

Here is a year's worth of daily tips and cogent guidance covering every facet of the professional marketing experience. *365 Marketing Meditations: Daily Lessons for Marketing & Communications Professionals* is a book for anyone who ever wanted to turn an idea into reality.

"No matter what size your company or what aspect of marketing you're in, you are well advised to read this practical book filled with choice morsels of wisdom."

—Mel Korn, CEO, Saatchi & Saatchi Collaborative Marketing

"What a wonderful combination of significant insight with just plain fun. It will be on my desk throughout the year, that's for sure."

—Al Ries, author, *The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing* and Chairman, Ries & Ries

"This is a unique collection of engagingly written tips on communication and marketing that will surely resonate with both marketing professionals and practicing attorneys."

—Ralph Savarese, Principal, McMorroSavarese and former Managing Partner, Howrey Simon Arnold & White, LLP

"Insightful, powerful, funny...Here is a treasure of tips and ideas that marketing and communications professionals can put to use every day."

—Reid Walker, Vice President – Communications, Honeywell Specialty Materials



Watershed Press, Washington, DC

\$9.95



365

Marketing Meditations

By Richard S. Levick and Larry Smith



# 365

## Marketing Meditations

Daily Lessons For  
Marketing &  
Communications  
Professionals



By Richard S. Levick and Larry Smith

# 365

## Marketing Meditations

Daily Lessons For Marketing &  
Communications Professionals

---

Richard S. Levick, Esq.  
*President & CEO*

Levick Strategic Communications, LLC  
rlevick@levick.com

Larry Smith  
*Director of Strategy*

Levick Strategic Communications, LLC  
lsmith@levick.com

---

Since the first soap was sold in the mid-1800s, the most prominent marketing has focused on products.

---

We know with certainty which shampoo will remove dandruff, which detergent gets out ring-around-the-collar, and which car company “tries harder.” But changing times have forever altered the very definition of marketing.

How, for example, do we choose a bank, an accountant, lawyer, or doctor? Increasingly, as markets have globalized and consolidated, professional services marketing is playing catch-up with the product sector. Marketing has become increasingly important and accepted. A greater number of professionals in the service sector now appreciate marketing and look upon it as an important part of the business development function. And they understand its impact on the bottom line.

Meanwhile, amid persistent global skepticism about corporate integrity, marketing professionals are also expanding their scope with an eye—not to just sell the products and services their companies manufacture—but to the need to preserve and protect corporate reputations.

This book of daily marketing meditations outlines the most important rules of marketing. It also provides a pathway to help marketers know when those rules should be broken, and to have the courage to break them.

It is designed to do something else as well. Organizational change never happens painlessly. For marketers caught up in that change, the road can indeed be lonely.

At professional service firms, for example, marketers are frequently solo practitioners or part of small groups (though this is changing as more global organizations now report marketing staffs of more than 100 people). They often work with tight budgets that pale in comparison to their product marketing counterparts. And, they often have short time spans in which to show a return on investment, while successful marketing by its very nature requires time to permeate the consciousness of its targets.

At the same time, reputation management is still a largely reactive process for many corporations. All too often, crises are mishandled, with marketing and communications professionals excluded from decision-making or brought in too late in the process to make a difference. Too seldom is it understood that unfolding events can be modified with the right strategy. Even in the years since Enron, corporate myopia remains widespread.

This book, we hope, will remind all the marketing professionals who face such a myriad of challenges and frustrations that they are not alone.

*Richard Levick and Larry Smith*  
*January 2005*

We'd like to thank all of those people who made this book possible. Daniel Money Penny for revising and adding to a number of these meditations. Michael O'Horo and Bill Flannery for their brilliant advice on professional services sales training. Felice Wagner for her unique insights and humor. Burkey Belser, because he is an historic change agent in professional services marketing.

Thank you as well to Marcia Newell, a legal recruiter who shrewdly understands how marketing works at every level of an organization. Thanks to Diane Hartley who never fails to bring humor and humanity to the highest-pressure professional situations. And, thanks to our London partner Gavin Ingham Brooke who is always there for us when clients have real-time needs across the Pond.

And, to be sure, we'd like to thank our wives—Richard Levick's wife Debbie MacDougall and Larry Smith's wife Marie Ellen Larcada—for their support on this project and on every other project we've undertaken since we've known them.

Most of all, we'd like to thank Gerry Riskin and his wife Bethany for inviting us to their home, providing the perfect work environment (an island), and for playing a vital and substantive role in helping us brainstorm the ideas and pull this book together.

Finally, we should clarify that this book of 365 daily meditations is really 366 daily meditations. So we're actually over-delivering on what we've promised. That's a basic rule of marketing, after all.

**H**onor the rule of “st.” Marketing is about being perceived as *first*, *biggest*, *fastest*, and *best*, in your own category. There is no rule of “nd.” There are few who remember Bert Hinkler was the *second* person to fly solo across the Atlantic.

## January 2

---

**H**arley-Davidson customers tattoo the company logo on their bodies. That's branding. Anything less is just a tagline.

## January 3

---

**E**veryday we are bombarded with 3,000 to 5,000 messages. If you don't repeat your message over and over, directly to your target audience, you cannot get through the information clutter. Reach and repetition is key. Reach and repetition is key.

## January 4

---

**C**offee and Starbucks are synonymous. That's the value of a brand. Customers visit Starbucks five times a week, spending money on something that would cost much less if they made it at home.

## January 5

---

**S**tarbucks sells more than 30 different products, but it markets one thing—coffee. Focus your marketing efforts narrowly.

## January 6

---

**A**sk your partners what your brand is and see how many answers you get. Ask your clients and you'll get even more. If you want to be a brand, they all have to have the same answer.

## January 7

---

**A**ll professional services marketing is about penetrating markets—industry, practice area, or geography. That's it. Your marketing campaigns must start with this recognition.



## January 8

---

**T**he outnumbered Normans defeated the Saxons in England with simple new technology—stirrups—that let them ride horses into battle. They created the world's largest empire as a result. Look for new ways to apply even the simplest technology.

## January 9

---

**D**ogs age seven years for every one of our years. Currently, it's estimated that the Internet evolves every three months with new applications. How are you communicating differently with your clients today than you did three months ago? How will you communicate differently three months from now?

## January 10

---

**M**any lawyers and accountants say, “We have branded, we have merged, we have advertised.” In marketing, there is no such thing as past tense. All marketing words must end in “ing,” not “ed.”

## January 11

---

**C**oca-Cola asks all its sales staff and executives, “How is what you are doing today going to help sell this beverage?” In the professional services, many people forget their mission.

## January 12

---

**A**s Tom Peters writes, always pursue the “wow” response. When you are editing a memo, drafting a press release, or writing an email, the person next in line to read it is your client, no matter who they are. Is it the best you can do?

## January 13

---

**W**ho was the third person to fly solo across the Atlantic? Who was the first woman? Amelia Earhart created a new category, and for that she is remembered, not for being third.

**W**hat makes you different? If there is no clear answer to this question that is perceived in the marketplace, then you do not have a market position.

**I**n virtually every market, you need to be one of the top three in order to own significant market share. Traditionally, the number one firm in a market owns twice as much business as number two; which in turn has twice as much business as number three. After that, you're just fishing for minnows.

## January 16

---

**D**on't waste marketing dollars telling your clients and prospects how smart you are. They already know that. All they care about is how you are going to solve *their* problem.

## January 17

---

**S**uccess in litigation involves twin goals—achieving victory in court *and* preserving reputation. Winning requires both.

**W**HIFM is the world's most powerful radio station because it's the only one that clients and prospects listen to. It stands for *What's In It For Me?* All of your marketing needs to be focused on answering this question for your target clients and prospects.

**D**o you or your clients drink bottled water? They're gladly spending \$1 to \$10 per bottle for something they can get for free. The substantial difference between the number of bottles sold in those few cities where it serves an environmental need, and the total number of bottles sold, is known as marketing.

## January 20

---

**N**ike, the best-known brand in the world, keeps it simple: three words or just a swoosh. Anything more would be superfluous. Keep your brand simple.

## January 21

---

**Y**ou cannot be the “we do everything firm.” Trying to brand more than one thing is like putting a gun rack on a Mercedes. It cannot be done.

## January 22

---

**I**f you have to explain your brand, it is not working. Keep it short and simple.

## January 23

---

**A** brand is not a slogan. A brand is *your* promise.



## January 24

---

**N**o amount of marketing can make up for support staff who aren't polite on the phone, partners who don't return client calls and professionals who don't measure up. Everything your firm does must reaffirm its brand.

## January 25

---

**W**hat keeps your clients up at night? This is the bullseye of marketing. If you don't know the answer, you are not marketing. You're just busy.

## January 26

---

**L**aw is about precedents, accounting is about rules, banking is about old relationships. But marketing is about being first.

## January 27

---

**P**rofessional services clients will never tell you they are purchasing your services because of an advertisement they saw or an article they read. But marketing substantially influences their short lists because it reaffirms what they already presume. It makes existing clients feel smart for having hired you. It makes you become familiar to strangers who sign checks.

## January 28

---

All purchasing decisions are emotional. You may tell your friends that you bought the car because of its safety features or gas mileage, but it is really about how it makes you feel. People hire the people they like.

## January 29

---

Advertising is the fastest form of marketing because it is limited only by budget. And advertising is control. The message never varies unless you want it to.

## January 30

---

**P**ublicity is far less controllable and takes more time to work than advertising, but has far greater credibility. If I read it, it must be true.

## January 31

---

**L**earn to say “no.” Professionals are used to control and expect marketing staffs to follow their wishes. But they have far more respect for marketing professionals who exercise judgment and risk by showing them there is a better way.

## February 1

---

**W**inston Churchill argued that any memo longer than a page was wasted paper. One of the largest law firms in the world has a brochure of 553 words.

## February 2

---

**K**now your market. The world is a big place. Market only to your most likely customers.

## February 3

---

**S**ixty years ago, Pepsi Cola tried to outsell Coca-Cola by being the “cheaper cola.” They have been playing catch-up ever since. Market on value, not price.

## February 4

---

**K**now as much about a reporter who’s about to interview you as you would a client prospect who may be about to hire you. Especially during a crisis.

## February 5

---

**T**he great philosopher Popeye's first rule was, "I am what I am!" It applies to all professional services firms. You can only be viewed by the market for what you are, or for what you will be soon.

## February 6

---

**M**ost marketing is based on personal experience. Make a patient wait for an hour, or don't return client calls, and no amount of marketing will change that perception.

## February 7

---

**H**enry David Thoreau wrote that most of us live lives of quiet desperation. Live yours with noisy jubilation. Get noticed and have fun every day.

## February 8

---

**L**ewis & Clark followed Thomas Jefferson's command to the letter, following the Missouri River rather than the Colorado. Had they taken the Colorado, they would have reached the West Coast two months earlier. Break rules, even Thomas Jefferson's.



## February 9

---

**T**he captain of the Titanic had such a great safety record that when the great ship struck an iceberg, precious hours were lost because the possibility of sinking was so far beyond his experience. Yesterday's success is always a trap when conditions change. And they always change.

## February 10

---

**C**lients come to law firms with business problems, not legal ones. Patients come to doctors for reassurance, not anatomical diagrams. Don't get trapped in your own expertise.

## February 11

---

**C**omprised of 201 square acres, and with an army of only 700 soldiers equipped with ancient armaments, yet it is the most powerful country in the world, with one billion followers. It is the power of ideas that makes the Vatican the most powerful country on Earth. Worship ideas.

## February 12

---

**E**xpect professionals to take time before they become believers in marketing. Parlay successes on their behalf in order to convert them. And remember, it's the converts who become the most zealous evangelists of the new gospel.

## February 13

---

**S**trategize how you'll sell marketing to resistant professionals. Identify the individuals who are most important to your internal political mission. Then, find out what's most important to them and give it to them.

## February 14

---

**N**othing holds our attention like pictures. Use them.

## February 15

---

**T**hings will fall into place that would have fallen into place without you. Good ideas will go bad, and you'll have to answer for it. "They're going to blame you for the rain," said Lyndon Johnson, "so you might as well take credit for the sunshine."

## February 16

---

**M**arket to the buyer's need, not the seller's ego.

## February 17

---

**O**MASC drives most publicity efforts. It means, “Only Mom and Spouse Care.” Publicity should deliver real value to the reader, not to the ego of the lawyer, architect or broker.

## February 18

---

**H**ire people smarter than yourself and learn from them. They’ll think you’re smarter for doing so.

## February 19

---

**N**ewspapers start with a blank page everyday. You are their resource. You're providing what they need.

## February 20

---

**T**ruth for a lawyer is precedent, for a doctor it's fact, for a scientist it's proof. Truth for a journalist is what they know at deadline.

## February 21

---

**M**ost journalists are overworked, although they are often inaccurately referred to as “lazy.” Make their jobs easier by giving them the quotes, facts and story angles they need. Follow up interviews with an email listing your three key points.

## February 22

---

**T**he products sector won't sell you a bar of soap without market research. If you want to sell professional services, there is no substitute for market research.

## February 23

---

**Y**ou can't own a position without first scientifically understanding the market.

## February 24

---

**F**ind a name and keep it forever. If Mr. Clean were to call itself something else, they'd have to start marketing all over again.



## February 25

---

**T**here are two answers to every question: a solution or an excuse.

## February 26

---

**D**on't be afraid of failure. Don't make excuses for it. Just be prepared to explain its value.

## February 27

---

**I**t's in your own interest to take responsibility. You only can grow by taking on more responsibility and delegating past responsibilities to others. Trust them to fill those requirements.

## February 28

---

**I**f you're debating whether to delegate a task, chances are the best course is to delegate.

## February 29

---

**T**oday is a day that comes but twice a decade. Commemorate it. Offer clients something equally rare.

## March 1

---

**R**ead everything. Books are lessons without the pain of personal experience.

## March 2

---

**B**ruce Springsteen publicly thanked his lawyers for “protecting him and his music for the past 25 years.” He did not thank them because they were smart, or because of how they really understood the last Trademark Act passed by Congress. Market what’s valuable to the client in language the client uses.

## March 3

---

**E**xplain marketing concepts in ways that your internal audience will understand, and use the most commonly understood language. Professionals will sometimes oppose marketing ideas, not because they're against them, but because they don't understand them.

## March 4

---

**S**ome great marketing is invisible. Some firms communicate a powerful image by pretending to be above it all. They're winning the war by seeming to not be in it.

## March 5

---

**R**espond to an angry email with a pleasant phone call.

## March 6

---

**P**en and paper are now rare and valuable means of communication. Say “thank you” in ink.

## March 7

---

**C**lients want to walk away from your presentation with free advice and insights. Substance is potent marketing.

## March 8

---

**T**he best client giveaway is information. They'll value it enough to pay for more.

## March 9

---

**L**istening is the best form of persuasion. Clients are more impressed by how you listen than by what you say. The more you listen, the smarter they think you are.

## March 10

---

**W**hen meeting people for the first time, stare into their eyes. If you can later say what color they are, then you've had the kind of substantial eye contact that tells them you are focused and interested.

## March 11

---

**Y**ou can't find the client's sweet spot without listening and asking questions. You have to earn the right to answer their questions.

## March 12

---

**T**he average listener is more effective than a genius who speculates.



## March 13

---

**A**sk your clients what they think, directly. Don't ask your professionals what they think your clients think.

## March 14

---

**A**sk your clients how you're doing. Some of them are waiting for you to ask. Others will be surprised and delighted you did.

## March 15

---

**A** degree in marketing means so much—to the school that lured you to it!

## March 16

---

**B**uy a headset for every telephone. Stand while talking on the phone to clients and reporters. It makes you more comfortable, more energetic, more powerful and less distracted.

## March 17

---

**M**ultitasking means not paying attention to any of the things you're doing.

## March 18

---

**K**ee your voice mail greeting relevant. Let people know where you are. Let them know when you're returning.

March 19

---

**D**on't tell. Show.

March 20

---

**E**verything is marketing. The clothing you wear is marketing, and so is the way you answer the telephone.

## March 21

---

**P**eople write sloppy emails. Write emails as if they were formal letters—and without a single typo. Such care will set you apart.

## March 22

---

**S**urpass expectations. But set expectations that can be surpassed.

## March 23

---

**D**o your litigators respect marketing? Are they willing to work on teams with marketing experts, to win the court of public opinion, not just the court of law? They'd better be.

## March 24

---

**A**lways be early when on deadline.

## March 25

---

**E**very communication is an opportunity to express value and educate. Don't squander it. Express value in everything you do.

## March 26

---

**U**se “we” when talking about client projects. Doing so confirms the implicit partnership in almost every utterance. Virtually every project is a partnership.

## March 27

---

**T**he habit of using the word “we” not only expresses your team approach, it builds internal confidence and makes everyone involved feel part of the job.

## March 28

---

**A**t the end of meetings and discussions, repeat priority points. Make sure everyone is agreed on the action steps. Never take consensus for granted.



March 29

---

**D**iscussions are not actions.

March 30

---

**E**ach great idea requires equivalent energy and action. Meetings and discussions aren't work. They're preludes to work.

# March 31

---

**L**earn to say “no”. It beats the heck out of a “yes” you can’t deliver.

# April 1

---

**W**hen saying “no,” explain why and offer alternatives.

## April 2

---

**M**ake sure to define what success will look like. If you don't, you and your client will never get there.

## April 3

---

**S**uccess in marketing takes time. Communicating that is a first step to managing expectations.

## April 4

---

**S**ometimes successful marketing has dramatic bottom-line impact. Sometimes the impact is deferred. That is another first step to managing expectations.

## April 5

---

**W**hat kinds of successes in marketing don't have dramatic bottom-line impact? Be prepared to define those successes. Be prepared to explain their long-term economic value.

## April 6

---

**O**nce you've sold something,  
stop selling.

## April 7

---

**A**fter you ask for the client's business,  
be silent. Even if the silence is  
excruciating, endure it.

## April 8

---

**S**ales is an escalating process. Just like in dating, the suitor wins the right to the next step. First dates shouldn't end in questions about matrimony.

## April 9

---

**Y**ou can accomplish virtually anything in marketing as long as you commit the time, resources and budget.

April 10

---

**M**ake sure your budgets and expectations meet. If they don't, one or the other has to change.

April 11

---

**S**peak in pictures.

## April 12

---

**M**ake your points by telling stories. They explain how things get done. A marketing war story demonstrates value by showing what marketing can do.

## April 13

---

**E**ffective advertising requires Monty Python thinking. Be “completely different” so you get noticed; not more of the same so you feel safe.



April 14

---

**M**arket like a mountain climber.  
Don't look where you don't want  
to go.

April 15

---

**M**arket like a mountain climber.  
Have all your equipment ready  
before you begin.

## April 16

---

**C**elebrate your successes. Especially with skeptical professionals, you must always be marketing the concept of marketing.

## April 17

---

**D**istribute proof of your success. Don't just make copies of a rave review or a feature article. Distribute it to all appropriate audiences each time it appears.

April 18

---

**H**ave a mentor who's not in your firm. Outsiders have no vested interest other than in your welfare.

April 19

---

**N**on-communication is not neutral. In nearly every instance, it is interpreted negatively.

# April 20

---

**V**isit all clients. Visit clients across the street. Visit clients around the world.

# April 21

---

**V**isit clients without an agenda.

## April 22

---

**S**he who visits clients comes back  
with work.

## April 23

---

**O**bserve a small need and fill it. If a  
client complains mildly about how  
his phone wire is always getting  
tangled up, send him a phone line detangler!  
He'll think of you every time he makes a call.

April 24

---

**F**ollow your own advice.

April 25

---

**M**ake it easy for your clients and prospects to remember you. Give them things...a memento, a small gift that will mentally connect them to you at the moment they need to buy what you're selling.

## April 26

---

**P**repare for all meetings by knowing the answers to key questions ahead of time.

## April 27

---

**E**very non-sale is a potential referral. So treat it as a sale. Every sales process is an opportunity to generate widespread goodwill.

## April 28

---

**R**eturn all calls same day, period.  
Exceptions are as follows: None.

## April 29

---

**T**reat reporters exactly like clients.  
Return their calls and pay them  
respect. They may be *more* important  
than clients, because they can do you more  
damage, short- and long-term.



# April 30

---

**R**eporters can help you a lot. They can hurt you more.

# May 1

---

**F**our out of five reporters agree: When you don't return our phone calls, you're saying, "Write whatever you want."

## May 2

---

**J**ournalists are the gatekeepers to your clients.

## May 3

---

**W**hat do your clients read? If you don't know the answer, you cannot know what they need to hear from you. If you don't know the answer, you cannot know how to reach them with that information.

## May 4

---

**M**ake your internal clients define the amount of money they're leaving on the table by not pursuing a proposed marketing initiative. Once they specify the amount, it will be awfully tough for them to ignore you the next time you talk about taking action.

## May 5

---

**S**ubscribe to the trade magazines and other industry publications that are essential to your most important clients. Read them.

## May 6

---

**I**dentify your boss or bosses. Even in the largest firms, you can identify the spokespersons, the rainmakers, and the power brokers. These are the people to focus on.

## May 7

---

**M**arketers who pay attention to rainmakers exclusively do so at their peril. The real power brokers may be also operational. They too are crucial in helping you maintain credibility in the organization.

## May 8

---

**F**igure out what your bosses need and give it to them before they ask for it. There's no better way to establish a powerful alliance.

## May 9

---

**B**ad press happens, so don't get over-excited and don't overreact. The key is to limit the bad press to one news cycle.

## May 10

---

**I**t's crucial not to get over-excited by good press. It's a single event that now requires follow-up. The real benefits are still to come.

## May 11

---

**T**riple-check the spelling of all companies, firms and individuals. Any misspelled name is potentially disastrous. It advertises that you don't care.

# May 12

---

**E**very client deserves the very best talent they can find.

# May 13

---

**A**s you treat the president, treat the clerk or professional assistant. Keep in practice when it comes to courtesy. Besides, they are the gatekeepers.

## May 14

---

**A**ssistants who like you sell you to their boss. Those who do not, sabotage you.

## May 15

---

**I**n a public relations crisis, make sure the people answering the phone are as well-trained as the person speaking to the reporters. You never know when the twain shall meet. Aggressive reporters don't mind impromptu interviews with receptionists.



## May 16

---

**W**hat is your public relations crisis contingency plan? If you don't know, it's time to start writing.

## May 17

---

**I**n a media crisis situation, there are two initial goals. First stop the bleeding. Then prepare for what's coming next.

# May 18

---

**S**eldom do people tell you how much your words affect them. Speak as though they are listening.

# May 19

---

**D**ivide your list of things to do by “Must Do’s” and “Nice to Do’s.” You will never get to the “Nice to Do’s.”

## May 20

---

**E**very dissatisfied customer is an opportunity to generate exponentially greater satisfaction than would have existed in the first place. Make people so satisfied with your fix that they are almost glad for your mistake.

## May 21

---

**T**wo factors motivate buyers: Pain and opportunity. Pain is the much greater motivator of the two.

## May 22

---

**W**hat is your client's pain?  
Articulate it, write it down,  
incorporate it into your thinking.  
Target all your marketing to the elimination  
of that pain.

## May 23

---

**D**on't be surprised by the lack of  
response when you market opportu-  
nity. They're hearing about great  
deals and opportunities every day. But they've  
got to do something about pain.

## May 24

---

**P**ain affects both your external and internal clients. Your partners are up at night worrying about something. Help them understand marketing is a salve, not just another responsibility.

## May 25

---

**I**f you hear the word “but” in a response to a proposed initiative, everything that has preceded it is irrelevant. Everything before the “but” is just polite sugar-coating. What comes after the “but” is what they’re really saying, and what you really need to address.

# May 26

---

**T**o be effective, praise must exceed criticism by a 2:1 ratio. Otherwise, it's received as just a way to soften serious criticism.

# May 27

---

**A**n action point must be agreed on as a result of every meeting or memorandum. Even emails and phone calls should not end without an implicit, if not explicit, next step.

May 28

---

**M**arketing gets you found, while sales get you chosen.

May 29

---

**F**ew salespeople are born that way. They first had to learn that every rejection gets them closer to the sale.

May 30

---

**P**owerful senior partners need sales training just as much as the up-and-comers. Sometimes they need it more. They need to be taught not to be complacent.

May 31

---

**H**ave the courage to make a decision. The smartest managers prefer wrong decisions to no decisions.



## June 1

---

**H**ave the courage to take a bold initiative. Clients who abhor bold initiatives aren't usually worth keeping.

## June 2

---

**H**ave the courage to fire clients. Have the courage to say “no” to money.

## June 3

---

**T**he FORTUNE 500 increasingly demand that their law firms be media-savvy. If they are not, then they are just lawyers, not counselors.

## June 4

---

**R**epeat the same point over and over. It will take on the force of accepted wisdom. Repeat the same point over and over.

## June 5

---

**D**o not live in denial. There is too much to be learned in helpful criticism no matter how hard it may be to hear the first time.

## June 6

---

**M**ost new ideas aren't as good as old ideas reapplied creatively. We know most of what we need to know. The trick is, how do we do it?

## June 7

---

**N**ot to decide is to decide.

## June 8

---

**Y**ou are judged by how you handle defeat as much as, or usually more than, by the fact that you were defeated. Prepare yourself. Think about how you will act and what you will say.

## June 9

---

**L**et the world know that a service you've performed was performed. Don't flaunt it. State the fact straightforwardly.

## June 10

---

**I**t is the results that matter, not how hard you worked.

## June 11

---

**D**on't gossip. Your clients will think they're next to be gossiped about.

## June 12

---

**L**earn the difference between gossip and legitimate market information. Clients crave the latter; they dread the former. Legitimate market information has a teaching purpose.

## June 13

---

**I**t's a sin for any member of a professional firm to say something bad about the firm to the outside world. It's quicksand.

## June 14

---

**I**t's a sin for any member of a professional firm to castigate a competitor, even if the criticism is legitimate. It gains you nothing.

June 15

---

**B**elieve in your organization or go  
someplace else.

June 16

---

**N**o one will ever do it...



# June 17

---

**W**ho cares if they do it! Only a second-tier firm would do it...

# June 18

---

**W**hy haven't we done it? How do we catch up?

## June 19

---

**A** consultant is a road warrior with PowerPoint and a suitcase. Use consultants to reinforce the advice you've been giving. When they hear it from an outsider, they'll believe it.

## June 20

---

**T**he beauty of being an adult is that you have permission to turn an idea into a reality. Children have the courage to turn ideas into reality but not the power. Adults have the power but not always the courage.

## June 21

---

**G**et as many benefits from a single event as you can. A seminar is an opportunity to meet and impress clients. It's also a wonderful chance to publish its content in articles, invite clients, meet reporters, and leverage your online capabilities.

## June 22

---

**D**o not count on entertaining clients as a way to get their business. That is only a first step. Some executives go out of their way not to hire people who take them to ballgames.

## June 23

---

**B**egin servicing clients the same day they retain you.

## June 24

---

**A**pologize when you're wrong. Stick to your guns when you're not.

June 25

---

**D**on't work with people you don't like.

June 26

---

**O**nly work someplace where you have something to learn.

## June 27

---

**S**ometimes an apology is the only viable public response. “No comment” is seldom acceptable.

## June 28

---

**S**et benchmarks. Have intermittent sub-goals and attain them.

June 29

---

**G**o to Anguilla off-season. Read Mark Twain. Remember what's important.

June 30

---

**N**o, it's not life or death.

# July 1

---

**S**end holiday cards in July.

# July 2

---

**B**e ready to publish a cumulative list of your firm's accomplishments at the drop of a hat.



## July 3

---

**K**now what your weak spots are before the come-to-Jesus meeting. Prepare to document and articulate your position ahead of time.

## July 4

---

**U**se graphs and pictures to make your critical marketing points. Use graphs and pictures to show what's been accomplished in terms of the firm's marketing and strategic positioning, and what still needs to be accomplished.

## July 5

---

**C**ongratulate yourself. Delay your next agenda, or your next project, just long enough to fully savor your last victory.

## July 6

---

**B**e hyper-efficient. Know where everything is. Your firm is a big place, and you should know as many of its details as anyone else there.

## July 7

---

**M**ake sure your cell phone batteries are charged. Make sure your passport is updated. Always have toiletries packed ahead of time.

## July 8

---

**H**ave you convinced your own professionals? You'll never convince the outside world of anything they don't believe themselves.

## July 9

---

**H**ave your newest recruits update your orientation program. They will tell you where your weaknesses are, as well as your strengths.

## July 10

---

**S**ell each other, and teach your people to sell their colleagues. They can't credibly flatter themselves in front of clients. But their own colleagues can sound very convincing if they know how to endorse their own partners and associates.

## July 11

---

**U**se all available technology to track appearances of your firm in the press and on the Internet. You can then make your own powerful points about the firm, and how it might need to bolster or change its marketing approach, by marshalling these appearances to support your points.

## July 12

---

**K**now who your competition really is. A lot of firms get as fooled by reputation as the press does. Drill down, and find out who's really going for the same business you are.

## July 13

---

**G**ive something away, in terms of information and market knowledge, but learn how to identify when a prospect is interested only in free advice. Pull out quickly. These prospects would be selfish clients even if, by some chance, you got the work.

## July 14

---

**W**hen you have too much business, raise your rates. You can afford to lose the clients who balk.

## July 15

---

**W**hen your partners start making one impracticable demand after another, increase your budget or request a bigger one. Either they'll give it to you or become more reasonable in their expectations.

## July 16

---

**D**on't call your assistants "assistants." When partners see the marketer build up an empire of "assistants," it means a short tenure for the marketer. Instead, give them titles that suggest they're co-professionals.

July 17

---

**W**rite your own job description and file it with the managing partner or president. Update it quarterly.

July 18

---

**D**on't say what you did. Say why you did it. Think and report benefits.



## July 19

---

**W**hat's Plan B? If Plan A goes south, you must have a contingency plan immediately available. It shows you're in control.

## July 20

---

**D**eal with things immediately as they occur. It will help you keep your sanity and allow you to get more done.

## July 21

---

**B**eing efficient isn't enough because you may be doing the wrong thing efficiently. Being effective isn't enough, because you need to be able to get it done. Be efficient and effective.

## July 22

---

**P**ublish. Gain internal credibility by first getting external imprimatur. Professionals will believe you're important if someone else thinks you are.

## July 23

---

**I**f the outside consultant you hired isn't making you a hero, you've got the wrong outside consultant.

## July 24

---

**H**ard work alone doesn't matter. What good does it do me to hear about how hard you've worked?

## July 25

---

**B**ad marketing is worse than  
no marketing.

## July 26

---

**D**on't use boilerplate language for  
thank-you notes, especially the ones  
sent to different people at the same  
client companies. If you do, and they find out,  
it will be much worse than had you never sent  
the notes in the first place.

## July 27

---

**D**on't forget your business cards. Always carry extras. Forgetting sends the message that you don't really want to be at the meeting or the conference.

## July 28

---

**O**wn something. What you own defines your brand. Sub-specializations are natural starting points from which to evolve a unique identity.

## July 29

---

**B**e wary of knee-jerk criticisms. Why is it so hard for lawyers to do marketing? Try being a lawyer and find out for yourself.

## July 30

---

**W**hen it “absolutely, positively” has to be there overnight, the 30-fold extra charge for FedEx over regular post is at most an afterthought, a small price to pay for fulfilling the expectation of guaranteed service. Never market on price unless being cheaper is the only thing you want to be known for.

## July 31

---

**T**rust. Don't require over-reporting from vendors. If they're the types to bilk you, they'll find a way no matter what you do.

## August 1

---

**H**ave the same name in different cities. Different names undermine institutional cohesion, even when local partners insist on it.

## August 2

---

**W**ith rare exceptions, mergers and new partners don't maintain much media shelf life. Find something about those mergers and new partners to extend the interest of outsiders. Why is it important to your clients, not just to you?

## August 3

---

**B**ring new partners and groups into your marketing plans. Not only will the marketing support their business development plans, it will be one more way to fully integrate them.



## August 4

---

**Q**uick, who was the other name partner in Johnny Cochran's law firm during the O.J. Simpson trial? Lesson: No work is big enough or hot enough by itself to focus attention on an entire firm.

## August 5

---

**U**se the press for third-party commentary. Talk about matters other than your own cases. It's a less risky way to show off your expertise.

## August 6

---

**M**eet reporters and journalists personally. It's easier to get good press from people who know you.

## August 7

---

**B**e careful of media and marketing plans in document form. They're awfully expensive paperweights.

## August 8

---

**D**on't reject a good idea because it's not part of your plan. It's another good way to form alliances with the people whose idea it is.

## August 9

---

**E**mbrace serendipity.

## August 10

---

“**I** rehearse all my ad libs,” said Winston Churchill. Prepare and train for the media, and for beauty contests. Learn how to sound off-the-cuff.

## August 11

---

**B**ad news always trumps good news. That’s human nature. That’s the nature of media and marketing.

## August 12

---

**W**hen pitching news stories, always ask the question, What makes this different, bigger, better, faster? The best way to alienate reporters is to expect them to be interested in something that isn't really the least bit interesting.

## August 13

---

**T**he Internet is too efficient. It eliminates all barriers to entry, so don't overestimate what you can accomplish there in terms of marketing.

## August 14

---

**D**on't ever break a promise to a reporter.

## August 15

---

**S**ome firms still delegate marketing and recruitment to the same person. You don't want to be that person. Firms that combine both will not succeed at either.

## August 16

---

**M**ake the recruitment head your ally. You have a common interest in the firm investing money in Web sites, publicity and other marketing. Firms that might hesitate to spend on advertising will still spend on things that enhance their position in the job market.

## August 17

---

**S**ound like an expert when you're in Miami. Tell Miami stories even if most of your business gets done in Kansas City.

## August 18

---

**T**he press is a conga line. Reporters go online to see whom their colleagues quoted. Get quoted by one, and the others will beat a path to your door, even if the newspaper is in Des Moines.

## August 19

---

**I**n a 24-hour news cycle, there's almost no such thing as an exclusive. But it's still in your interest to give one.



## August 20

---

**D**on't ever promise a reporter an exclusive without delivering.

## August 21

---

**D**on't snub reporters because you've never heard of their publications. They have a funny way of eventually landing at *The Wall Street Journal*.

## August 22

---

**A**ll news is personal. The media was never all that interested in unmanned space flights.

## August 23

---

**T**he personalities of your professionals have a direct bearing on news coverage. Find ways to exploit some. Find ways to hide others.

## August 24

---

**M**edia training always improves the spokesperson, no matter how experienced.

## August 25

---

**D**on't attack proposed initiatives. Instead, devise alternatives and map out how they would be implemented.

## August 26

---

**T**wo journalists getting married were in such a hurry to meet deadlines that all they had time to say was “I...” Remember that when a reporter calls you for comment.

## August 27

---

**R**equests for Proposals (RFPs) aren't for everyone. Make sure you are not giving away more than you are getting.

## August 28

---

**I**f a prospective client wants all your best ideas before hiring you, consider how much you want them as a client.

## August 29

---

**S**ometimes the most ironclad marketing rule must be broken. Sometimes it's dangerous to return all phone calls the same day. Take everything in moderation, including moderation.

# August 30

---

**W**hen you make a mistake, fall on your sword and move on. People will admire you for it.

# August 31

---

**N**ever be defensive. People will lose respect for you.

## September 1

---

**F**irst-time marketing directors have short lives. The boss is still learning, but won't learn fast enough. Understand this and prepare for your next job.

## September 2

---

**T**here is no such thing as a local paper. Writers for *The Economist* read *The Miami Herald*, especially online.

## September 3

---

**C**adillac ads don't target new buyers. They're designed to make existing Cadillac buyers comfortable and proud in the choice they made. Much of your marketing, and especially publicity, does the same for your clients.

## September 4

---

**M**edia coverage doesn't sell. It helps create client short lists.



## September 5

---

**M**edia coverage doesn't sell. It gets recruits interested.

## September 6

---

**M**edia coverage doesn't sell. It reminds your own people of why they are proud of where they work.

## September 7

---

**M**edia coverage doesn't sell. It creates selling situations.

## September 8

---

**S**ecure media coverage in the same newspapers or magazines in which your firm advertises. It doubles the potential impact.

## September 9

---

**R**eporters read their own newspapers.  
They can't help but be influenced by  
the advertisements they see there.

## September 10

---

**L**isten to what professionals say they  
want. But give them what they need.

## September 11

---

**M**edia is initially designed to service ego, but communications directors will still be judged by how they support business development.

## September 12

---

**N**othing stays sold.

## September 13

---

**L**ess is often more. White space attracts attention.

## September 14

---

**D**o you care where the cook at a great restaurant went to school? Who cares where your partners went? Include it if you like, but never lead with it.

## September 15

---

**A**lways ask your professionals what they learned in an encounter with prospective clients. You'll get great market information, of course. But you'll also habituate your professionals to learning from such encounters, rather than just trying to sell themselves.

## September 16

---

**M**arket research is a tool. It is only a tool. The real thinking starts after the data is collated.

## September 17

---

**M**arket knowledge ages quickly.  
The best pundits are always a  
little tentative.

## September 18

---

**I**f the managing partner can't say what  
the priorities are, how can you succeed?

## September 19

---

**N**ever trust the airlines to get you to a commitment on time. If it's important, get there a day early.

## September 20

---

**W**hat's happened in the last two weeks that's most important to your client?



## September 21

---

**E**ncourage the managing partner to praise the marketing successes of others in the firm. Provide her with a few bullet points to make it easier.

## September 22

---

**W**ho have you thanked today?

## September 23

---

**P**raise someone else's success even if it threatens your position.

## September 24

---

**A**lways take away at least one lesson from a failure, even if it's not your failure.

## September 25

---

**A**utomate the newsletter so that it reaches clients and prospects with “What’s In It For Me” information in a timely way.

## September 26

---

**G**et outsiders to comment on substantive issues in the newsletter. That will enhance its value and increase its credibility. If it’s worth reading, it’s worth getting a range of contributors.

## September 27

---

**Y**our Aunt Selma must understand the story you're pitching to the general media. If she can't, it's no good. The most complex stories must be broken down to no more than three basic points for general consumption.

## September 28

---

**T**oo much emailing is like talking too much. People will stop paying attention.

## September 29

---

**M**ake sure you mean it before you  
hit SEND.

## September 30

---

**W**hat will it say on your profes-  
sional epitaph? What would  
you like it to say?

## October 1

---

**H**old as few staff meetings as possible. Keep them short and to the point.

## October 2

---

**A**ndy Warhol's dictum, that everybody will be famous for fifteen minutes, was not meant as a marketing strategy. Wait for the big event or the global merger and you will be forgotten as soon as it's over. Market every day.

## October 3

---

**A**lways have an excuse to collect a bunch of business cards. During a speech, mention some great article that you can send them. “Please leave me your business cards and I’ll see to it that you get the article.”

## October 4

---

**W**hen giving a speech, walk through the audience if possible. Make them feel your presence as more than just a speaker at a podium.

## October 5

---

**W**hen giving a speech, look at individuals as if you're challenging them to consider your points. Don't put anyone directly on the spot. Do address them directly.

## October 6

---

**W**hen giving a speech, entertain as much as you inform.



## October 7

---

**W**hen giving speeches, don't fill up your PowerPoints with text. The whole purpose of PowerPoint is to make pictures do the work of words.

## October 8

---

**I**n a one-hour speech, the most important moments are the first and the last.

## October 9

---

**N**o matter what kind of communication, don't bury your lead. Define the most striking fact or overriding import. That's your first sentence.

## October 10

---

**M**edia doesn't require a lot of time from your professionals but it requires time right now. You need to call the journalist back now, not in three hours.

## October 11

---

If you are entering a beauty contest, wouldn't it be great to land a little media coverage in the local papers commenting on the very issues that will be raised in the beauty contest?

## October 12

---

You get as much information from what people don't say as from what they do.

## October 13

---

**I**f you're entering a new market, market strategically. If you're opening in Madrid, Madrid is the center of your universe.

## October 14

---

**T**he day of headquarters is over. Firms no longer want to say, "We're a Chicago firm," or "We're a San Francisco firm." The institutional effects of globalization permeate every aspect of how businesses now conceptualize themselves and refer to themselves.

## October 15

---

**O**ne firm in Australia levies a fine on partners who refer to its Melbourne office or its Brisbane office. It has no separate offices, just people who happen to be working in different cities.

## October 16

---

**S**ay “branch” office often enough, and the office will disappear. All the partners there will feel demeaned and leave.  
Solution: don’t say “branch” office at all.

# October 17

---

**A**ll marketing is vertical. Market to each target industry separately.

# October 18

---

**Y**ou're always on camera. Even when they're not looking, they're looking.

## October 19

---

**B**eing first is not enough. You have to continue to be first.

## October 20

---

**B**eing biggest is not enough. Sometimes being biggest means you have to work twice as hard to prove you're also the best, or even good enough.

## October 21

---

**M**arketing cannot come out of nothing. It must reinforce what exists. Real marketing is honest.

## October 22

---

**T**here is always a connection between what you do and sports, ballet, music, geography, history or motorcycles. Find out what they care about and show an interest. It will make you more interesting.



October 23

---

**M**arketing is good for the soul.  
It's all about understanding  
what other people need.

October 24

---

**M**arketing is a lifestyle.

# October 25

---

**H**ow can I do this better?

# October 26

---

**T**he very act of spending more money than others on marketing will get you noticed. They'll write articles on your marketing campaigns. They'll market your marketing.

## October 27

---

**D**on't market if all you want is a "toe in the water." Spending more gets you more. Spending less gets you nothing.

## October 28

---

**F**ulfillment and trustworthiness are everything. Credibility is gained one step at a time but lost in a leap.

## October 29

---

**Y**our firm is a hydra, many-headed. You think you have one boss, but you have many. Accept the fact that there will be times when their demands are mutually exclusive.

## October 30

---

**R**ead. Reflect. Then act.

# October 31

---

**W**hy compete? Collaborate  
and win!

# November 1

---

**M**arketing moves at the speed of  
thought. Write everything down  
or it's lost.

## November 2

---

**D**on't order the garlic soup for lunch. What you order for dinner is your business.

## November 3

---

**C**lient endorsements, whether oral or written, are the grand slams of professional services marketing.

## November 4

---

**D**o something every day that might someday lead to a client endorsement.

## November 5

---

**A**lways move on to the next thing.

## November 6

---

**T**he very finest marketers know so very little about so very much.

## November 7

---

**A**ll things are not related. A failure this morning does not mean the rest of the day is doomed.  
Compartmentalize, as appropriate.



# November 8

---

**A**re you so good at what you do that even on your bad days you're good?

# November 9

---

**U**se voice mail as a tool.

## November 10

---

**S**top at yellow lights, open the doors for strangers, and be graceful. It will become a habit and ultimately a personal trademark.

## November 11

---

**B**e kind during the drive to the office. It will make you better when you get there.

## November 12

---

“**Y**es” eliminates objections in advance. Once they say yes, they’ll find a way to shelve their own doubts and reservations. The rest is detail.

## November 13

---

**A**nticipate objections. Know your responses in advance. Respond casually, as if the issues involved are not so titanic.

## November 14

---

**A**pollo 11 was a great media event because it was the first moon landing. By Apollo 13, there was no media interest until it became a near disaster. News gets old very fast.

## November 15

---

**T**he best mentors choose you.

## November 16

---

All marketing is even more local than politics. Marketing is one person at a time.

## November 17

---

Always abide by the time contract—begin meetings when you say you will begin, and end when you have committed to do so.

## November 18

---

**M**arket in the other person's language, not your own. The French aren't receptive to English-language marketing. They're doing us a favor. They're telling us not to waste our time.

## November 19

---

**A**lways talk to strangers. Talk to people in the elevator. It's a remarkably pleasant thing to do. It's also great practice for unearthing new opportunities.

## November 20

---

**U**se the same criteria to criticize both yourself and others. Do so with the same focus and intensity.

## November 21

---

**D**efine what others like least in you. You may want to change it. Or you may not.

## November 22

---

**W**hen they ask how much, or when they ask about possible conflicts or potential start dates—stop selling. The sale has already been made and they're already allies. Now they're trying to figure out how to sell internally. Help them.

## November 23

---

**D**eflect sticker shock. Go over the estimated deliverables and the estimated price before committing anything to paper.



## November 24

---

**R**eporters are human. Call them by their first names, especially during a media crisis. If you correct erroneous coverage, do so politely, especially during a crisis.

## November 25

---

**I**f they don't understand what you're saying, try changing pictures.

## November 26

---

**I**f you can't explain it in three sentences,  
you don't understand it yourself.

## November 27

---

**E**veryone with whom you are  
communicating has a short  
attention span.

November 28

---

November 29

---

**T**ry bullets instead of paragraphs.

**P**eople do not read long emails.

# November 30

---

**A** business card can be a turning point.  
What does yours convey?

# December 1

---

**Y**es, the whole world is watching.

## December 2

---

**G**reat marketing is 90% of it. Selling is the other 90%.

## December 3

---

**A**ssume that the worst thing that can be said about you has been said about you.

## December 4

---

**C**almness in crisis defines leadership. Saying “no” to good people because the firm needs you to say “no” defines leadership. Accepting an inevitability of defeat defines leadership.

## December 5

---

**I**t took 5,000 years for civilization to get off the ground at Kitty Hawk. It was just another 65 years to the moon. Once it starts moving, you can never fully anticipate the pace of change.

## December 6

---

**W**rite emails as if unintended audiences will see them. Very carefully.

## December 7

---

**B**eing right may not matter.

December 8

---

**T**he best listeners rarely talk about it.

December 9

---

**E**verything changes.



## December 10

---

“If you need a list to remember your enemies, you’ve got too many enemies,” said Gerald Ford. Everyone’s a potential ally.

## December 11

---

Consensus has its limits. If you ask enough people, you’ll eventually hear a “no” to everything.

## December 12

---

**P**ay no attention to the man behind the curtain. Every success is full of missteps and mistakes. All you see is the proud and perfect final magic.

## December 13

---

**A**lways leave some money on the table. Make the client feel good.

## December 14

---

**R**emember, your clients have clients. They'll expect the same service levels from you that they provide their own clients. How they treat others decisively affects how they'll evaluate you.

## December 15

---

**I**n law, accounting, architecture and medicine, failure is a sin. In marketing, it's absolutely essential.

## December 16

---

**O**ffer three alternatives, three action points, three benefits. Three is a magic and powerful number in religion, in mythology, in business.

## December 17

---

**S**ell benefits, not features. Anti-lock brakes are a feature. Saving a life in an accident is a benefit.

# December 18

---

**A**lways plan to arrive at a meeting  
15 minutes early.

# December 19

---

**D**on't say, "I feel..." Say, "I think..."

December 20

---

December 21

---

**P**ay for lunch.

**M**arket like your job doesn't depend on it.

## December 22

---

**T**ake clients to concerts or ballgames because you like them, not because you want to sell to them. Always try to have a good time when you go out with clients. That's the point.

## December 23

---

**W**hen clients or prospects start to talk, shut up and listen. Even if you're in the middle of a sentence, and you might forget your thought, shut up and listen. If they're talking, it means they're engaged, maybe excited, and possibly ready to buy.

## December 24

---

**M**ost professional services aren't sold by cold-calling. But it's a handy skill to develop.

## December 25

---

**F**or God so loved the world that He did not send a committee. Marketing is not a part-time or volunteer activity and it is not for dilettantes. Marketing by committee is the surest way to kill any effort.



## December 26

---

All professions have their limits, which mean that all professions can learn about marketing from other professions. Architectural firms can learn from law firms. Accounting firms can learn from doctors.

## December 27

---

Any opportunity to write a book is worth pursuing. No other writing has such authority. The old saw, “She wrote the book on it,” is doubly potent when she actually did write the book on it!

## December 28

---

**T**hinking differently means that some days you will be all alone.

## December 29

---

**M**ajor news organizations throw away more press releases than they read. What's the best way to communicate your news?

## December 30

---

**B**eethoven wrote five symphonies that weren't as great as the other four. Not everything you do is a masterpiece. Finishing is the first goal.

## December 31

---

**B**e a protagonist to history, not a spectator. Work to make a difference.



**Richard S. Levick, Esq.**, is the president of Levick Strategic Communications, which has spearheaded publicity campaigns for the largest global professional services organizations and handled the media for front-page matters, from Napster and Guantanamo to the Catholic Church controversy and the *Rosie* magazine lawsuit.



**Larry Smith** is Director of Strategy at Levick Strategic Communications, and an acknowledged marketing and crisis management guru. His other books include *Inside/Outside: How Businesses Buy Legal Services* and, with Richard Levick, *Stop the Presses: The Litigation PR Desk Reference*.

# About the Authors