OMNI Launches New Website!

More Than Just a New Look
OMNI is proud to announce that we will soon be launching a newly redesigned website. Our goal was to provide an updated interface, with features allowing access to tools and resources that streamline processes for all end users.

Key Features:
- Tracking transaction forms that have already been submitted.
- Access to districts plan page.
- Direct link to Start/Change Contributions
- Important Preferred Provider Program (P3) information.
- A “What’s New” section.

As a technology-driven company, we’ve developed a new platform with customized tools keeping our clients and partners needs in mind. We are excited to launch this site and look forward to adding new features in the future.”

Q&A
Universal Availability

with OMNI’s Director of Compliance, Zachary Keep

Zachary Keep
Director of Compliance
U.S. OMNI

Steve Thomson, Dir. of Marketing, U.S. OMNI

Thomson: In a few words, what is Universal Availability?
Keep: Universal Availability is one of the most critical regulations in the 403(b) space, and refers to an employer’s obligation to provide “meaningful notice” to all eligible employees of their opportunity to participate in a 403(b) plan. It’s one of those concepts that sounds simple, but can actually be very complex once you start to delve into it.

Thomson: What does the IRS mean by meaningful notice?
Keep: The sense of what constitutes “meaningful notice” has expanded quite a bit. In today’s world your notice would ideally inform employees not just of their eligibility, but also include an educational component; showing how to contribute, why a 403(b) can be beneficial, and clearly demonstrating which options a participant has.

Thomson: How can an employer best comply with these regulations?
Keep: The best rule of thumb is that it’s hard to do too much. At minimum, employers should distribute OMNI’s Universal Availability Notice on a bi-annual basis. We also recommend that employers undertake additional efforts to bolster their compliance, which can include posters, pay stub memos, benefits fairs, and even in-person educational presentations by one or more of your providers. It is particularly important to pinpoint any populations who might not have access to e-mail and ensure that they are reached through some other medium.

Thomson: What else should an employer know about Universal Availability?
Keep: The concept of eligibility can be surprisingly tricky. Some plans exercise their right to prohibit or exclude employees working less than 20 hours/week. While the exclusion is permissible, it invites scrutiny in the event of an audit and can lead to penalties if an employee was wrongly classified as part time. In practice, it’s generally easier to allow all employees to contribute.
Maximum Allowable Contributions

How it’s calculated and how OMNI helps.

One of OMNI’s key services is to ensure strict compliance with IRS regulations. To that end, OMNI calculates and tracks each participant’s Maximum Allowable Contribution (“MAC”) and provides a report at the beginning of every year. A participant’s MAC can sometimes be increased by certain catch-up provisions, eligibility for which is also calculated by OMNI.

Base Limit:
The IRS sets a base limit amount that a participant can contribute to their 403(b). This limit is typically set near the end of the tax year and may increase from time to time. For 2019, the base limit is $19,000. Certain employees may be eligible to shelter additional funds through the following catch-up provisions:

Age Catch-up:
In the year a participant turns 50, the IRS allows an additional Catch-up Contribution. As with the base limit, this amount is subject to change every year and is currently at $6,000. Therefore, 403(b) participants that are age 50 and older can contribute $25,000 in 2019.

Service Based Catch-up:
Eligibility for the “Service Based Catch-up” can be difficult to determine. Employees who have attained 15 or more years of service may be eligible for an additional contribution of up to $3,000 above their base limit (which itself may be increased by the age based limit). Accordingly, participants who qualify may contribute $21,000 annually or $27,000 if they are 50 or older. Eligibility for the Service Based Catch-up is neither automatic nor permanent, and can only be determined through a detailed review of a participant’s historical 403(b) contributions, as well as ongoing monitoring of further contributions.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Aaron Thompson Remittance Specialist
How long have you been at OMNI?
Since January 31st, 2017

What are your main job functions?
I am a remittance specialist to approximately 170 orgs

What is your favorite part about your job?
My favorite part about the job has been building relationships with the payroll contacts to the point where we go from discussing a participants problem to talking about how our weekend was.

What activities do you enjoy outside of work?
Outside of work I spend most of my weekends working at a local fine dining restaurant and on my occasional days off I enjoy urban exploring with my partner Carlos. After our recent trip to Puerto Rico I have caught the travel bug and have trips to London and Amsterdam in the works.

What is something every employer should know about OMNI’s services?
Every Employer should know that OMNI is a team and provides the highest quality service. We work in tandem across all departments when faced with 403(b) participant and employer challenges.

What are your retirement dreams?
I would love to travel and collect experiences rather than things. I also hope to slow down enough where I could have a few dogs and spoil them rotten.

Featured in our next edition:
Reasons to choose an advisor that is CRES CERTIFIED

Look for U.S. OMNI at these upcoming events

October 8-10 | New Orleans AASPA
October 16-18 | Colorado ASBO
October 22-23 | New Jersey ASBA
October 25-28 | International ASBO
November 5-7 | Georgia ASBO
November 10-12 | Ohio ASBO
November 13-15 | Kentucky ASBO
November 19-21 | Tennessee ASBO
November 21-22 | California Symposium
November 22 | Illinois ASBO