

# PERFORMANCE AND CONTROLS PRACTICE

## Your Growth in the Balance

Corporate transparency and stable business practices have become inextricably linked. Operations must make the transition to this age of high-powered processes, while at the same time customers, stakeholders and regulators demand thorough visibility of internal controls. Stabilizing, sustaining and growing your enterprise means balancing these elements by accentuating the organization's strengths and mitigating weaknesses from the inside out.

MFA's Performance and Controls Practice has the specific expertise necessary to help you achieve that crucial balance. Whether maintaining compliance more efficiently, correcting troublesome processes or implementing strategies for process optimization, our consultants know how to accurately assess your organizational needs and put the right solutions to work for you.

*As your company seeks vital process improvements to enhance its performance, it must also bear in mind the increasingly transparent environment in which it operates. MFA can help you balance these elements ... and use both to your advantage.*



MFA CORNERSTONE CONSULTING



## UNDERSTANDING YOUR BUSINESS

MFA is not content to simply lay industry best practices over an organization in an effort to resolve problems. We first and foremost gain a thorough understanding of each organization's specific needs – because while one company may want to grow, another may want to stabilize and brace for a change in direction. Every situation is unique, and every situation demands a unique approach.

## APPLYING HIGH-LEVEL EXPERTISE

At MFA, we combine industry, financial and business experience to help assess your operations, build a strategy and, when necessary, execute on your behalf. Whether yours is a privately held, publicly traded or nonprofit organization, our top-tier consultants are ready to help you maximize the performance of your operations.

## Business Performance Enhancement

For growing and established companies alike, one broken process can lead to a myriad of issues, from minor hiccups to major operational breakdowns. Companies succeed by never being satisfied with the way things are and by responding quickly to problem areas within the organization. Recognizing and addressing these deficiencies, or simply identifying opportunities for improvement, requires a keen, objective eye and the ability to blend innovation with smart business practices.

MFA takes into account an organization's unique strengths, challenges and the internal change that is necessary to address a range of processes, from billing and collection cycles to manufacturing efficiency reporting. By combining our business acumen in the disciplines of finance, operations and internal controls with the advanced skills of our IT Advisory Practice, we can illuminate the path to more reliable returns for your organization.

## PROBLEM SOLVING AND PROCESS OPTIMIZATION

Stress on the bottom line can often be a symptom of business process issues. Our team works with management to identify the root cause of systemic business process breakdowns and addresses the problem with solutions that range from the reorganization of business process workflows to radical adoptions of new, IT-based automated processes.

Maybe it's not "broken," but it could be better. At MFA, we also help clients take existing functional processes and extract opportunities for improvement to optimally link people, best practices and tools. Whatever the objective — increased productivity, revenue enhancement, expense reduction or overall service level improvement — we guide clients through the entire optimization process to ensure that the end result is a more efficient, agile business process.

## Sarbanes-Oxley Compliance

Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) changed the way companies approach business governance, and today its demands go well beyond initial compliance activities. SOX requires an ongoing effort that includes achieving, testing and maintaining compliance, and these elements must be carefully calibrated to avoid any unnecessary impact to your bottom line.

During SOX engagements, MFA's experienced compliance team applies a well-rounded approach that takes our clients' business strategies into account. We align our activities with each client's primary objectives to effectively address management's goals while maximizing available resources. Through judicious management, MFA coordinates meeting schedules, allocates resources intelligently and retains senior level expertise on-site to ensure the creation and maintenance of a strengthened control and compliance environment.

## DECADES OF INTERNAL CONTROLS EXPERIENCE

Our 25+ years of internal controls experience and extensive roster of business-savvy SOX clients demonstrate the strength and range of our compliance solutions. The exceptional knowledge base and vast experience amassed over the years puts us in the unique position of being a single source for regulatory, technical and operational guidance. In working with MFA, clients are secure in the knowledge that they are working with truly seasoned professionals who can efficiently tackle complex issues as they arise.

MFA's team of credentialed IT control consultants augments our SOX compliance solutions and ensures a well-rounded approach that considers the full strategy of our clients during SOX compliance engagements. We outline your controls and develop process narratives that are designed to uncover and mitigate specific risks and activities within your organization's control environment. We identify gaps between IT policies and external requirements as well as create, disseminate, document and manage policies using a risk-based approach. Our broad industry experience provides a strong knowledge base for performing a thorough, system-related control assessment.

## PRE-IPO COMPLIANCE PLANNING

Going public has always been a daunting task, and SOX has added a new layer of complexity to the process. MFA's professionals can prepare companies for the IPO market while streamlining their operations, maximizing compliance and getting them where they need to be to support management's strategies.

## Internal Audit

The rise in regulatory scrutiny of both public and private companies has transformed the internal audit world, making it critical to bring in the right team of internal

auditors. Whether testing corporate governance or evaluating operational initiatives, well-executed internal audits provide the confidence you need to keep your business moving.

## OUTSOURCING THE INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION TO STAY ON TRACK

Maintaining and retaining experienced internal audit staff is an expensive proposition for many companies. As such, outsourcing or co-sourcing the internal audit function has become a viable, cost-effective alternative. In partnering with MFA, clients are able to remain focused on their core job responsibilities thus ensuring day-to-day operations do not suffer.

The key to successfully outsourcing your internal audit function lies in selecting the right auditors. MFA's deep experience in SOX compliance projects and external audits in a wide range of industries has given us the precise mix of specialized knowledge and experience necessary to meet the demanding and ever-evolving regulatory and business requirements of an internal audit function.

## COMPLIANCE AND BEYOND

Public and private companies alike have an enormous responsibility to meet varying compliance demands. Our professionals understand how to integrate your strategy with the nuances of the regulatory environment. Beyond the basic compliance issues, our team can assess the execution efforts of management initiatives and recommend business process and IT enhancements, ensuring that company operations reflect company goals.

## Clients We Serve

### PUBLIC COMPANIES

For years, MFA's aptitude for managing compliance has been put into practice for clients navigating the maze of Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) requirements. Keeping costs in check while leading compliance strategies, optimization of controls and testing efforts, our professionals make compliance a manageable piece of your business. In addition, our deep knowledge of operations, infrastructure, IT and financial nuances enable us to streamline your internal processes and help improve your competitive edge.

### PRIVATE COMPANIES

At one time, internal controls and performance were phrases rarely uttered in the same sentence. Today, they are closely intertwined, requiring comprehensive, ongoing assessments to ensure that internal controls and performance complement one another without holding back the potential of your operations. MFA consultants can make a direct impact on your business by helping you strengthen your operations and controls, apply methods to mitigate fraud and comply with governance principles and regulations.

### NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

While nonprofit organizations operate under different regulatory scrutiny, their business and compliance needs can be just as intense as those for a large for-profit company. MFA's understanding of nonprofit operational requirements – from asset preservation and fraud prevention to organizational continuity planning – is a great benefit for our clients, and allows us to help you enhance your organization's performance from top to bottom.

## Spectrum of Services

### BUSINESS PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT

- Operational Performance Reviews
- Business Process Implementation, Enhancement or Integration
- Operational Reporting Metrics and Management Analytics
- Efficiency Analysis
- Process Standardization and Gap Analysis

### SARBANES-OXLEY COMPLIANCE (SOX)

- Pre-IPO SOX Compliance Planning and Strategy
- Sarbanes-Oxley Initial Compliance
- Sarbanes-Oxley Sustained Compliance
- Controls Optimization
- Target Acquisition Control Assessment
- Acquisition Compliance Integration
- Corporate Governance Assessment

### INTERNAL AUDIT

- Outsourcing and Co-Sourcing
- Function Set-Up and Optimization
- Compliance and Internal Controls
- Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) Initial and Sustained Compliance
- Pre-IPO SOX Compliance Planning and Strategy
- Target Acquisition Control Assessment
- Acquisition Compliance Integration
- Corporate Governance Assessment