2016 RANKING OF TOP ACCOUNTING FIRMS

Finding the Top Accounting Firms in San Diego, CA

Sunny San Diego has a lot to offer its residents, and accounting firms are no exception! There are dozens of CPAs in San Diego, and finding the right one for you and your business is no easy task.

With so many firms to choose from, you want to be sure that you select the firm that is best suited for your particular needs and goals. However, researching each firm can be a time consuming process.

This list of top accounting firms in San Diego will help you find the best match for you. We have carefully selected the firms using AdvisoryHQ's selection methodology and have also outlined the services offered by each firm.

This will help you determine which firm offers the services that most closely cater to your needs. Each firm offers a different set of specializations. This list will save you valuable time by setting out each firm's industry specializations in one place.

Hopefully this list helps you determine which San Diego accountant has the most to offer you and your business.



AdvisoryHQ's List of the Best Accounting Firms in San Diego

- <u>AKT</u>
- Blum & Clark LLP
- <u>Christy White Associates</u>
- Gatto, Pope & Walwick LLP
- Haskell & White LLP
- Hutchinson & Bloodgood
- JGD & Associates
- Leaf & Cole LLP
- <u>Levitzacks</u>
- <u>RJS Law</u>

List is sorted alphabetically (click any of the names above to go directly to the detailed review section for that firm)

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Top 10 Accounting Firms in San Diego, California

Firm	Location
AKT	San Diego
Blum & Clark, Certified Public Accountants, LLP	San Diego
Christy White Associates	San Diego
Gatto, Pope & Walwick LLP. (GPW)	San Diego
Haskell & White LLP	San Diego
Hutchinson and Bloodgood LLP	San Diego
JGD & Associates LLP	San Diego
Leaf & Cole, LLP	San Diego
Levitzacks	San Diego
RJS Law	San Diego

Methodology for Selecting Accounting Firms in San Diego

What methodology did we use in selecting this list of best accounting firms in San Diego, CA?

Using publicly available sources, AdvisoryHQ identified a wide range of accounting firms that provide services in San Diego and the surrounding areas.

We then applied AdvisoryHQ's "Breakthrough Selection Methodology" to identify the final list of top accounting firms that provide services to communities in and around San Diego.

Click here for a detailed review of our methodology: Methodology for Ranking Top Advisors in the U.S and U.K.

Detailed Review – Top Ranking Accounting Firms in San Diego

Below, please find the detailed review of each firm on our list of top accounting firms in San Diego. We have highlighted some of the factors that allowed these San Diego accounting firms to score so highly in our selection ranking.

AKT LLP Review

AKT LLP offers audit, tax preparation and consulting, accounting assistance, and business consulting services.

This firm has offices in California, Oregon, and Alaska. AKT LLP is a member of a family of related companies that provide various financial services to both private clients and businesses.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled AKT LLP to rank as one of 2016's top accounting firms in San Diego.

Services Offered

AKT offers a wide range of accountancy services to both individual and professional clients.

Audit & Assurance

This firm has experience assisting all types of organizations with assurance services. They can instruct you on how to prepare your financials so that they are compliant and organized upon outside review.

AKT utilizes cutting edge technology to import and analyze electronic data. They operate as a paperless environment, which provides an organized and secure auditing process.

Specific audit and assurance services include:

- Audit, review, and compilation of financial statements
- Benefit plan audits
- A-133 single audits
- Financial due diligence
- Agreed-upon procedures
- Contract compliance
- Internal controls
- Fraud assessment
- Employee benefit compliance

Business Advisory

AKT offers a deep well of business advisory services. The firm sets your business up with consultants who will evaluate your business with a fresh set of eyes and offer you skilled and experienced expertise for your industry.

Some of their business advisory services include:

- Business strategy and planning
- Business succession planning
- Valuation services
- Benchmarking and financial metrics
- Acquisition and transaction support
- Organization development consulting

International and Expatriate Tax Services

They can also advise clients living abroad as well as those recently returning to the U.S. from another country. These specialty services include:

- Federal and state tax preparation
- Late tax filing
- Foreign Bank Account Report (FBAR or FinCEN Form 114)

Tax Preparation

AKT will also assist with the regular complexities of domestic tax preparation. They can help you cut through dense regulations and get you ready for submittal.

Some of their tax preparation services include:

• Compliance and preparation

- State and local taxes
- Trusts, partnerships, and estates
- Research and development tax credits

Specialized Industry Knowledge

This firm also provides specialty accountancy services to particular industries. AKT strives to bulldoze through complexity to provide clients with a crystal clear picture of tax regulation and compliance.

Such specialty services are provided for the following industries:

- Agriculture and farming
- Architecture and engineering
- Construction accounting services
- Dental
- Distribution and manufacturing accounting
- Food and beverage accounting and finance
- Growth companies
- Healthcare accounting and finance
- Nonprofit and government
- Professional services
- Telecommunications
- Utilities
- Veterinary

Blum & Clark Review

Blum & Clark is an accounting firm in San Diego offering a wide range of services to both businesses and individuals. They strive to give personalized service to each client depending on their particular needs and goals.

Their mission is to address present financial viability while also taking a proactive approach to reach future goals.

Blum & Clark has served the San Diego community for years and has a strong base of returning local clients.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled Blum & Clark to rank as one of 2016's top accounting firms in San Diego.

Diversified Services

Blum & Clark offers a wide range of accounting services to individuals, businesses, and non-profits. Some of their services include:

Tax

Blum & Clark offers tax and tax compliance services. Their tax service will address your tax liabilities so that you can maximize cash while managing all of your federal and state obligations.

They stay on top of changing regulations and are skilled in handling the complexity of tax laws so that they can sort through your finances and prepare your taxes accurately.

They also offer tax compliance services to:

- Individuals
- Corporations
- S-corporations
- Partnerships
- LLCs
- Non-profits
- Trusts and estates
- Retirement plans
- International tax

Assurance and Advisory

This firm also offers assurance and advisory services to assist in the overall efficiency or running of a business. They help clients address challenges faced when operating a business with the goal of decreasing expenses.

Blum & Clark will also introduce new technologies to streamline business planning.

Some assurance and advisory services include:

- Audits, reviews, and compilations
- Entity selection and restructuring
- Accounting software selection, implementation, and support
- Financial projections and forecasts
- Debt and finances advising
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Transaction structuring and negotiations
- Business succession

IRS Representation

In the event of an audit, Blum & Clark can represent you. This can provide invaluable piece of mind because Blum & Clark can answer IRS questions appropriately and in a timely manner.

They can assist you with both state and federal authority dealings.

Blum & Clark also offers many other accounting services:

- QuickBooks advice
- Payroll services
- Cash flow and budgeting analysis
- Mergers, acquisitions, and sales
- Financial projections
- Debt and finance advising

Christy White Associates Review

Christy White Associates is a California accountancy firm with locations in San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

Their company mission is to create a worthwhile business relationship with clients and to offer responsive, trustworthy advisors who provide timely quality assurance, accounting, and consulting services.

They are licensed by the State Board of Accountancy and are a women majority owned firm.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled Christy White Associates to rank as one of 2016's top accounting firms in San Diego.

Firm History

The firm was founded by Christy White in 2010, who brings over two decades of experience as an accountant.

Among other notable positions, she spent seven years working with the School Services of California, where she became a leading expert on California school district finance and accounting.

Michael Ash, partner at Christy White Associates, and Heather Daud, principal, also specialize in governmental and charter school audits.

Large Selection of Services

Christy White Associates offers a wide range of accountancy services, including:

- Audits
- Consulting
- Federal single audits
- Fraud investigation and forensic audits
- Workshops/trainings
- Partnerships

CharterWise Management

Christy White Associates offers the CharterWise service, which assists charter schools with back office support and financial services.

They work with a number of California charter schools and handle their finance, compliance, and reporting needs so that the schools can focus on education and enhancing the lives of students.

CharterWise management services include:

- Accounting finance
- Payroll processing
- Compliance
- Grants administration

- Operational support
- School development (new and existing schools)

Core Industry Specializations

Governmental Organizations

Governmental agency auditing is a cornerstone of this firm. Associates offer a significant amount of experience auditing:

- Cities
- Special districts
- Counties
- School districts
- Indian tribes
- Government-sponsored pension plans
- County treasury investment pools

Non-Profits

Christy White Associates understands the unique needs of non-profits and has the experience and knowledge to handle the specialized financial requirements of charitable organizations.

In fact, Christy White Associates works with all types of non-profits, including:

- Education
- Health & human services
- Scientific
- Arts & culture

Non-profit services typically include:

- Financial audits
- Compliance audits
- Accounting and review services
- Form 990 tax preparation
- Consulting

School Districts

This firm has a wealth of experience working with school districts.

In fact, founder Christy White has 26 years of experience with auditing and consulting for school districts. Some of their clients include:

- San Diego Unified School District
- San Bernardino Community College
- Garden Grove Unified School District
- Alameda Unified School District
- Grossmont Union High School District
- Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College

Small Businesses

Another cornerstone of Christy White Associates is the financial and auditing needs of small businesses.

Gatto, Pope & Walwick, LLP Review

Gatto, Pope & Walwick, LLP strives to offer the best client experience possible. They work to respond to all current client inquires within 24 hours or sooner so that you'll feel like more than just a client account.

More than 25 CPAs work at this firm, but clients work with an individual CPA so that you can benefit from both personal attention and the resources of a large firm.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled Gatto, Pope & Walwick, LLP to rank as one of 2016's top accounting firms in San Diego.

Community Involvement

Gatto, Pope & Walwick (GPW) believes in serving the local San Diego community by giving to charitable causes.

The firm offers hundreds of community service hours and associates donate both time and funds to charitable organizations.

Some of the San Diego non-profits that GPW is involved in include:

- 21 San Diego
- Rancho Family YMCA
- Bonita Valley Community Church
- Center for Community Solutions San Diego
- Deer Canyon Foundation
- San Diego Blood Bank
- Even Chance
- Promises2Kids

Tax Services

GPW has the skills and expertise to help you deal with a wide range of tax issues. The firm can assist with tax issues such as:

- Income tax
- International tax
- Tax representation
- Estate, gift, and trust tax

Assurance and Compilation Services

Gatto, Pope & Walwick offers financial reporting services to a highly personalized degree. Depending on your needs, they offer financial reporting with three different levels of assurance:

<u>Audit</u>

GPW will dig deep into your company's books and financials to gain a full understanding of how your business is run.

With that understanding established, they will then issue an opinion on your financials and offer recommendations going forward.

Review

This service offers limited assurance regarding the state of your financial reports. GPW will bring concerns to light and make recommendations for your business going forward.

Compilation

This service differs from audit and review services in that it ensures that your financial reports are properly organized and formatted.

Additional Services

Gatto, Pope & Walwick also offers further accounting services. They provide business consulting services regarding such issues as:

- Investments
- Compensation strategies
- Sales
- Mergers
- Generational planning

GPW also offers services to family offices. Such programs provide advice related to the unique issues faced by high-net-worth clients.

GPW strives to offer comprehensive services to such clients, including:

- Tax and investment reviews
- Financial statements
- Cash-flow updates and projections
- Wealth accumulation
- Asset protection
- Diversification

Haskell & White LLP Review

Founded in 1988 by Steven Haskell and David White, Haskell & White has a strong presence in the Southern California community with offices in both Orange County and San Diego.

Partners and associates at this firm seek to provide clients with above and beyond customer service.

Haskell & White wants to be more than a "number-cruncher" to your business and is fully committed your success.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled Haskell & White, LLP to rank as one of 2016's top accounting firms in San Diego.

Commitment to Client Success

Haskell & White offers unique advantages in the way services are provided to their clients.

- <u>Partner and manager connection</u>: Clients have access to decision makers. This direct involvement saves you time and avoids unnecessary bureaucracy.
- <u>Regular attention</u>: Haskell & White provides regular attention to the state of your financials and also to business strategies that encourage your company's growth.

They offer services such as networking, efficient business formation, tax planning, implementation of computer systems, and more to encourage your company's success.

- <u>Stable business</u>: Haskell & White are a successful business themselves as they have expanded to 70 associates. They have seen annual growth of 20-30 percent for the last several years.
- <u>Middle-Market</u>: This firm works with public and private middle-market companies and offers personalized services regardless of company size.
- <u>International resources</u>: Haskell & White is affiliated with Leading Edge Alliance, which is a global network of independently-owned CPA firms.
- <u>Happy employees</u>: This firm is also dedicated to workplace satisfaction. In fact, Haskell & White was recognized as one of the "Best Places to Work in Orange County" by the *Orange County Business Journal*.

Commitment to the Community

Many firm partners are board members of local charities, and associates constantly donate their time to charitable causes.

The firm also encourages charitable giving every Friday, where associates dress casually in exchange for a charitable donation.

Tax and Accounting Services

Haskell & White focuses on providing tax, accounting, and auditing services to public and private middle-market companies. They have experience working with a wide range of clients, from business start-ups to established companies.

A list of the services at Haskell & White includes:

- Tax consulting and planning
- Audit and business advisory services
- Mergers & acquisitions
- SEC-related services

Hutchinson & Bloodgood LLP Review

Hutchinson & Bloodgood was formed in 1922 and has a team of over 30 partners and 100 associates.

They have a strong presence with four locations in California, including Glendale, El Centro, San Diego, and Watsonville.

They offer accountancy services in areas such as tax planning, auditing, information technology consulting, business valuations, and business advisory services.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled Hutchinson & Bloodgood LLP to rank as one of 2016's top San Diego, CA, CPA firms.

Wide Range of Accountancy Services

Hutchinson & Bloodgood provides a large selection of financial services.

Business Planning and Consulting

This firm has the experience and skill necessary to assist clients with building a proactive business plan.

With an understanding of your industry, team members will offer strategic ideas to assist you in your business plan.

Such services are available for new businesses as well as older businesses looking for a strategic shake up.

Employee Benefit Plan Audits

Hutchinson & Bloodgood provides efficient services that can make the correct and necessary changes to your employee benefit plans.

These services involve audits to your retirement and pension plans as well as managing your ongoing administration needs.

They currently handle over seventy-five retirement and welfare benefit plans, so you can feel comfortable knowing that they have the experience and skill necessary to provide you with all your employee benefit plan needs.

Exit Planning for Business Owners

Hutchinson & Bloodgood is aware that many business owners are reaching retirement age and will soon be ready to make a strategic exit from their businesses.

Despite the large number of people who need business exit services, only a small percentage of owners have done a significant amount of succession planning.

This firm understands how business owners should handle such transitions to maximize their bottom line.

Further Services Provided

Hutchinson & Bloodgood also offers service in the following areas and industries:

- Business valuations
- Cost segregation
- Estate planning
- Financial reporting and assurance
- IT assurance
- IT consulting
- Recruiting
- Royalty and audit contracts
- Tax

• Tax credits and incentives

Industry Specializations:

- Agribusiness
- Construction
- Family business
- Financial institutions
- Franchises
- Healthcare
- Hospitality and Leisure
- Legal
- Life sciences
- Manufacturing and distribution
- Non-profits
- Special districts
- Technology

JGD & Associates LLP Review

JGD & Associates is a San Diego-based accountancy firm offering services such as tax, assurance, accounting, and advisory services.

They serve all types of organizations, small and large, including privately held companies, non-profits, government agencies, and individuals.

Founded in 1977 in La Jolla, they have a strong connection to the San Diego local community, and associates are involved in a number of local charitable causes.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled JGD & Associates LLP to rank as one of 2016's top accounting firms in San Diego.

Large Selection of Services

JGD & Associates offers a wide range of accountancy services to the San Diego community. Some of these services include:

- Assurance and reporting
- Employee benefit plans
- Tax strategies and filings
- Managed accounting
- Exit and succession
- Advisory

Industry Specializations

JGD & Associates specializes in accounting services for a broad range of industries.

Manufacturing and Distribution

JGD & Associates offers both accountancy and advisory service to the manufacturing and distribution industry.

They can assist in profitability strategies, managed accounting, income tax planning, as well as addressing specific industry tax incentives. Such incentives include:

- Research and development
- Domestic international sales corporation
- Domestic production activities deduction
- Cost segregation
- Green credits
- Transfer pricing

Real Estate

This firm also specializes in the accountancy needs of the real estate industry. They can help you manage your financing options, new regulatory concerns and working in a volatile market.

JGD & Associates has a wealth of experience working in the real estate industry and has clients in areas such as:

- Commercial and residential investors and lessors
- Property managers & real estate brokers
- Hotel, land, and golf course developers
- Shopping center owners
- Single purpose entities

• General contractors

Further Specializations

Some of the other industry specializations that JGD & Associates handles include:

- Privately held companies
- Family owned businesses
- Individual and executive support
- Non-profits

Leaf & Cole LLP Review

Leaf & Cole is an accounting firm in San Diego founded in 1959. They offer tax, accounting, audit, and consulting services to both businesses and individuals.

Their partners are seasoned industry professionals who together bring over **100** years of tax and accounting experience to the table when serving clients.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled Leaf & Cole LLP to rank as one of 2016's top CPA firms in San Diego, CA.

Broad Selection of Accounting Services

At Leaf & Cole LLP, you benefit from the personalized treatment of a small office as well as the significant experience brought to the table by their seasoned professionals.

They offer a wide range of tax and accounting services, described below.

Tax Services

Leaf & Cole is capable of handling tax planning, preparation, compliance and IRS representation for a wide range of clients, including:

• Individuals

- Partnerships
- Corporations
- Estates & trusts
- S-Corporations
- Retirement plans
- Non-profits
- Limited Liability Corporations

Special Districts Auditing

Leaf & Cole stays informed and current with the financial concerns of special districts through their experience working with California special districts, as well as engaging with related associations, conferences, and continuing education.

The firm provides services to the following California special districts:

- Water and sewer
- Wastewater treatment and reclamation
- Street and repair
- Parks and recreation
- Fire
- Community service
- Improvement corporations
- Finance authorities
- Employee benefit plans
- Facilities corporations

Auditing Services

Leaf & Cole also offers auditing services to affordable housing organizations as well as non-profits.

Compilation and Review

When a client requires financial services but a full audit is unnecessary, Leaf & Cole offers complication and review services at a lower cost than an audit.

A compilation is a placement of financial reporting into statements without issue of an opinion or assurances.

A review provides further services in that it involves analysis of a company's financial statements.

However, an audit will still provide a more in-depth analysis of a company's financials.

Additional Services

Leaf & Cole offers further accounting services beyond those described above, including:

- Management advisory
- Litigation consulting
- Small business
- Financial consulting services

Levitzacks Review

Founded in 1964, Levitzacks is a San Diego accountant that has provided tax, accounting, and related services to the local community for decades.

Levitzacks is proud of the high level of partner involvement they offer clients as well as the breadth of talent available in their pool of team members.

On staff at Levitzacks are staff tax attorneys, an accredited senior appraiser, certified fraud examiners, and forensic specialists.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled Levitzacks to rank as one of 2016's top accounting firms in San Diego.

Firm Culture Awards

Levitzacks is the recipient of a number of firm culture awards. *San Diego Business Journal* named them one of San Diego's Best Places to Work in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015.

Accounting Today voted Levitzacks one of the Nation's Best Accounting Firms to Work for from 2011-2015.

Levitzacks believes that happy team members will keep clients happy by providing the best services possible. That is why Levitzacks is committed to a complete employee benefit program that adheres to the values:

- Stay healthy
- Feel secure
- Work/life balance

Wide Range of Client Services

This firm has a wide range of accounting related services to offer clients. Some of the services offered include:

- Planning, compliance, and consulting
- Estate planning
- Tax authority representation
- Business succession planning
- Accounting services
- AICPA: Center for Public Audit Firms
- PCAOB (Protecting Company Accounting Oversight Board)
- Private companies: audits, reviews, and compilations
- Public company services
- Business valuations
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Internal controls
- Fraud prevention and detection
- Forensic accounting

Industry Specializations

Beyond the services offered, Levitzacks also provides industry specializations. Staff members have a wealth of experience handling the issues and concerns dealt with when evaluating the financials of the following industries:

- Defense contracting
- Retailing
- Automobile dealerships
- Construction and development
- Beverage production and distribution
- Manufacturing
- Engineering services

- Biotech
- Internet services
- Franchising
- Distribution
- Profit sharing
- 401(k)s
- And more

RJS Law Review

Founded by Ronson Shamoun in 2003, RJS Law is now the largest tax law firm in Southern California.

They specialize in all areas of civil tax controversy and criminal tax defense and offer representation to individuals, small businesses, and corporations.

RJS Law strives to offer highly skilled tax advice and representation while also forming a relationship with each client by offering top notch and personalized customer service.

Key Factors that Enabled This Firm to Rank as a Top 2016 Accounting Firm

Below are key factors that enabled RJS Law to rank as one of 2016's top accounting firms in San Diego.

Awards and Recognition

RJS Law founder Ronson Shamoun was recognized as the "Best of the Bar" by *San Diego Business Journal* in 2014, and he was also recognized by *San Diego Metro* as one of San Diego's best attorneys in 2014.

The San Diego Daily also recognized him as one of San Diego's top young attorneys in 2010.

Shamoun has also appeared on a number of local and national media outlets as a tax expert.

He has been quoted as a tax expert by the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, *San Diego Business Journal*, *San Diego Daily Transcript* and the *Daily Buzz*.

News stations Fox 5, AMB 10, NBC 7, and KUSI 9 have also interviewed Shamoun or quoted him as a tax expert.

Practice Areas

RJS Law offers a large selection of tax law practice areas. Such areas include:

- Criminal tax defense
- IRS audits
- IRS appeals
- IRS collections
- Offer in compromise
- Innocent spouse relief
- Federal payroll tax
- EDD/California Payroll tax
- Sales tax
- State tax
- Estate tax
- International tax
- Corporate law
- Real estate law
- Offshore voluntary disclosure program

Free Case Evaluation

If you have specific questions about your potential case, you can head to the RJS Law website and enter your contact info and details about your case.

Someone from RJS Law will get back to you with a complimentary case review.

Testimonials

RJS Law is proud of the reputation they have created in the San Diego community. Their website has published dozens of rave review testimonials from former and current clients who have had wonderful experiences working with RJS Law.

Conclusion – Top 10 Accounting Firms in San Diego, CA

Selecting an accounting firm or San Diego CPA firm forces you to consider a number of factors.

What degree of service do you require? And does a particular firm specialize in your industry or area of business? What exactly are you looking for in a tax accountant in San Diego?

Making a decision about an accountant is intimidating because the firm you choose will comb through your business or personal finances and, depending on your needs, may even provide you with suggestions that will alter the way you run your home or business.

Such a major responsibility should not be left up to chance. You should choose a firm that, after careful consideration, you trust is up to the challenge of managing your finances and livelihood.

Be sure to read carefully and do your own research so that you're confident the San Diego CPA you choose aligns with your personal beliefs, values, and financial goals.

Most firms offer a free consultation, so you can do further research and set up an initial face-to-face or phone meeting with a "short-list" of firms before finally settling with an accounting firm.

If you have questions, comments, or tips about this "Top 10 Accounting Firms in San Diego, CA" article, send us an **email**.

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Cheers, AdvisoryHQ Team