

Dark Horse CPAs Announces Hiring of Jesse Lilligren as Principal Accelerator

Lilligren Begins Principal Accelerator Program, Establishes SMB Accounting and Advisory Practice in Salida, Colorado.

CARDIFF BY THE SEA, CA, UNITED STATES, August 28, 2026

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Dark Horse CPAs, a top accounting and tax firm serving small businesses across the nation, announces the hiring of Jesse Lilligren as an Accelerator in the firm's Principal Accelerator Program. Lilligren joins Dark Horse to build an accounting and advisory practice focused on helping business owners understand their financial information and use it to make better decisions.

Lilligren began his career in internal audit at a large healthcare company, an experience that shaped his approach to both leadership and client service. He quickly found that identifying a problem was only the beginning; he wanted to help solve it. That instinct has followed him throughout his career, along with a strong emphasis on teaching and developing others.

"I wanted to build a practice big enough to have an impact without giving up the depth every client deserves," said Lilligren. "On my own, I had full control but no stable way to grow. At traditional firms, there's a path, but you give up your stake and any say in how the work gets done. Dark Horse was the only model that gave me ownership, a real path to grow, and the freedom to build my practice the way I know it should be built."

His approach to advisory work starts with understanding where financial information stops being useful to the owner. Some businesses are not capturing the information they need, while others have the data but struggle to interpret it or use it effectively. Lilligren sees his role as



Jesse Lilligren, CPA

finding that disconnect and helping the owner turn financial information into a decision.

“Accounting is the language of business, but most owners never learned to speak it,” said Lilligren. “Their business is talking to them all the time, telling them what’s working and what isn’t. As long as that stays numbers on a page, none of it is useful. Clients need someone who can translate those numbers into plain English and then into a decision they can act on.”

That same philosophy carries into the way Lilligren works with both clients and teams. Rather than keeping expertise behind the advisor’s desk, he wants the people he works with to understand the thinking behind the recommendation and become stronger decision-makers themselves.

Lilligren sees a significant opportunity among small and lower-middle-market businesses that need stronger financial guidance but are not ready to hire a senior finance leader full-time. Dark Horse gives him a platform to reach those owners while maintaining the depth of relationship that drew him to advisory work in the first place.

“Every business owner is the hero of their own story,” said Lilligren. “My job is to be the guide behind them. If the owner is Luke Skywalker, I’m Yoda. I’m not the one out front, but I’m the one making sure the hero has what they need to win.”

“Jesse has zero interest in being the CPA who hands over a set of numbers and calls the job done,” said Chase Birky, CEO and co-founder of Dark Horse CPAs. “He wants to get close enough to the business to see where an owner is making decisions without the information or context they need, then help fix that. He’s building his practice around not just providing that information and context but having a seasoned perspective and point of view to bring to the table for strategic decision-making.”

About the Dark Horse Accelerator Program

The Dark Horse Principal Accelerator Program was created for entrepreneurially minded CPAs who want to build a scalable book of business without the personal and financial sacrifices required to start a firm from scratch. Dark Horse provides its CPAs with the resources and support needed to grow intelligently and profitably. Its proprietary technology, flexible staffing model and established systems allow CPAs to focus on advising clients and building lasting relationships.

Accelerators complete a training program covering the firm’s technology, sales process and practice-building model before beginning to develop their own books of business. They receive one-on-one coaching and access to full-time and fractional professional personnel as they grow. After successfully completing the program and meeting the firm’s ownership requirements, Accelerators may become equity Principals of Dark Horse CPAs.

The Dark Horse Principal Accelerator Program is currently accepting new Accelerators. Interested CPAs can learn more at abetterway.cpa or by emailing info@darkhorse.cpa.

About Dark Horse CPAs

Dark Horse CPAs provides integrated tax, accounting and CFO services to small businesses and individuals across the United States. The firm was founded to give small businesses and their owners access to the tax strategies, accounting insight and client experience often reserved for larger companies. To learn more, visit darkhorse.cpa.

Justin Kurn

Dark Horse CPAs

justin@darkhorse.cpa

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/937776238>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.