

CLIENT AT THE CORE

MARKETING AND MANAGING TODAY'S
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM

AUGUST J. AQUILA, PhD

BRUCE W. MARCUS



WILEY

JOHN WILEY & SONS, INC.

More Praise for *Client at the Core*

Bruce Marcus and August Aquila reward readers of *Client at the Core* with an imaginative map for the perilous journey through the twists and turns of marketing and managing today's professional services firm. It is creative, thorough and a catalyst for your further thought. Don't leave home without it.

—Gerry Riskin,
Partner, Edge International

In *Client at the Core*, the authors have captured the changing role of professional services marketing and firm management. There is valuable insight here, and a down-to-earth guide to competing successfully in the new environment.

—David Maister,
Author and Consultant

Finally, a practical book that focuses on what it means to put clients at the core! I was impressed with the practicality of the book from the standpoint of its common sense approach to keeping your professional services firm relevant in the 21st century's client driven economy. Aquila and Marcus have hit a home run with their insightful analysis and poignant prose. A must read for anyone that serves client from within a professional firm.

—Jeffrey S. Pawlow, Managing Shareholder,
The Growth Partnership, Inc.

At its heart, this book is *the* running shoe for law and accounting professionals who want to put the client first, not only because it the smartest thing to do, but because it is also the most profitable thing to do in an age of never ending competition. It says not only "just do it!" but here's how. Following the evolution of professional services marketing over the past 25 years, this is a must read for any professional services firm that wants to navigate and indeed lead in the turbulent and highly competitive waters ahead.

—Richard S. Levick, Esq.,
President of Levick Strategic Communications, LLC and
co-author of *Stop the Presses: The Litigation PR Desk Reference*

I'm overwhelmed! The book is a masterpiece! August J. Aquila and Bruce W. Marcus have produced THE essential guide for managing a professional services firm. It is as encyclopedic in its scope as it is timely as today's headlines. Aquila and Marcus have marshaled their considerable real-life experiences and far-reaching visions into a veritable operating manual for the successful firm. It is must-reading for any professional seeking to survive and thrive in today's markets and will remain a classic reference for years to come. Simply: This book is the last word on the subject.

—Rick Telberg, Editor/At Large
American Institute of Certified Public Accountants

This book hits the nail on the head in terms of the key issues of managing a professional services firm. It combines a unique blend of real world experience along with hard hitting, out of the box ideas for successful implementation. While both are noted authors and authorities on the topic of professional services firm management, this clearly is their best work to date. A definite must-read for anyone serious about professional services management.

—Allan D. Koltin, CPA, President & CEO,
PDI Global, Inc., Chicago, Illinois

In a world where performance is measured by what the accounting software is able to track, partners who carry the biggest sticks and who don't see themselves as requiring motivation or needing behavioral change, *Client at the Core* focuses on managing a firm from a refreshingly newer, perspective. Armed with a heavily marked up copy of the book as their guide to thoughtful planning and implementation, coupled with a strong focus toward the new way of managing in this complex, competitive industry of law, any management team will be racing down the course to win the gold. Stuck in old ways, other firms will be left at the starting line. The race is on and *Client at the Core* is an exemplary discourse on creating winning teams, strategies and client relationships. No firm should be without it as its management guide.

—Silvia L. Coulter
Chief Marketing and Business Development Officer
Dorsey & Whitney LLP

Excellent reading and a valuable reference material. *Client at the Core* is an appropriate title for a book that finally teaches us what our business is about . . . solving clients problems and providing services that they need and not what we want to sell. Superb discussion about how growth firms design their practices around their clients and stagnant firms are designed around themselves. I can't think of a better way to introduce younger staff to the substance of our profession than having them read *Client at the Core*. The book turns theoretical concepts into practical and useful tools.

—Barry W. Braun
Goldenberg Rosenthal LLP

August Aquila and Bruce Marcus are two of my favorite consultants, writers and thinkers in the professional services field. I was delighted they combined their towering wisdom and created *Client at the Core*, and you will be as well. Client selection and retention is one of the critical success factors for a professional service firm, and Aquila and Marcus do a masterful job at educating us on the necessary ingredients of each. But they don't stop there. I especially found the chapters

on firm governance and paying for performance thought-provoking, and certainly challenging to the conventional wisdom. If you want a better understanding of marketing and leading a professional firm in these turbulent times, this book is an essential read.

—Ronald J. Baker, author,
*Professional's Guide to Value Pricing and
The Firm of the Future*

Client at the Core draws on the authors' extensive experience working with professional service firms to explain the changes in the practice environment, how to meet the needs of an ever more demanding and sophisticated clientele and the importance of building a marketing culture within a firm. The book provides a very contemporary and interesting look at world events and other factors that have changed the dynamics of professional practice. Aquila and Marcus write in plain terms their views of both the vital and the unnecessary steps needed to create a client-centric firm. With its practical tone and comprehensive content, *Client at the Core* will be instructive for anyone in professional services looking to upgrade the firm's marketing strategy.

—Sally J. Schmidt, President
Schmidt Marketing, Inc.

August and Bruce once again are blazing the trail for professional services marketing—creating a map for client-centric marketing performed by a firm with a client-centric structure and culture. They don't abandon the marketing lessons and disciplines learned in the past three decades, but show how to build on those lessons to attain the level of marketing sophistication necessary for the next decade. This book is sure to stay on the desk of any professional serious about getting and keeping clients!

—Martha H. Sawyer
Hudson Sawyer

Marcus and Aquila have important points to make, not trendy agendas to sell. They dramatize the challenges facing the professional services, and they do so without being preachy or tendentious. And, my goodness, a book about marketing that is actually well-written! There's no jargon here, just coherent strategies eloquently and forcefully prescribed. Books like *Client at the Core* imbue the business development process with dignity.

—Larry Smith, Director of Strategy,
Levick Strategic Communications, LLC
Author of *Inside/Outside—How Businesses Buy Legal Services* and
co-author of *Stop the Presses: The Litigation PR Desk Reference*

Meaty and rich with texture. The authors understand the *application* of marketing concepts to the CPA profession at a very deep level, and communicate clearly and concisely. Every page was another ‘Yes!’ when reading about the *application* of marketing principles to the CPA world. The authors nailed it.

—Gale Crosley, CPA
Crosley + Company

Aquila and Marcus have captured the scope of the significant changes evolving in professional service firms today. They have given us practical and useful ways to absorb these changes and to address the realities of today’s professional firm management. I have one professional service firm management book that is on my desk constantly, dog-eared from use. I will now have two.

—Rita A. Keller, Director,
Brady, Ware & Schoenfeld, Inc.

Client at the Core gives readers real-world, contemporary advice on how to run a professional services firm. It’s easily readable, and well organized with bullet points and options to choose from. I especially enjoyed the discussion of compensation, because as we know, what gets rewarded gets done. It is worth getting the book for the chapter on ROMI (return on marketing investment) alone. This book belongs on the desk of every professional who wants a satisfying and highly-paid practice.

—Larry Bodine,
Regional Director for North America, PM Forum, and
Executive Editor of *Professional Marketing* magazine

Client at the Core provides a blueprint for developing a client-focused approach to marketing and client service development. Follow what Aquila and Marcus recommend and you will be able to unlock the secrets to client-focused service development and marketing. A compulsory reading for anyone in a professional services firm.

—Mark Lloydbottom, FCA CPC CPEC
Managing Director
Practice WEB, United Kingdom

Readers of *Client at the Core* will benefit from the vast experience of my colleagues August Aquila and Bruce Marcus. It is critical to understand the nuances of marketing professional services. This book does just that, providing a roadmap that begins with how to take care of clients and how to obtain more quality clients and ends with how to provide services to clients profitably and with value—a huge undertaking done with their usual insight and style.

—Jean Marie Caragher
Capstone Marketing
www.capstonemarketing.com

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PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM

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*To my exceptionally strong and courageous daughter, Kate,
who makes the world a better place to live*

August J. Aquila

*To my wife, Mana, who has sustained my spirit through
many books, through many words, through life's assaults on
reason—and who has sustained my life as joyful*

Bruce W. Marcus

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

August J. Aquila

August J. Aquila is an internationally known consultant, speaker, and author. He has held leading positions in the accounting profession for more than 25 years—as the first regional marketing director for an international firm, as a partner in a top 50 accounting firm and as executive vice president of a marketing consulting firm, and in executive positions with American Express Tax & Business Services. He currently heads the Practice Management Consulting division for The Growth Partnership, Inc., a full service consulting firm to the accounting profession. As a consultant, he focuses on management implementation and specializes in CPA firm mergers & acquisitions, management and partnership issues, and facilitating firm retreats. He is the editor of *Partner Advantage Advisory*, a monthly newsletter, and has written and co-authored four other books.

Bruce W. Marcus

Bruce W. Marcus is a widely published author and consultant who has practiced marketing for professionals for almost half a century. As the author of hundreds of articles and more than a dozen books on marketing, marketing related subjects, and the capital markets, and as the editor of *The Marcus Letter on Professional Services Marketing*—one of the most widely read publications on the subject—he has been at the forefront of the changes and maturity of the art of marketing professional services, and he has brought innovative marketing programs to both large and small professional firms. He is the co-author, most recently, of *New Dimension in Investor Relations: Competing for Capital in the 21st Century* (Wiley).

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FOREWORD

by Patrick J. McKenna

In the world of professional services, a professional firm's approach to its clients has evolved through a number of distinct and identifiable phases over the years since the *Bates* decision. The result is that today, most sophisticated accounting, law, consulting, and other professional service providers approach marketing and their clients very differently than they did 20 or even 10 years ago.

In its first iteration, throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s, a competent group of professionals needed only find ways to let prospective clients know of the availability of their firm. Back then we didn't call it marketing, nor did we dare to ever mention the term *sales*, lest someone think us overly commercial, rather than considering us as esteemed professionals. Indeed, we referred to what industry commonly called marketing as *practice development*, but only in hushed tones and never in front of the client.

In many cases, there was a great mystique attached to what a true professional actually did. A realization eventually dawned on some practitioners and firms that they needed to educate prospective clients on how and when to use their firm's services. In these early days, the emphasis was on gaining a competitive advantage by simply letting people know more about you and your firm. Not a bad argument, given that most professional firms had never even developed a brochure to outline for clients what services the firm provided.

Next came the *rainmaking* era. An increased comfort with commercialism and winning the argument for being a business rather than just a profession brought the advent of aggressive professional service firms advertising their wares through yellow page advertisements and even television infomercials. As increasing numbers of baby boomers graduated from professional schools, the expanded number of professionals entering the market introduced many to the concept of competition. This heralded the transition from lock-step systems that rewarded the lifetime contribution of a professional to his or her firm, to an internal system that rewarded those

who were the best at bringing in new business. We spoke of developing personal marketing plans and our efforts to *target* prospective clients. We decided what to sell and to whom, and professional service firm marketing was something we *did* to people.

It was not until the mid-1990s that the view changed. Largely as a result of the Internet's making information easier to access and the concurrent demands of better educated and more sophisticated clients, the issue of client satisfaction became more germane. Increasingly, firms found that their best clients, those clients responsible for providing the greatest revenue stream to the firm, were corporations that had in-house departments retaining their services. Thus, a legal department selected the outside law firms, the financial control department chose the audit firm, and the advertising department coordinated the next round of creative pitches from various external vendors. And there was no air of mystique with these internal people. They pretty much knew exactly what they were looking for, had the necessary background to judge your firm's expertise, and knew when they were getting quality and service. The more enlightened professional firms started to pay a great deal more attention to the wishes and needs of these clients. The result was something of a sea change in how marketing was viewed—the beginning of a client-centric view that today dominates the field.

In my view, the most advanced firms have progressed through a further evolution as they moved beyond a client focus to becoming even more concerned with how they effectively develop relationships. Their concentration is not merely on the achievement of short-term or transactional satisfaction, but rather on the development of long-term solid relationships that will evidence clients seeing them as their preferred provider or strategic partner. Thus much of the marketing emphasis has now switched from merely getting good clients to also keeping them.

As I'm just old enough to have lived through and witnessed this evolution of marketing thinking over the past two decades, *Client at the Core* is an essential blueprint to helping us all take the next steps. The authors, battle-scarred by the evolution of professional firm management and marketing from then to now, have captured the changing needs of the firms in this turbulent new economic era. This is a well-written book that uses plain language to convey practical, well-thought-out ideas. It has been my rare gift to have known and collaborated with both of these authors over the years, and your gift is in having them come together to share their insights with you here.

So get your favorite colored highlighter, read this book with an eye toward learning from the masters, and you will see what I'm talking about.

Patrick J. McKenna is a leading consultant to professional service firms and co-author of the international business bestseller, *First Among Equals* (Free Press, 2002).

PREFACE

The professional world doesn't need another book on how to write a press release or write a brochure or run a seminar, so that's not what this book is about. The libraries of professional firms are replete with books and articles on the subject, and indeed we two have written a vast amount of it. We assume that any professional facing up to the realities of competition is inundated with this literature. The tools of marketing, we now know, are no more the essence of marketing than the fountain pen (or even the computer) are the essence of accounting and auditing.

What this book is about, then, is a new perspective on the crucial subject of how to keep your firm relevant to the needs of the marketplace you face in the coming decade. And while we do include some very cogent things we've learned about marketing practice and skills in the more than a quarter century that we've been doing this, and in fact go to great lengths to address some practices too often badly misused, we think you may find it more valuable to explore the profoundly changing environment for professional firms, and what the professional firm must do today to survive and thrive in the new marketing environment.

We address, then, the core subject of creating clients and building a marketing culture in the light of the current and distinctive business and regulatory environment; of making the professional services firm, no matter its size, relevant to the needs of the first decades of the twenty-first century. We address, as well, the need—and techniques—to build a marketing culture as an integral part of managing a firm, because we know now that nothing that happens in a law or accounting firm is unrelated to marketing.

We write this book knowing that conventional wisdom about marketing no longer applies as readily as it might have in the early days of professional services marketing. One has only to read the remarkable and authoritative book by Larry Smith on how in-house corporate counsel chooses outside counsel (*Inside/Outside*

—*How Businesses Buy Legal Services*) to recognize how utterly futile the traditional marketing techniques can often be in competing for clients. One need only read the works of the international consulting firm, Edge International, the work done by David Maister, the practical marketing musings of *The Marcus Letter*, and the astute observations of August Aquila in a broad spectrum of publications, including the newsletters *Partner Advantage Advisory* and its predecessor, *Partner to Partner Advisory*, to know that merely to reside in the mechanics and vehicles of marketing is no long sufficient.

We write, as well, about the differences between marketing a product and marketing a professional service, and why understanding these differences affects the professional services marketing process. These differences are significant. They render obsolete and make irrelevant so much of the traditional academic views of marketing, when those views are applied to professional services.

In the past 25 years since the *Bates* decision (*Bates v. State Bar of Arizona*, 1977) moved the professions of law and accounting into a new realm of competition—which is indeed what *Bates* did—the economic world has changed. It has moved the professional practice well beyond its hide-bound traditions and concepts of the anointed professional. The business environment we now face is driven more by the Peter Druckers of the world than by the arcane marketing practices of earlier times. Drucker, remember, propounded the first law of management, which is that the purpose of a company (or a firm) is to create a customer (or client). This principle, perhaps more than any other, drives us as marketing professionals.

Our intention is to convey, in the simplest, clearest terms, how the economic landscape for accountants and lawyers has changed, and what professionals must now understand and do to compete—to successfully and profitably traverse this new world. We mean to have you, the reader and professional, come to understand and to function effectively in this new context and competitive environment—to go beyond the mere practice of the mechanics of marketing to an understanding of how a new marketing culture works, and why it's imperative to have one. Marketing, we know now, is no longer an arbitrary activity. It's an integral part of law and accounting firm management. Those firms that understand this are the ones that thrive in a competitive environment. Our objective is to have you take that understanding and mold it to your own practice.

You'll find that we try to avoid the jargon and the clichés of marketing and management, simply because they communicate nothing but a knowledge of clichés and jargon. They are a wonderful way to avoid using insight to understand the marketing philosophy and process.

We don't talk of *vision* in its most frequent use, for example, because in the words of Patrick McKenna and David Maister in their wonderful book *First Among*

Equals, “Many management texts suggest that one key contribution of a leader is to create a ‘vision.’ We’re skeptics. There may be those individuals who, through personal charisma or the painting of an irresistible future, can get large numbers of professionals to follow them. We just don’t think many people can pull it off.” We do, however, talk of vision in realistic—and valuable—terms. As is the case in so many terms used in marketing and management, it’s not the concept that’s bad—it’s the misuse of it. We talk of vision as a clear view of opportunities, and the will and ability to seize them.

We don’t talk of *mission* because a firm’s mission is not the concern of clients, nor can it be creditably stated to affect a client’s decisions, or to give comfort to clients and prospects. Mission, instead, is the dream of the firm managers. Beyond the firm, a mission is believable only in the performance, not in the statement or promise. And as anyone who has worked with a professional firm knows, mission is too often a myth perpetuated at the top and ignored or misunderstood farther down the line. “Don’t speak of love,” goes the old Rogers and Hammerstein song, “show me.”

We speak instead of those measures that address the realities of firm management—understanding as best as possible the needs of the clientele and how to better serve those needs. How to convert knowledge into a management and marketing tool. How to communicate internally and effectively. How to build a marketing culture within a firm in professions that have no traditions of marketing. And finally, how to measure a firm’s progress and results.

To some extent, the timing of this book is fortuitous. While we might well have written it from the standpoint of merely watching the hands of the clock move over 25 years, we are now jolted into reality by the current rash of scandals that have shaken the foundations, and questioned the integrity, of accounting and legal practice, of corporate governance, of investor and shareholder concern, of the real meaning to the business world of new technology, of the initial reactions (and overreactions) to the accounting and corporate scandals—of the maelstrom of economic and regulatory change.

It’s easier to see in perspective the profound effects that Bates had on the professions since 1977, beyond simply freeing professionals from the strictures that prohibited frank marketing. New technology made a difference, as have the challenges to the profession precipitated by the massive failures in process and integrity of the first years of the twenty-first century.

But the most significant changes have been brought about by the ability of professional services firms to market and compete—processes that did not openly exist prior to *Bates* in 1977, nor for which there were traditions in any profession. These changes were precipitated less by the manifestations of the traditional marketing

process than by the instinctive movement to compete by developing and offering clients new and innovative services. Few of today's accounting firms and law firms would have been recognizable in 1977 in their current configurations.

This change, in a dynamic world, continues today, and is indeed accelerating. Thus, the purpose of this book, which is to allow today's professional services firms to not only see themselves in the perspective of the past, present, and future, but to provide them with a blueprint of how to create a marketing structure, process, and culture. It is to allow the modern professional services firm, even in this maelstrom of economic and regulatory change, to prepare itself to serve its markets, to manage itself successfully, to compete effectively.

In the twenty-first century, it's virtually impossible to meet the marketing needs of a company without recognizing that the most significant part of marketing is the nature of the firm itself—how it is structured, how it is governed, how it is managed, and how it serves clients. And that, too, is what this book is about—managing a firm to serve the needs of the marketplace, and competing successfully in serving those needs. A firm first needs to be able to create clients before it can market to clients.

The configuration of the professions and the market they serve are changing, not as a manifestation of the accident of time—the new century—but rather as a function of events of the time and the evolution of the commercial and industrial world. Our objective is to help professional services firms and their advisors, no matter the size or the nature of the practice, become relevant to the needs of the next decade.

The ideas, suggestions, and orientations of this book, it should be noted, are not derived from abstract theory about a world that should be. They are based, rather, on the broad and extensive experience we both have had as practitioners of this arcane art—more than 50 years between us. Most of what we write about in this book, however old, however new and innovative, stems from our own experience and firsthand knowledge of what works. We offer no advice other than that which we know to be practical and viable, nor for which we have not had to take responsibility for results. We have drawn as well from comparable experience of others whom we know to be innovative and practical practitioners and sound advisors.

There is a mystery in marketing, and don't let anybody tell you otherwise. No matter how good we are, no matter how intensive our efforts or how broad our skills and experience, there is always too much we don't know.

We don't know all we need to know about the market for our services, nor exactly why people buy. We don't know as much as we think we do about how to inform and motivate our prospective clientele. We don't know a great deal, although we think we do, about how to motivate professionals to participate in the marketing process.

We do know that there is much more to learn about how to structure the contemporary law or accounting firm to meet the needs of the changing clientele. We

know remarkably little about how to measure the effectiveness of our marketing efforts in professional services, when professionals must rely on circumstances beyond their control to bring the client through the door, rather than just in the efficacy of marketing efforts, nor do we know a great deal about how to distinguish one firm from another and project that distinction. In fact, we know very little about how to deal with change, and right now, there's a great deal of it. These are among the issues we explore here.

Too few professionals—and marketers—understand the profound differences between marketing a product and marketing a professional service, and why that difference matters. Product marketers have had more than 100 years to learn the basics of their craft, and they function in a context in which everyone in a company understands that marketing matters. They may not always remember it, nor function as if they ever knew it, but Peter Drucker put his finger on the awesome truth that the purpose of a company is to create a customer. Too many professionals still seem not to have learned that lesson, and think that the purpose of a professional firm is to practice the profession. But for whom? Would any accounting or law firm be able to bedazzle the world with brilliance if it had no clients, nor could get any? The problem is that there is no tradition of marketing in the professional practice, and a mere two or three decades are hardly enough time to establish one.

We know very little about productivity in marketing professional services, compared to what the product marketers know. After all, you can measure the efficacy of a product ad by counting the number of units you sell. Can you measure return on investment in marketing by the number of clients you get the day after your marketing program hits the street?

What do we know, then? We know, by now, the basic skills of marketing that take a stride toward establishing presence in a marketplace. We know enough of marketing skills to make some measure of difference. We know that when we realize that the client is at the core of the profession, it is the client's needs we must address, and not the litany of services we offer. Those services are smoke if they serve no client purpose or need.

We know that we must recognize what we don't know, and dedicate ourselves to learning what we don't know, and not reside in the small world of what we think we know.

Most important, we must recognize that whatever skills we bring to marketing, it is still ultimately an art form, and not quite the science we would like it to be. And so if you want to succeed in marketing, then, don't hire the scientist. Hire the artist.

There is hope. For those of us who were marketing professional services before *Bates*, or did it in those early days after *Bates*, we can say that marketing for professionals has come a great distance. More professionals now recognize the validity of marketing as an integral part of practice. More marketing professionals bring a

sophistication to the process that we had not thought possible in 1977, the year of the *Bates* decision that made marketing for professionals a valid practice to address the hitherto unknown process of competition. When *Competing for Clients* (Bruce W. Marcus) came out in the early 1980s, it was called the first comprehensive manual on the subject. Today, the body of literature on the subject is extensive, and a lot of it is genuinely instructive and valuable. That's progress.

But marketing sophistication brings increased and effective competition, which then requires even more sophistication. And the profound changes in the business and regulatory environment we now see breed a need for greater knowledge, greater flexibility, and greater acuity.

There is indeed a mystery in marketing. The success of the marketer, then, depends upon the knowledge, the skill, the enthusiasm that so many of us have. But the secret ingredient that makes it work is the artfulness that's brought to the process. And the approach to artfulness is what this book is also about.

One last point. Every author hopes to write the last word on the subject, and we are no different. We do know, however, that there is no last word on the subject. Think of this as a process in motion, because even as we write, things change. We'll try to stay ahead.

August J. Aquila
Bruce W. Marcus
February 2004

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book isn't finished yet. How can it be, when the economic world served by professionals addresses changes constantly?

In fact, a friend, a highly knowledgeable and respected professional, raised a question about our referring to "the next decade." "Will this book be obsolete after 10 years?" he asked.

Yes, it will be, because the world will have changed substantially. Some of it, anyway. And if what we say in this book is right, and helpful, that too might contribute to change.

Nevertheless, we could not have written this book without the help of a great many wise and competent people—all knowledgeable, experienced, and each outstanding in his or her field. Their contributions ranged from encouragement to shared experience, and always within the context of ideas contributed from the context of their own experience.

The list is long, and those not here are not here for lack of appreciation, but for lack of time and space. Among those who have influenced or informed us are Patrick McKenna and Gerry Riskin of Edge International, undoubtedly the leading law and professional firm marketing and consulting firm in the world; David Maister, who has turned professional firm management from a science to an art to a philosophy; Richard Levick and Larry Smith, of Levick Strategic Communications, LLC, the leading law firm public relations practitioners; Ronald J. Baker, whose thinking and writing on accounting firm management and especially on the concept of billable hours will undoubtedly change the nature of professional firm management; Silvia Coulter, who, as a leading professional marketer, knows more about selling professional services than anybody; Sally Schmidt, a pioneer who invented and codified much of what we do today in professional firm marketing; Ken Wright, who pioneered the best in international accounting firm marketing; Richard Weiner,

who invented as much about public relations as any of the other pioneers; Jeff Pawlow, who is making business development a true science with his Disciplined Marketing™ approach; Leisa Gill, who as the past president of Association of Accounting Marketing (AAM) and marketing director of Lattimore Black Morgan & Cain continues to advance the role of accounting firm marketing professionals; Bill Carlino, the distinguished editor of *Accounting Today*, which has published so much of our material; Rick Telberg, who first raised trade publication editing to a world-class level; Jennifer Prosek, whose skill and intelligence moved a small public relations firm to a world-class one, by being smarter and more knowledgeable than most of her peers; Louise Rothery, who so ably and deftly edits more than one legal trade journal at a time; Gilbert Parker, who has changed the nature of firm proposals and presentations from traditional clunky to modern graceful; Larry Bodine, a leading force in law firm marketing; Kathryn Davis, who showed how deft, competent, and original a freelance writer can be; Richard Chaplin and Nadia Cristina, publisher and editor of the excellent publication *Professional Marketing*, who did for professional services marketing in England more than anybody else before or since; Chris Frederiksen, who has taught countless CPAs and CA in the United States and abroad how to build million dollar practices; and all the legal and accounting publications that have published our many, many articles over the years.

And finally and ultimately, our clients, who have taught us so much, perhaps without realizing that we are always learning even as we teach. We are, fortunately, informed by the very best, for which we are both awed and grateful.

Among the more substantial contributors to this effort were two wonderful, patient and supportive people—Emily Haliziw and Mana Marcus. We've often been told that writers' wives bear a far greater burden than the writers themselves. It's true, and we thank them. More than that, we appreciate them.

A vast measure of gratitude goes to the team at Wiley that's responsible for turning words into book. John DeRemigis, Judy Howarth, and Kerstin Nasdeo bring new luster to the definition of professionalism. Lucky the author to have this team to work with.

And by the way, readers of *The Marcus Letter* (www.marcusletter.com), that sometimes iconoclastic but always serious and often useful online journal, will recognize a substantial amount of the ideas in this book. So, too, will readers of the former *Partner-to-Partner Advisory*, now called *Partner Advantage Advisory*. Not that the book is a rehash of articles we wrote in those publications—it's just that sometimes, established ideas are a good foundation for new ideas, and that's what happened here.

August J. Aquila
Minnetonka, MN

Bruce W. Marcus
Easton, CT

February 2, 2004

PART I

**PROFESSIONS AND
PROFESSIONALS
IN TURMOIL**

