

Companies contracting for finance execs

By Susan Tompor
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DETROIT — Sheri Pawlik is officially a chief financial officer for hire.

After spending 18 years crunching numbers in the auto industry, Pawlik took a buyout from Chrysler at the end of December. Most recently, she was a senior manager for financial controls for the Mopar parts division world headquarters in Center Line, Mich. Her duties included working with her team to figure out things like the gross profit margin by item, say motor oil.

Like a lot of people in the auto industry, she spent more than a few lunch hours chatting with

co-workers about a second career. What could they do next?

Like a lot of people wondering about the next step, she started hitting the Internet, plugging in simple searches like “financial officer.”

And then “**B2B CFO**” popped up.

“It was a direct fit to the skills I have,” said Pawlik, 40, of Beverly Hills, Mich.

“I look at the numbers, and I translate it in a way that the executive can make decisions.”

It’s one of those quirky ideas that has been around for 21 years — outsource the chief financial officer. But it’s another idea that’s gaining more traction as more people are bought out or lose their white-collar jobs.

B2B CFO is a network based in Phoenix that offers senior-level executive services nationwide on an as-needed basis to small and mid size businesses.

The network has 85 partners nationwide, serving about 375 companies. Michael A. Campian was downsized from a job at a small automotive company three years ago. He now offers CFO services to six smaller companies in Michigan, including Northfield Trucking Co. in Taylor.

“They don’t need to hire a full-time CFO if they don’t need it or can’t afford it,” said Campian, 50.

