become a resource for my clients and the people that I do business with. I do a lot of telecom seminars too, write for different journals and send out a lot of

releases. A lot of CPAs don't necessarily do that, but I believe in the power of marketing."

But Abraham has relied on more than just speaking gigs to boost his reputation. The always forward-thinking CPA has relied on the Internet for business promotion since the early days of the Web.

"We do a lot of Internet work. Many of my articles and educational products are Internet-based. We try to provide resources for the Web and every time there's a new case it proves helpful," Abraham said. "For my clients and the attorneys I work with, I often do mini-audio seminars and e-mail them out to my 9,000 person contact base. That way they can get knowledge and it keeps me constantly in front of them."

All the hard work and persistence has certainly paid off for Abraham, as others attest to his stellar reputation.

"Mel's probably the most highly regarded appraiser in the state of California," Keith Schiller an attorney at the Orlinda, Ca.-based Schiller Law Group, said. "I come across a lot of appraisers in my line of work and few if any are better than Mel. His judgment is highly respected and I've heard very strong compliments from taxpayers, IRS officers, district council appeal officers and the representatives for taxpayers. He does an excellent job."

— Jeff Weiss

The Valley's Top 25 CPAs