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Messier | Glover | Prawitt

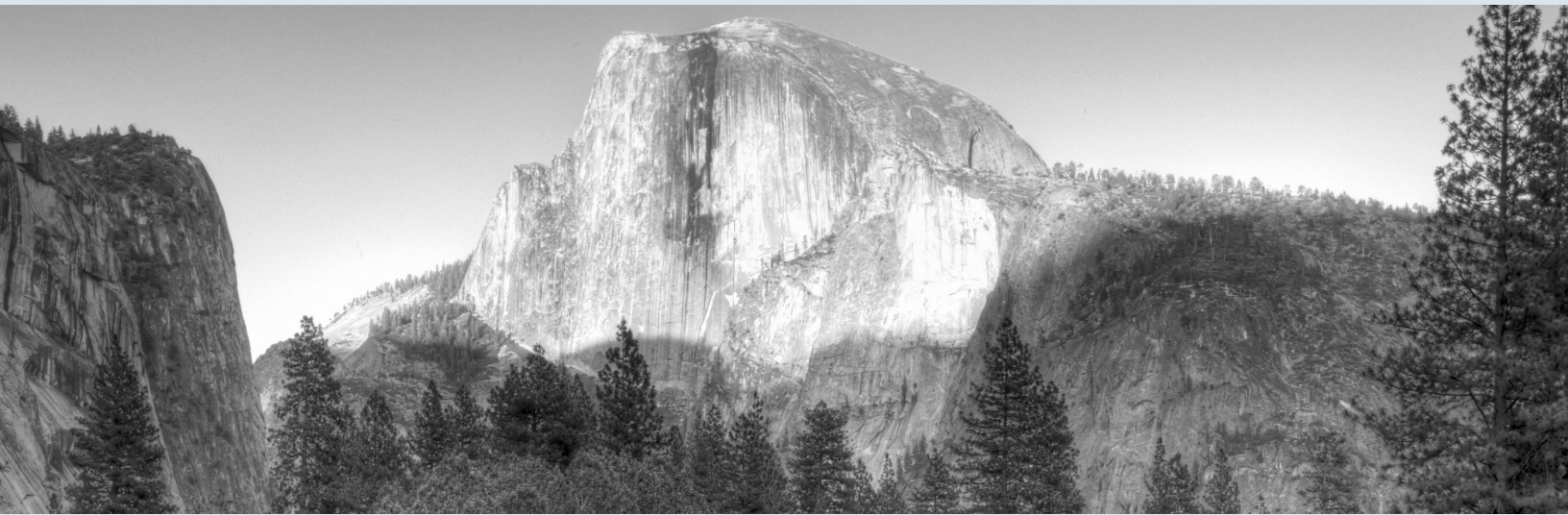
# AUDITING & ASSURANCE SERVICES

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH

Mc  
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Hill

Twelfth Edition

# Auditing & Assurance Services



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TWELFTH EDITION

# Auditing & Assurance Services

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH



Mimi Ditchie Photography/Moment/Getty Images

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## AUDITING & ASSURANCE SERVICES

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# About the Authors

Norwegian School of Economics



**Professor William F. Messier Jr.** is the Norwegian Institute of Public Accountants (DnR) Professor of Auditing at the Department of Accounting, Auditing and Law at the *NHH* Norwegian School of Economics. Professor Messier holds a BBA from Siena College, an MS from Clarkson University, and an MBA and DBA from Indiana University. He is a CPA in Florida and has held faculty positions at the University of Florida (Price Waterhouse Professor), Georgia State University (Deloitte & Touche Professor), and University of Nevada, Las Vegas (Kenneth and Tracy Knauss Endowed Chair in Accounting).

Professor Messier was a visiting faculty member at SDA Bocconi in Milan and the Universities of Luxembourg and Michigan. Professor Messier served as the Academic Member of the AICPA's Auditing Standards Board and as Chair of the AICPA's International Auditing Standards Subcommittee. He has served as the Editor of *Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory* and President of the Auditing Section of the American Accounting Association. Professor Messier was the recipient of the American Accounting Association's Outstanding Accounting Educator Award (2015), AICPA's Distinguished Achievement in Accounting Education Award (2012), AAA Auditing Section's Outstanding Educator Award (2009), the Distinguished Service in Auditing Award (2008), and the Department of Accounting, Kelley School of Business, Indiana University—Academic Excellence Award (2018). In 2011, Professor Messier was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Norwegian School of Economics.

Professor Messier's research has been published in *The Accounting Review*, *Journal of Accounting Research*, *Contemporary Accounting Research*, *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory*, *Management Science*, and *Decision Sciences*. He has also served as an expert witness in audit litigation cases.

Jessica Lund/Pelion



**Professor Steven M. Glover** is the CFO at Pelion Venture Partners and formerly the K. Fred Skousen Distinguished Professor and Associate Dean of the Marriott School of Business, Brigham Young University. Professor Glover is a CPA in Utah and holds a PhD and BS from the University of Washington and an AA in Business from BYU—Idaho. He previously worked as an auditor for KPMG LLP and as a director in the national office of PwC LLP. Professor Glover has served on the AICPA Auditing Standards Board and on the audit committee of a nonprofit organization. He has served on the board of advisors for technology companies and he actively consults with public companies and public accounting firms. He has also served as an expert witness. Professor Glover is a past President of the Auditing Section of the American Accounting Association and he has been on auditing-related task forces of the AICPA. Professor Glover is or has served on the editorial boards of *Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory*, *The Accounting Review*, *Current Issues in Auditing*, and the review board of the AAA/CAQ *Access to Audit Personnel Program*. He has authored or co-authored over 40 articles and books primarily focused in the areas of auditor decision making, audit education, and audit practice. Together with Professor Prawitt and KPMG, LLP, he co-authored an award-winning monograph designed to accelerate the professional judgment of auditors and auditing students, as well as a monograph on professional skepticism commissioned by the Standards Working Group of the GPPC, an international consortium of the six largest public accounting network firms. Professors Glover and Prawitt along with Professor Bill Tayler also worked with BDO to author the acclaimed *BDO Professional Judgment Framework*.



**Professor Douglas F. Prawitt** is the LeRay McAllister/Deloitte Foundation Distinguished Professor of Accountancy and Director of the School of Accountancy at the Marriott School of Business, Brigham Young University. Professor Prawitt is a CPA in Utah. He holds a PhD from the University of Arizona, and BS and MAcc degrees from Brigham Young University. Professor Prawitt's research has been published in *The Accounting Review*, *Journal of Accounting Research*, *Contemporary Accounting Research*, *Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory*, *Behavioral Research in Accounting*, and *Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes*. Professor Prawitt was awarded the Merrill J. Bateman Student Choice Teaching Award in 2002, BYU's Wesley P. Lloyd Award for Distinction in Graduate Education in 2006, the American Accounting Association's Deloitte/Wildman Award in 2013, the AAA Auditing Section Innovation in Auditing and Assurance Education Award in 2014, the BYU Marriott School of Business Outstanding Faculty Award in 2016, and the American Accounting Association's Outstanding Accounting Educator Award in 2016. He was awarded the American Accounting Association Gender Issues and Work-Life Balance Section's *KPMG Mentoring Award* in 2020 and the Auditing Section's *Distinguished Service in Auditing Award* in 2021.

Prawitt has consulted with international, regional, and local public accounting firms and has served as an expert witness in audit litigation cases. He worked extensively over a five-year period with the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations (COSO) on the *COSO Enterprise Risk Management Framework* and *Internal Control over Financial Reporting—Guidance for Smaller Public Companies* projects and served a three-year appointment as a voting member of the AICPA Auditing Standards Board, from 2005–2008. In the fall of 2020, he was appointed to a fourth consecutive three-year term as a member of the COSO Board. Professor Prawitt has served in several capacities with the American Accounting Association, including as Associate Editor of *Accounting Horizons* and as Editor of *Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory*. He has authored or co-authored over 40 articles and books, primarily in the areas of auditor judgment and decision making, and audit practice. Together with Professor Steve Glover and KPMG, LLP, he co-authored an award-winning monograph designed to accelerate the professional judgment of auditors and auditing students, as well as a monograph on professional skepticism commissioned by the Standards Working Group of the GPPC, an international consortium of the six largest public accounting firm networks. More recently, Prawitt collaborated with Professors Steve Glover and Bill Tayler to produce BDO LLP's acclaimed *BDO Professional Judgment Framework*.

## Dedications

The authors dedicate this book to the following individuals:

Teddie, Stacy, Brandon, Zachary, Mark, Lindsay,  
Olive, and Frederick

—William F. Messier Jr.

Tina, Graham, Emery, and Stella

—Steven M. Glover

Meryll, Nathan, Natalie, Emily, AnnaLisa, Lileah,  
George, and Diana

—Douglas F. Prawitt

# Why a New Edition?

## Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The pace of change in the financial statement auditing environment continues to accelerate, even as the need for reliable, high-quality assurance over financial reporting continues to intensify. The auditing environment is far more complex and dynamic today than it was even 10 years ago, technology is changing the capabilities of auditors and the way they do their work, and audit reporting has undergone significant changes.

This new edition reflects a number of major changes in auditing standards. Most importantly, the early chapters were significantly revised to incorporate new standards on risk assessment and audit evidence. This edition also continues to increase coverage and hands-on resources in the important emerging area of audit data analytics and data visualization. Concepts regarding audit data analytics are referenced throughout the text and are discussed in-depth in the updated appendix. The book retains the problems using industry-leading data analytics and visualization software from IDEA® and Tableau® throughout several chapters and in online resources. While that content helps students develop competence in using software platforms, it is just as important that students learn how to interpret software outputs from an audit perspective and continue to add new skills to their toolbox. Thus, this new edition also includes (1) a more advanced Tableau case that requires interpretation of risks, and (2) an introduction to robotic process automation (RPA) through a simple case to provide students with exposure to the growing area of robotics. In integrating these new audit technology resources, our focus remains on helping students gain a deep, intuitive grasp of fundamental auditing concepts. We do this by using understandable yet compelling illustrations, examples, and analogies, such as relating the demand for an audit to the desire of a prospective home buyer to buy a home inspection service in the first chapter. Our intent is that students will not only understand the important standards and concepts underlying auditing but that they will gain a strong intuitive grasp of why it is important and how the underlying logic can inform their judgments not only as auditors but as businesspeople. With this new edition, in addition to a deep understanding of the fundamentals of auditing, your students will come away with an understanding of the latest auditing standards and with a strong initiation into the world of audit data analytics, giving them a running head start into today's financial statement auditing work environment.

We help you and your students navigate a world in which there are three major sets of auditing standards (AICPA, PCAOB, and IAASB) by focusing on the fundamental concepts underlying financial statement audits. *It is important for you and your students to know that by studying this book, your students will learn the most important, fundamental auditing concepts that underlie an audit performed under any of the three extant sets of standards.*

As the auditing environment becomes more complex and demanding, with technology playing an increasingly central role, it is even more important that students gain a deep understanding and working knowledge of fundamental auditing concepts and how they are applied. Technology is unlikely to replace auditors in the foreseeable future, but it will free them from relatively mundane tasks and require them to be able to exercise more insightful professional judgment in their work. They will need to know how to form the right questions to be answered from their audit data analytics and draw deep and insightful implications from the results. These abilities will be based on a solid understanding of accounting, auditing, and business. *The fundamentals we focus on in this book will become even more important, not less, as technology plays a bigger role!* From the beginning we have worked hard to make this book the most up-to-date, “student-friendly” introductory auditing book on the market; this new edition continues that effort. Some of the



ways this book encourages your students (and ours) to think more clearly and deeply about what they are studying are by the use of

1. Audit data analytics throughout the book, both in the chapters and in a stand-alone appendix, and in hands-on online resources.
2. A focus on key, fundamental concepts.
3. A “Professional Judgment” appendix to accelerate the development of professional judgment abilities in your students, based on the 2013 AAA Wildman Award-winning KPMG Professional Judgment monograph, authored by Steve Glover and Doug Prawitt, in collaboration with KPMG leaders and partners.
4. Clear, easy-to-understand explanations and examples throughout the book.
5. “Stop and think” phrases at key places throughout the chapters to encourage students to more fully internalize key concepts and facilitate deep learning by your students.
6. Discussion cases throughout the book to illustrate key concepts and real-world applications.

This new edition continues and enhances the resources available for use with industry leader IDEA software by CaseWare Analytics. IDEA is a powerful and user-friendly data analysis tool designed to help auditors perform audit data analytics, audit sampling, and other audit procedures efficiently and effectively. Students are introduced to IDEA in the text through hands-on tutorials, exercises, and problems, including problems regarding visualization and data analytics. Please note that the underlying dataset has been changed for the 12th edition, reducing concern about students using prior-year solutions. This edition also continues to provide hands-on resources and exercises that will help introduce your students to the emerging area of data visualization using Tableau, a market-leading data visualization tool, including a new more advanced problem set linked to the stand-alone appendix. We also provide access to a new case that uses UiPath to introduce students to robotic process automation (RPA). Solution files and an implementation guide are also available online for instructors.

This edition also has been updated to reflect the latest changes in auditing standards, such as standards related to understanding the entity, risk assessment, materiality, audit evidence, and accounting estimates. This edition also provides audit guidance on the FASB’s newest revenue recognition and lease accounting standards. Further, the text discusses the AICPA’s new attestation standards and the new quality management standards (which replace the prior quality control standards). We have also focused on clarifying and simplifying the book’s exposition, for example, by providing a simpler, clearer view of the latest audit reporting standards in Chapter 18.

While we are very much aware of the extra investment required when a book rolls to a new edition, we believe that we owe it to our colleagues and students to provide the most up-to-date materials possible so their hard work and energy in teaching and studying represents an investment in the latest, most current concepts, delivered in the most understandable way possible. We are confident that the changes made in this edition will make it easier for you to teach effectively and for your students to learn more efficiently and more deeply, especially in view of the many changes in auditing standards and the advent of audit data analytics.

We are grateful for your loyalty and support of this text and we appreciate the many compliments we have received regarding past editions. We are especially gratified by the enthusiastic response the text has received as we have done our best to create a clear, easy-reading, student-friendly auditing textbook. As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions, and we hope you will be pleased with the updates we have made in this new edition.

With warm regards,

*William F. Messier Jr.*

*Steven M. Glover*

*Douglas F. Prawitt*

# Give your students an intuitive, hands-on learning experience!

The 12th edition includes the following important features and enhancements:

- New, short videos available on Connect to provide further insight on some of the more challenging concepts.
- An audit data analytics appendix, included at the back of the book for instructors to assign when and where it makes the most sense in their particular auditing curriculum. This appendix includes a thorough discussion of the AICPA’s Audit Data Analytics Guide. New content on Connect has been developed to support this appendix, including a more advanced Tableau case and an introduction to robotic process automation, using UiPath.
- Audit data analytics coverage throughout the book in chapters where audit technology is most likely to have a significant impact including new references to robotic process automation.
- Hands-on resources to introduce your students to audit data analytics and data visualization, using IDEA and Tableau—industry-leading data analytics and data visualization software products. User-friendly, end-of-chapter IDEA and Tableau assignments and problems for hands-on application are found throughout the book and on Connect.
- Revised and expanded datasets for Rogers Company, the hypothetical company used for both IDEA and Tableau problems.
- An Audit Data Analytics Implementation Guide for instructors provides suggestions on how to incorporate the book’s audit data analytics content into the class curriculum.
- A “professional judgment” appendix, designed to accelerate the development of the student’s professional judgment and based on the AAA Deloitte/Wildman Award-winning KPMG Professional Judgment monograph, is included in the print version of the book. Additional resources relating to this appendix are available through KPMG’s University Connection website.
- “Stop and Think” questions throughout the book to encourage students to more fully internalize key concepts.
- Increased use of updated Practice Insights that provide a link from the textbook material to the real world.
- Updated to reflect the new AICPA attestation standards.
- Updated and clarified coverage of attestation engagements relating to financial forecasts and projections.
- Improved descriptions and layouts for the hands-on EarthWear Mini-Cases that provide students with opportunities to apply audit professional judgment and practice audit procedures.
- Updates to reflect the latest accounting and auditing standards related to understanding the entity, risk assessment, materiality, audit evidence, and accounting estimates.
- Updated and improved test bank questions.
- Improved linkage between chapter content and end-of-chapter material.

Here is a chapter-by-chapter sampling of the improvements made in recent editions:

### **Chapter 1, *An Introduction to Assurance and Financial Statement Auditing***

- Now includes an introduction to the emerging audit technologies that are changing the financial statement audit in exciting ways, including audit data analytics, and a preview of the new audit data analytics and data visualization material and resources that will be incorporated into the book and online.
- Incorporates new PCAOB audit report format, which places the opinion first, includes a “Basis for Opinion” section, and addresses critical audit matters (CAMs).
- Writing has been streamlined and clarified to provide a more straightforward, focused introduction to the text.

### **Chapter 2, *The Financial Statement Auditing Environment***

- Updated coverage of anticipated changes to the format and nature of the CPA exam, including the future “CPA Evolution” approach to the exam.
- Updated discussion of the role of risk in the business model presented in the chapter to be consistent with COSO’s new Enterprise Risk Management Framework.
- Introduction to and explanation of the PCAOB’s codification of Auditing Standards.
- More streamlined focus on the AICPA’s Principles Underlying an Audit of Financial Statements, and clarified coverage of other areas.

### **Chapter 3, *Audit Planning, Types of Audit Procedures, and Materiality***

- Updated for revised standards on terms of the engagement, using the work of internal auditors, use of specialists, consideration of laws and regulations, and related parties.
- Updated discussion of the types of audit procedures.
- Updated discussion of materiality based on revised auditing standards.
- New and updated practice insights and exhibits.

### **Chapter 4, *Risk Assessment***

- The auditor’s risk assessment process and assessing the risk of material misstatement is updated to reflect changes to the risk assessment standard.
- The fraud risk assessment process is updated for recent changes in auditing standards.
- A new practice insight and a new exhibit discussing the accounting irregularities related to Luckin Coffee.
- Incorporation of data analytics when discussing types of audit procedures.

### **Chapter 5, *Evidence and Documentation***

- Substantial revision to the chapter to reflect the new auditing standard on audit evidence.
- Addition of PCAOB management assertions for comparison to AICPA categories.
- Substantial revision of the advanced module on analytical procedures.
- Discussion of audit data analytics in conjunction with substantive analytical procedures.

### **Chapter 6, *Internal Control in a Financial Statement Audit***

- New and updated practice insights and exhibits.
- Updated presentation of flowcharts to reflect computerized environments.
- Significantly streamlined discussion of the 17 COSO principles.

### **Chapter 7, *Auditing Internal Control over Financial Reporting***

- New and updated practice insights and exhibits.
- Improved discussion on the link between understanding entity-specific risks of material misstatement and the identification of key controls.
- New discussion on the need for auditors to consider the entity's use of RPA/bots in the accounting process.
- Revised end-of-chapter questions.

### **Chapters 8 and 9, *Audit Sampling: An Overview and Application to Tests of Controls, and Audit Sampling: An Application to Substantive Tests of Account Balances***

- Updated and new practice insights and stop-and-think prompts.
- Clarification of key terms and challenging concepts.
- Improved linkage between text and examples.
- Updates to Advanced Module 1 in Chapter 8 to improve links to the main chapter text.
- Explanation in Chapter 9 of why population size is a key input for MUS but not for attribute sampling.

### **Chapters 10–16, *Business Process Chapters***

- Increased discussion on changes in practice regarding detail testing of revenue.
- Updates to module on auditing the tax provision based on the effect of recent tax laws.
- Updated terminology in flowcharts and surrounding discussion that acknowledge updates to how IT is used in accounting processes.
- Increased emphasis on the link between internal controls and the risk of material misstatement.
- Updated discussion of impairment testing.
- Incorporation of revised lease standards, including PP&E lead schedule and roll-forward disclosing new “right-to-use” operating lease assets.
- Updated discussion on auditing fair value and estimates based on new audit standards.
- New and updated practice insights, exhibits, and stop-and-think prompts.
- Revised end-of-chapter questions.
- References to audit data analytics and examples as appropriate, including robotic process automation (RPA).

### **Chapter 17, *Completing the Audit Engagement***

- New references to audit data analytics in terms of how they can be used in finalizing the audit.
- Updated and clarified discussion of letters of audit inquiry (formerly “legal letters”).
- Streamlined and clarified writing throughout.
- Added emphasis on the role of entity policies and procedures over their accounting for such things as contingencies, commitments, and subsequent events as part of their internal control over financial reporting.
- Incorporation of FASB accounting standard relating to the requirement for companies to evaluate their own going-concern status and new AICPA ASB auditing standard guiding auditors in assessing the entity's going-concern self-assessment and in making an independent assessment.

### **Chapter 18, *Reports on Audited Financial Statements***

- Updated to reflect new audit reporting standards, with focus on the PCAOB audit report, including coverage of CAMs (critical audit matters).
- Chapter updated, streamlined, and simplified for greater clarity.
- Clearer, more understandable coverage of audit reporting when explanatory language is added to the standard unmodified/unqualified audit report and when comparability issues arise due to changes in accounting principles, changes in accounting estimates, etc.

**Chapter 19, Professional Conduct, Independence, and Quality Management**

- Discussion of AICPA’s shift from “quality control” standards to “quality management” standards.
- Increased emphasis on the importance of reputation for financial statement auditors, earned through integrity and reliability.
- Updates and clarifications throughout the chapter.

**Chapter 20, Legal Liability**

- Updated for important recent cases and statutory law.
- New clarification regarding liability for secondary public offerings.
- New practice insight about SPACs and auditor liability.
- New learning objective about insights from academic research about auditor legal liability.

**Chapter 21, Assurance, Attestation, and Internal Auditing Services**

- Updated to reflect new changes to AICPA attestation standards, including newly permitted “direct examination attestation” engagements in which no management assertion is required, etc.
- Replacement of the now obsolete WebTrust and PrimePlus assurance services with expanded coverage of SOC 2 and SOC 3 attestation engagements, including an illustrative SOC 2 examination report, based on updated AICPA Trust Services Criteria (in the Advanced Module).
- Chapter streamlined, simplified, and clarified to focus on important concepts.
- Updated and clarified coverage of attestation engagements relating to financial forecasts and projections.

**Twelfth Edition Supplements****Instructor Resources include the following:**

- **Solutions Manual**, revised by William F. Messier Jr., Steven M. Glover, and Douglas F. Prawitt
- **Instructor’s Manual**
- **Test Bank with AACSB, AICPA, and Bloom’s Taxonomy tags**
- **Instructor PowerPoint Presentations**
- **EarthWear Mini-Case Solutions**
- **Solutions to Audit Data Analytics Problems**
- **Implementation Guide for Audit Data Analytics**

Additional resources include: Links to Professional Resources, Sample Syllabi, Text Updates, and Digital Image Library

**Additional Student Resources include the following:**

- EarthWear Mini-Cases
- Audit Data Analytics Assignments and Problems, by Messier, Glover, and Prawitt
- Relevant Accounting and Auditing Pronouncements by chapter

**Assurance of Learning Ready**

Many educational institutions today are focused on the notion of *assurance of learning*, an important element of some accreditation standards. The Messier, Glover, and Prawitt *Auditing and Assurance Services: A Systematic Approach* book is designed specifically to support your assurance of learning initiatives with a simple, yet powerful, solution.

Each chapter in the book begins with a list of numbered learning objectives, which appear throughout the chapter as well as in the end-of-chapter assignments. Each test bank question for *Auditing and Assurance Services: A Systematic Approach* maps to a specific chapter learning outcome/objective listed in the text. Each test bank question also identifies topic area, level of difficulty, Bloom's Taxonomy level, and AACSB and AICPA skill areas. You can use Connect to easily query for learning outcomes/objectives that directly relate to the learning objectives for your course.

### **AACSB Statement**

McGraw-Hill Education is a proud corporate member of AACSB International. Understanding the importance and value of AACSB accreditation, *Auditing & Assurance Services* 12e recognizes the curricula guidelines detailed in the AACSB standards for business accreditation by connecting selected questions in the text and test bank to the six general knowledge and skill guidelines in the AACSB standards.

The statements contained in *Auditing & Assurance Services* 12e are provided only as a guide for the users of this textbook. The AACSB leaves content coverage and assessment within the purview of individual schools, the mission of the school, and the faculty. While *Auditing & Assurance Services* 12e and the teaching package make no claim of any specific AACSB qualification or evaluation, we have within *Auditing & Assurance Services* 12e labeled selected questions according to the six general knowledge and skill guidelines as a helpful starting point.

# How does 12e prepare your students?

The continuing rapid pace of change in auditing standards and practices, together with the recent emergence of audit data analytics and data visualization technologies, has had a significant effect on the auditing profession. In this ever-changing environment, it is crucial that students learn from the most up-to-date, student-friendly resources. As always, the author team of *Auditing & Assurance Services: A Systematic Approach* is dedicated to providing the most current professional content and real-world application, as well as helping students develop professional judgment and prepare for the CPA exam.

In their 12th edition, authors Messier, Glover, and Prawitt continue to reinforce the fundamental values central to their past eleven editions:

**Student Engagement.** The authors believe students are best served by acquiring a strong understanding of the basic concepts that underlie the audit process and how to apply those concepts to various audit and assurance services. The primary purpose for an auditing text is not to serve as a reference manual but to facilitate student learning, and this text is written accordingly. The text is accessible to students through straightforward writing and the use of engaging, relevant real-world examples, illustrations, and analogies. The text explicitly encourages students to think through fundamental concepts and to avoid trying to learn auditing through rote memorization. Students are prompted by the text to “stop and think” at important points in the text, in order to help them apply the principles covered. Consistent with this aim, the text’s early chapters avoid immersing students in unnecessary detail such as the minutia relating to all the complexities of audit reporting, focusing instead on students’ intuition relating to the fundamental audit concepts of materiality, audit risk, and evidence. The first chapter provides a high-level introduction to what an audit report looks like while avoiding unnecessary detail. It also lays out a clear explanation and illustration of the demand for assurance and provides an understandable overview of the auditing process from start to finish. A case involving EarthWear Clothiers, a mail-order retailer, is integrated throughout the book and additional student resources and includes free student access to several useful hands-on mini-cases, with full solutions available to the instructor. “Practice insights” throughout the book engage students and help them see the application of concepts in a practical setting. Finally, an audit data analytics module in a stand-alone appendix, together with coverage throughout the book and hands-on, online resources to introduce students to audit data analytics and data visualization will introduce your students to the increasingly central role of technology in auditing.

**A Systematic Approach.** The text continues to take a systematic approach to the audit process by first introducing the three underlying concepts: audit risk, materiality, and evidence. This is followed by a discussion of audit planning, the assessment of control risk, and a discussion of the nature, timing, and extent of evidence necessary to reach the appropriate level of detection risk. These concepts are then applied to each major business process and related account balances using a risk-based approach. The text has been revised to reflect the latest accounting and auditing standards, including accounting standards on revenue and leasing, and auditing standards on reporting and evidence.

**Decision Making.** In covering these important concepts and their applications, the book focuses on critical judgments and decision-making processes followed by auditors. Much of auditing practice involves the application of auditor judgment. If a student understands these basic concepts and how to apply them to an audit engagement, he or she will be more effective in today’s dynamic audit environment. We believe this will be increasingly true as technology is used more and more in the audit process. Two of the authors of this textbook worked with KPMG to develop a monograph designed to accelerate the development of professional judgment in students. We are excited to include a “professional judgment” appendix as part of the printed material in the text. This appendix is based on the KPMG Professional Judgment monograph, which was awarded the 2013 AAA Deloitte/Wildman award for the work published within the most recent five-year period that has had the most significant impact on the practice of professional accountancy. Access to additional directly related resources, including videos, mini-cases, and problems, are available on KPMG’s *University Connection* website for integration into the auditing course, as instructors see fit.

# Practical applications for today's student

## Real-World Integration and Hands-On Mini-Cases.



### Mini EarthWear cases

“Hands-on” mini-cases are integrated throughout the text. The mini-cases are also available in Connect, giving your students the opportunity to actually do some common auditing procedures.

### Practice Insights

Practice Insights in each chapter highlight important and interesting real-world trends and practices.

### Stop and Think moments

The book asks your student to “stop and think” at appropriate places to aid their focus on and understanding of key concepts.



**IDEA**  
Data Analysis Software

**Free IDEA software**

The educational version of IDEA software is available for free with each new book. The authors wrote chapter-specific IDEA assignments and problems, all of which are found inside Connect, including problems aimed at introducing students to IDEA’s visualization and audit data analytics tools. Exposing students to IDEA allows them the opportunity to work with *real* professional audit software.

### Tableau

Tableau is a market-leading data analytics and visualization software that students can download for free. The authors provide instruction on how to download Tableau and access basic tutorials created by the software provider. Additionally, the authors created data visualization and audit data analytics problems for the majority of chapters to be answered using Tableau. This functionality exposes students to cutting-edge technology used in practice.



**UWorld** | **ROGER**  
CPA Review

McGraw Hill Education has partnered with Roger CPA Review (Powered by UWorld), a global leader in CPA Exam preparation, to provide students a smooth transition from the accounting classroom to successful completion of the CPA Exam. While many aspiring accountants wait until they have completed their academic studies to begin preparing for the CPA Exam, research shows that those who become familiar with exam content earlier in the process have a stronger chance of successfully passing the CPA Exam. Accordingly, students using these McGraw Hill materials will have access to Roger CPA Review multiple-choice questions supported by explanations written by CPAs focused on exam preparation. McGraw Hill Education and Roger CPA Review are dedicated to supporting every accounting student along their journey, ultimately helping them achieve career success in the accounting profession. For more information about the full Roger CPA Review program, exam requirements, and exam content, visit [www.rogercpareview.com](http://www.rogercpareview.com).



### HANDS-ON CASES

EarthWear Online

#### EarthWear Introduction

In this activity you will become further acquainted with EarthWear Clothiers and their auditors Willis & Adams, LLP. This introductory activity also provides an opportunity to become familiar with the structure and format of the EarthWear Online cases.

Visit Connect's additional student resources to find a detailed description of the case and to download required materials.

Practice  
INSIGHT

At the heart of a capital-market economy is the flow of reliable information, which investors, creditors, and regulators use to make informed decisions. Chief Justice Warren Burger gave his view of the significance of the audit function in a 1984 Supreme Court decision:

By certifying the public reports that collectively depict a corporation's financial status, the independent auditor assumes a public responsibility transcending any employment relationship with the client. The independent public accountant performing this special function owes ultimate allegiance to the corporation's creditors and stockholders, as well as to the investing public.

More than 30 years later, the message is the same—users of financial statements rely on the external auditor to act with honor and integrity in protecting the public interest.

**Stop and Think:** What negative consequences could information asymmetry have for the absentee owner? How do the perspectives and motives of the manager and absentee owner differ?



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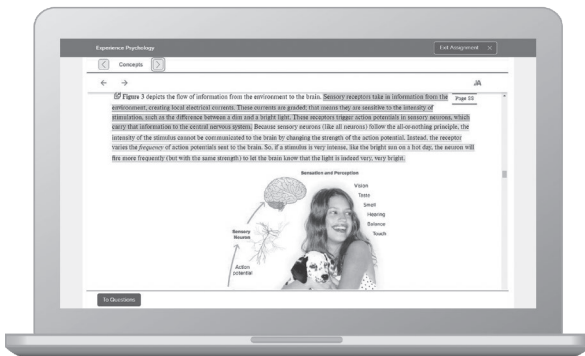
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(Also visit KPMG's *University Connection* website for relevant resources, including videos, mini-cases, instructor notes, and problems, that were created to accompany the AAA Deloitte/Wildman award-winning KPMG Professional Judgment Framework monograph, on which this module is based.)

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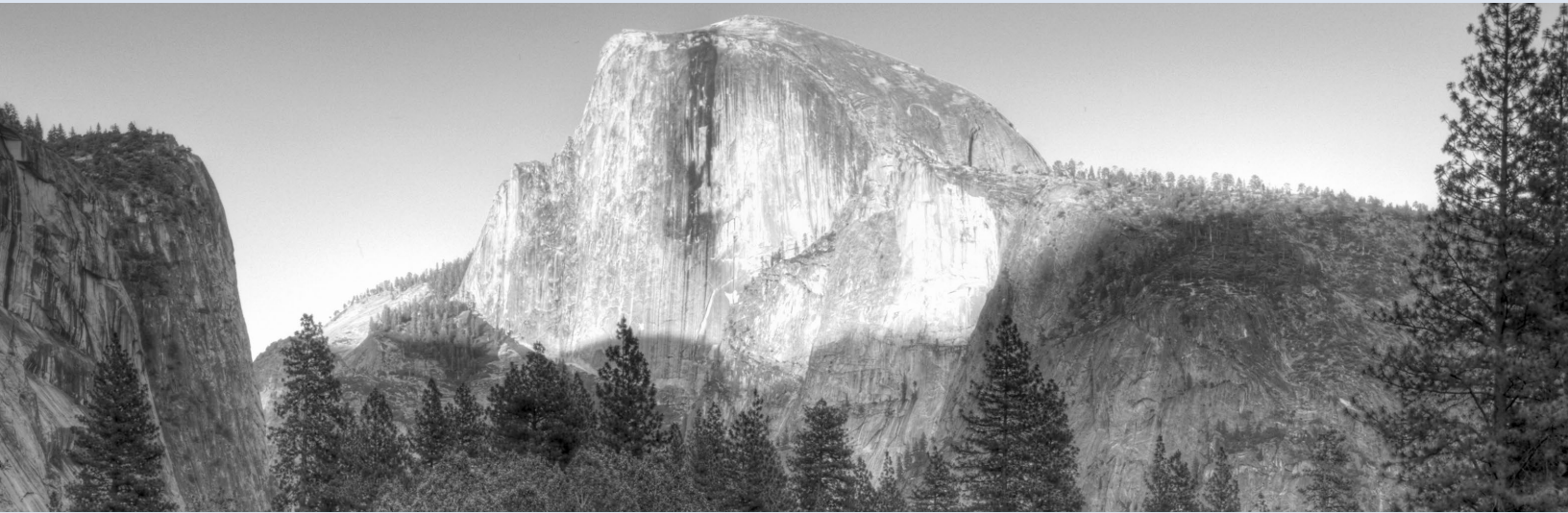
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(Also visit KPMG's *University Connection* website to access related resources, including videos, mini-cases, instructor notes, and problems, that were created to accompany the Deloitte/Wildman award-winning KPMG Professional Judgment Framework monograph, on which this module is based.)

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# Introduction to Assurance and Financial Statement Auditing



Mimi Ditchie Photography/Moment/Getty Images

**CHAPTER 1** An Introduction to Assurance and Financial Statement Auditing

**CHAPTER 2** The Financial Statement Auditing Environment

# CHAPTER

# 1



Mimi Ditchie Photography/Moment/Getty Images

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this chapter you will

- 1-1** Understand why studying auditing can be valuable to you whether or not you plan to become an auditor and why it is different from studying accounting.
- 1-2** Understand the demand for auditing and be able to explain the desired characteristics of auditors and audit services.
- 1-3** Know the basic definition of a financial statement audit.
- 1-4** Understand the fundamental concepts that underlie financial statement auditing.
- 1-5** Understand why sampling is important in an audit.
- 1-6** Be able to describe the basic financial statement auditing process and the phases in which an audit is carried out.
- 1-7** Know what an audit report is and understand the nature of an unqualified report.
- 1-8** Understand how technology and audit data analytics are changing audits in exciting ways.
- 1-9** Understand why auditing demands logic, reasoning, and resourcefulness.

## RELEVANT ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING PRONOUNCEMENTS\*

**AU-C 200**, Overall Objectives of the Independent Auditor and the Conduct of an Audit in Accordance with GAAS

**AU-C 210**, Terms of Engagement

**AU-C 700**, Forming an Opinion and Reporting on Financial Statements

**AU-C 705**, Modifications to the Opinion in the Independent Auditor's Report

**AU-C 706**, Emphasis of Matter Paragraphs and Other Matter Paragraphs in the Independent Auditor's Report

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 1101**, Audit Risk (AU-C 200)

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 1105**, Audit Evidence (AU-C 500)

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 1201**, Supervision of the Audit Engagement (AU-C 220)

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 2101**, Audit Planning (AU-C 300)

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 2105**, Consideration of Materiality in Planning and Performing an Audit (AU-C 320)

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 2110**, Identifying and Assessing Risks of Material Misstatement (AU-C 315)

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 2201**, An Audit of Internal Control Over Financial Reporting That Is Integrated with an Audit of Financial Statements (AU-C 940)

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 2301**, The Auditor's Responses to the Risks of Material Misstatement (AU-C 330)

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 2810**, Evaluating Audit Results (AU-C 450)

**PCAOB Auditing Standard 3101**, The Auditor's Report on an Audit of Financial Statements When the Auditor Expresses an Unqualified Opinion (AU-C 700, 701)

\*References to AU-C and AT-C sections reflect the *clarified* codification of the Auditing Standards Board (ASB) audit and assurance standards. Where the ASB has a standard that is similar to a Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) standard, the AU-C reference is included in parentheses after the PCAOB standard.

# An Introduction to Assurance and Financial Statement Auditing

**W**e welcome you to the world of auditing, and we invite you to invest your best efforts to learn the extremely practical and useful concepts that underlie this respected profession! These concepts will be valuable to you regardless of what you plan to do in your future career. You will learn in this chapter that auditing consists of a set of practical conceptual tools that help accounting professionals find, organize, and evaluate evidence about the assertions of another party. The demand for capable accountants and auditors of high integrity has never been greater. Opportunities for auditors are plentiful and rewarding and can lead to attractive career opportunities. Those who practice as auditors often later go into financial management, becoming controllers, chief financial officers (CFOs), and even chief executive officers (CEOs). But even those who do not plan to become auditors can benefit greatly from an understanding of financial statement auditing and its underlying concepts. Learning these tools is valuable to any business decision maker.

This is a particularly exciting time to learn about auditing and to be an auditor—the profession is in the early stages of a sea change in the way audits are carried out. Advances such as audit data analytics and artificial intelligence are dramatically changing the work auditors do. These changes will place a premium not only on auditors' ability to use technology, but also on their ability to generate penetrating insights by exercising professional judgment. Having a solid understanding of fundamental business, accounting, and auditing concepts will become even more important in a world of advancing technology.

We live in a time when the amount of information available for decision makers via electronic databases, the Internet, and other sources is rapidly expanding, and there is a great need for the information to be reliable, credible, relevant, and timely. High-quality information is necessary if managers, investors, creditors, and regulatory agencies are to make informed decisions. Auditing and assurance services play an important role in ensuring the reliability, credibility, and relevance of business information.

The following examples present situations that illustrate how auditing can add value by increasing the reliability and credibility of an entity's financial statements:

Aliyah Menendez, a local community activist, has been operating a not-for-profit center that provides assistance to abused women and their children. She has financed most of her operations from private contributions. Ms. Menendez applied to the State Health and Human Services Department requesting a large grant to expand her two shelters to accommodate more women. In completing the grant application, Ms. Menendez discovered that the state's laws for government grants require that recipients be audited to ensure that existing funds are being used appropriately. Ms. Menendez hired a CPA to audit the center's financial statements. Based on the center's activities, the intended use of the funds, and the auditor's clean report, the grant was approved.

Conway Computer Company is a wholesaler of computer products. The company was founded five years ago by George and Jimmy Steinburker. Thanks to their hard work and the

help of a venture capital firm, the company was now ready to go public. However, they knew that the company's financial statements needed to be audited by a reputable public accounting firm in order to comply with regulatory requirements and for investors to trust the stock offering. The company hired a major public accounting firm to perform its audits and the company successfully sold stock to the public.

These situations show the importance of auditing to both private and public enterprise. By adding an audit to each situation, the users of the financial statements will have additional assurance that the financial statements report honestly and accurately and will be more willing to rely on those statements. Auditors can also provide valuable assurance for the effectiveness of an entity's internal control. Consider the following example:



EarthWear Clothiers is a successful e-commerce retailer of high-quality clothing for outdoor sports. EarthWear's common stock is listed and traded on NASDAQ. Securities laws require company officials to certify that they have properly designed, implemented, and tested internal control over their accounting and reporting information systems. EarthWear's public accounting firm, Willis & Adams, LLP, examines the design and documentation of EarthWear's internal control on a yearly basis and conducts independent tests to verify that EarthWear's controls are operating effectively. Willis & Adams, LLP issues a report to the public expressing its opinion as to whether EarthWear's internal control is well designed and operating effectively. Thus, stockholders, creditors, and other stakeholders can have greater confidence in the financial reports issued by EarthWear's management.

We start by helping you understand in general terms why there is a demand for auditing, a subset of the broader set of assurance services that accounting professionals can provide. We then compare auditing to a home inspection service to provide an intuitive understanding of the role auditing plays. Finally, we give you an overview of the financial statement auditing process.

## Tips for Learning Auditing (and How Learning It Will Benefit You!)



### LO 1-1

You will find that the study of auditing is different from any of the other accounting courses you have taken in college, and for good reason. Most accounting courses focus on learning the rules, techniques, and computations required to prepare and analyze financial information. Auditing, on the other hand, focuses on learning the analytical and logical skills necessary to evaluate the relevance and reliability of financial information as well as the adequacy of the systems and processes responsible for recording and summarizing that information. As such, you will find the study of auditing to be much more conceptual in nature than your other accounting courses. This is simply due to the nature of auditing. Thus, we will periodically prompt you to “stop and think” about the concepts being discussed throughout the book. Seeking to thoroughly understand and apply principles as you read them will greatly improve your success in studying auditing.

Learning auditing essentially helps you understand how to gather and assess evidence so you can evaluate assertions (or claims) made by others. This text is filled with the tools and techniques used by financial statement auditors in practice. You'll find that the “tool kit” used by auditors consists of a coherent, logical framework, together with techniques useful for analyzing financial data and gathering evidence about others' assertions. Acquiring this conceptual tool kit can be valuable in a variety of settings, including practicing as an auditor, running a small business, providing consulting services, and even making executive business decisions. An important implication is that learning this framework makes the study of

auditing valuable to you as a future accountant or business decision maker, whether or not you plan to become a financial statement auditor.

Studying auditing isn't like what you've done in your financial accounting courses. You may have been able to do well in those classes by focusing on memorizing rules. But you'll do much better in your auditing course if you take a different approach. The study of auditing and the related concepts and techniques will make a lot more sense if you build your intuition of why audits are needed, if you understand the necessary characteristics of audits and auditors, and if you focus on what an auditor does, and *why*. Don't fall into the trap of attempting to study auditing through rote memorization! Instead, pause frequently to be sure you understand both "what?" and "why?" as you study the concepts and techniques of auditing, as well as "how" auditing is carried out.

## The Demand for Auditing and Assurance



### LO 1-2

To put it simply, an audit is a service that provides assurance to investors, creditors, or other stakeholders that a company is being honest about its financial information and that the information is reliable. We will go into more detail regarding what exactly an audit is later in the chapter. Many of the largest companies spend millions of dollars each year for the annual audit. In view of that fact, it is worth asking why an entity would decide to spend so much money on an audit.<sup>1</sup> Some might answer that audits are required by law. While true in certain circumstances, this answer is far too simplistic. Audits are often utilized in situations where they are not required by law, and audits were in demand long before securities laws required them. In fact, evidence shows that some forms of accounting and auditing existed in Greece as early as 500 BC.<sup>2</sup> However, the development of the corporate form of business and the expanding world economy over the last 200 years have given rise to an explosion in the demand for the assurance provided by auditors. In 1926, several years prior to the Securities Acts of 1933 and 1934, which required audits for publicly traded companies in the United States, 82 percent of the companies on the New York Stock Exchange were audited by independent auditors.<sup>3</sup>

### Principals and Agents

The demand for auditing can be understood as the need for accountability when business owners hire others to manage their businesses, as is typical in modern corporations. As the world has developed and companies have become larger, the need to raise capital and expand has increased.<sup>4</sup> Over time, capital markets developed, enabling companies to raise the investment capital necessary to expand to new markets, finance expensive research and development, and fund the buildings, technology, and equipment needed to deliver products to market. A capital market allows a public company to sell small pieces of ownership (i.e., stocks) or to borrow

<sup>1</sup>See G. L. Sundem, R. E. Dukes, and J. A. Elliott, *The Value of Information and Audits* (New York: Coopers & Lybrand, 1996), for a more detailed discussion of the demand for accounting information and auditing.

<sup>2</sup>G. J. Costouros, "Auditing in the Athenian State of the Golden Age (500–300 BC)," *The Accounting Historian Journal* (Spring 1978), pp. 41–50.

<sup>3</sup>G. J. Benston, "The Value of the SEC's Accounting Disclosure Requirements," *The Accounting Review* (July 1969), pp. 515–32.

<sup>4</sup>Also see M. Chatfield, *A History of Accounting Thought* (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1974), for a discussion of the historical development of accounting and auditing. See D. L. Flesher, G. J. Previts, and W. D. Samson, "Auditing in the United States: A Historical Perspective," *ABACUS* (2005), pp. 21–39, for a discussion of the development of auditing in the United States.

money in the form of thousands of small loans (i.e., bonds) so that vast amounts of capital can be raised from a wide variety of investors and creditors. A *public company* is a company that sells its stocks or bonds to the public, giving the public a valid interest in the proper use of the company's resources. Thus, the growth of the modern corporation led to diverse groups of owners who are not directly involved in running the business (stockholders) and the use of professional managers hired by the owners to run the corporation on a day-to-day basis. In this setting, the managers serve as *agents* who fulfill a *stewardship* function by managing the corporation's assets for the owners (who are sometimes referred to as *principals*).

Accounting and auditing play important roles in this principal–agent relationship. We'll first explain the roles of accounting and auditing from a conceptual perspective. Then we'll use an analogy involving a house inspector to illustrate the concepts. First, it is important to understand that the relationship between an owner and manager often results in information asymmetry between the two parties. **Information asymmetry** means that the manager, who runs the business day-to-day, generally has more information about the “true” financial position and results of operations of the entity than does the absentee owner.

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**Stop and Think:** What negative consequences could information asymmetry have for the absentee owner? How do the perspectives and motives of the manager and absentee owner differ?

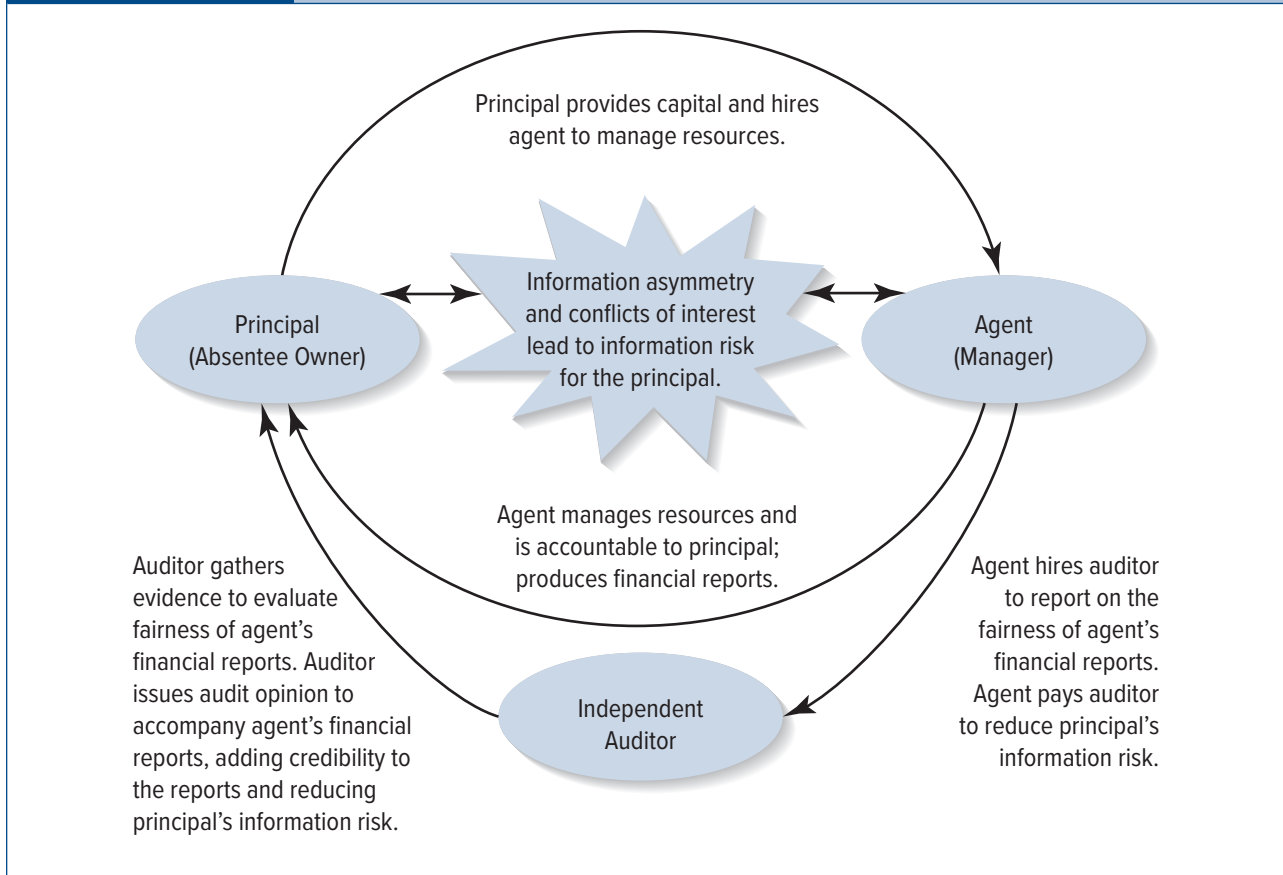
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Because their goals may not coincide, there is a natural *conflict of interest* between the manager and the absentee owner. If both parties seek to maximize their self-interest, the manager may not always act in the best interests of the owner. For example, the risk exists that a manager may follow the example of Tyco Inc.'s former CEO Dennis Kozlowski, who spent Tyco funds on excessive personal benefits such as \$6,000 shower curtains, or Andrew Fastow, the former CFO of Enron, who pleaded guilty to manipulating the reported earnings of Enron in order to inflate the price of the company's stock so that he could earn larger bonuses and sell his stock holdings at artificially high prices. To prevent this, managers' contracts often include requirements for them to report regularly to owners on the quality of their work and on how well she or he has managed the owners' assets. Of course, a set of criteria is needed to guide the form and content of the manager's reports. In other words, the **reporting** of this financial information to the owner must follow some set of agreed-upon principles in holding the manager accountable. As you can see, one primary role of accounting information is to hold the manager accountable to the owner—hence the word *accounting*.

## The Role of Auditing

Of course, reporting in accordance with an agreed-upon set of accounting principles doesn't solve the problem by itself. The manager is in a position to manipulate the reports because the manager is responsible for reporting on the results of his or her own actions, which the absentee owner cannot directly observe. It is at this point that the demand for auditing arises. If the manager is honest, it may very well be in the manager's self-interest to hire an auditor to monitor and independently report to the owner on his or her activities. The owner likely will be willing to invest more in the business and to pay the manager more if the manager can be held accountable for how he or she uses the owner's invested resources. The auditor's role is to determine whether the reports prepared by the manager conform to the contract's provisions, adding credibility to the reports and reducing **information risk**, or the risk that information circulated by a company's management could be false or misleading. Reducing information risk benefits both the owner and the manager by making the manager's reports more credible. Figure 1–1 provides an overview of this agency relationship.

**FIGURE 1-1** Overview of the Principal-Agent Relationship Leading to the Demand for Auditing



While the setting we've outlined is very simple, understanding the basics of the owner–manager relationship is helpful in understanding the demand for auditing. Auditing can similarly be essential in other economic relationships. For example, how can a lender prevent owners or management from misusing borrowed funds? One common way is for the lender to place restrictive covenants in the loan agreement. After receiving the loan, management regularly sends financial reports to show the lender that the requirements in the debt covenant are being met. If these reports are audited, the lender's information risk is reduced, and the lender may be willing to lend at a lower interest rate than would otherwise be the case.

**Practice INSIGHT**



At the heart of a capital-market economy is the flow of reliable information, which investors, creditors, and regulators use to make informed decisions. Chief Justice Warren Burger gave his view of the significance of the audit function in a 1984 Supreme Court decision:

By certifying the public reports that collectively depict a corporation's financial status, the independent auditor assumes a public responsibility transcending any employment relationship with the client. The independent public accountant performing this special function owes ultimate allegiance to the corporation's creditors and stockholders, as well as to the investing public.

More than 30 years later, the message is the same—users of financial statements rely on the external auditor to act with honor and integrity in protecting the public interest.



In summary, auditing is demanded because it plays a valuable role in monitoring the contractual relationships between the entity and its stockholders, managers, employees, and debt holders. Certified public accountants have been charged with providing audit services because of their reputation for competence, independence, objectivity, and concern for the public interest. As a result, they are able to add credibility to information produced and reported by management to other parties, such as the company's stock owners or outside lenders. The role of the Certified Public Accountant is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

## An Assurance Analogy: The Case of the House Inspector



Before we discuss financial statement auditors further, let's illustrate the concepts we've just covered using an analogy: buying a home. In the purchase of an existing house, *information asymmetry* usually is present because the seller typically has more information about the house than does the buyer. There is also a natural *conflict of interest* between the buyer and the seller. Sellers generally prefer a higher selling price and may be motivated to overstate the positive characteristics and understate or remain silent about the negative characteristics of the property they have for sale. In other words, there is *information risk* to the buyer.

### Seller Assertions, Information Asymmetry, and Inspector Characteristics

To support the asking price, sellers typically make **assertions** about their property. For instance, the seller of an older home might declare that the roof doesn't leak, that the foundation is sound, that there is no rot or pest damage, and that the plumbing and electrical systems are in good working order. The problem is that the buyer often does not know if she or he is dealing with an honest seller or if the seller has the necessary expertise to evaluate all the structural or mechanical aspects of the property. Lacking the expertise to validate the seller's assertions, the buyer can reduce information risk by hiring a house inspector.

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**Stop and Think:** Imagine for a moment that you are buying a house and are wisely considering hiring an inspector. Before reading on, test your intuition—what characteristics would you like your inspector to possess? What characteristics would you look for in the service provided by the inspector?

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### Desired Characteristics of the House Inspection Service

Now that you have identified some of the characteristics of a good inspector, which likely include competence, honesty, and objectivity, consider the key characteristics of the service he or she will provide. Keep in mind that some of the seller's assertions are more important than others. For example, is knowing whether the lights in the master bedroom are working as important to you as knowing about whether there is dry rot in the house's structure? Think for a moment about how the answer to this question affects what the service should focus on and how the inspection should be conducted. In Table 1–1 we have listed what we think are desirable characteristics of a house inspector and of the service provided by an inspector. Be sure to pause for a moment to compare your thinking with ours.

Certainly home inspections and other assurance services must focus on the assertions that are most important, and they must be conducted in a timely and cost-effective manner. Some assertions are more important than others because of their potential risk or cost. For example, a house inspector should recognize the signs that indicate an increased risk of a

TABLE 1-1

## Important Characteristics of House Inspectors and Inspections

**Desirable Characteristics of House Inspectors**

- Competent—they possess the required training, expertise, and experience to evaluate the property for sale.
- Objective—they have no reason to side with the seller; they are independent of the seller's influence.
- Honest—they will conduct themselves with integrity, and they will share all of their findings with the buyer.
- Skeptical—they will not simply take the seller's assertions at face value; they will conduct their own analysis and testing.
- Responsible and/or liable—they should stand behind their assessment with a guarantee and/or be subject to litigation if they fail to act with due care.

**Desirable Characteristics of a House Inspection Service**

- Timely—the results of the service are reported in time to benefit the decision maker.
- Reasonably priced—the costs of the services must not exceed the benefits. For this to occur the service provider will likely need to focus attention on the most important and risky assertions and likely can't provide absolute assurance.
- Complete—the service addresses all of the most important and risky assertions made by the seller.
- Thorough—the service provides some degree of confidence that it will uncover any significant problems.
- Systematic and reliable—the service is based on a systematic process, and the conclusions are based on reliable evidence. In other words, another comparable inspector would likely find similar issues and come to similar conclusions.
- Informative—the service provides a sense for how likely mechanical or structural failure is in the near future and provides an estimate of the cost to repair known defects or failures.

leaky roof. If those signs are present, he or she should investigate further, because damage caused by a leaky roof can be very expensive to repair. At the same time, just because the seller asserts that he or she recently lubricated all the door and window hinges doesn't mean it would be wise to pay the inspector to validate this assertion.

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**Stop and Think:** How might a house inspection be similar to a financial statement audit?

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## Relating the House Inspection Analogy to Financial Statement Auditing

Now that we have discussed some of the basic characteristics of house inspectors and their services, let's consider how these relate to financial statement auditors. The demand for the assurance provided by a house inspector comes from information asymmetry and conflicts of interest between the buyer and the seller. Information asymmetry and conflicts of interest also exist between managers of companies and potential investors. For example, if managers are overly optimistic or if they wish to inflate their bonus compensation, they may unintentionally or intentionally overstate the company's earnings and assets (e.g., by understating the allowance for doubtful accounts or by claiming to have more cash than they really have).

One important difference between our house inspector example and financial statement auditing is that the buyer of a home typically hires the inspector, presumably because if the seller were to hire the inspector, the buyer would be less confident that the inspector is objective and independent. However, as was discussed previously, the companies selling stocks or bonds to the public typically hire the auditor to report on the financial information that the companies periodically share with their stock and bond holders. To raise capital in the marketplace, companies often sell many small parcels of stocks and bonds to a large number of investors. Suppose a financial statement audit of a given company would cost \$500,000. Under such circumstances, it obviously doesn't make sense for each individual investor to arrange for an audit. Instead, the company hires and pays for the auditor because a reputable independent auditor's opinion can provide assurance to thousands of potential investors. By purchasing the assurance provided by an audit, the company can sell its stocks and bonds to prospective owners and creditors at more favorable prices, significantly reducing the cost of capital. In fact, studies indicate that audits save companies billions of dollars in costs of obtaining capital; for example, by getting lower interest rates on loans.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>For example, see M. Minnis, "The Value of Financial Statement Verification in Debt Financing: Evidence from Private U.S. Firms," *Journal of Accounting Research* 49 (2011), pp. 457–506.