

# TO MARKET, TO MARKET

## Marketing Your Consulting and Professional Services

by Richard A. Connor, Jr., and Jeffrey P. Davidson

John Wiley & Sons

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It seems that today everyone is writing a book about how to do something. And usually these books are uninteresting and terribly unhelpful. Too often a how-to book is a how-to book is a how-to book. (It was recently speculated in *Advertising Age* that the next how-to book will be *How to Help Yourself Help Yourself*.)

Can a how-to book really be informative? *Marketing Your Consulting and Professional Services* is. This concise, well-written book gets right to the how of the matter—how to improve your marketing. *Marketing* touches on every aspect of marketing your business that you could possibly be concerned with. Loaded with examples, useful forms, and informative exhibits (38, to be precise), *Marketing* is directed toward the “busy professional who has only basic-level knowledge of marketing and promotion.” And that might include more professionals than anyone cares to admit.

As an extraordinary how-to manual, *Marketing* provides vital step-by-step instruction and advice on how to maximize profitability and success. With it as a guide, you can't fail to enhance the image of your branch or agency and reach new heights in marketing technique and strategy.

### CLIENT-CENTERED MARKETING

Connor and Davidson discuss such necessities of marketing strategy as cultivating referrals, actively prospecting potential clients, client classification, letter writing, and strengthening relations with current clients. According to the authors, the client is the key, so client-centered marketing is the central theme of their book. That should be your top priority in every aspect of your marketing, they say. They advise that getting away (and staying away) from the traditional firm-centered approach to marketing is the first and most important step you must take to successfully market your services.

Hand-in-hand with client-centered marketing is client leveraging. You have to know the makeup of your clientele, their needs and wants, Connor and Davidson write. The authors stress the importance of expanding services to key clients, because that is how to take advantage of this “captive” market, one of your most valuable resources. Your goal, they write, is not to sell more services, but “to assist clients in achieving objectives through the appropriate use of your resources. Your role should be a conduit to the resources available within your firm.”

### KNOW YOUR LIMITATIONS

Taking advantage of all available resources is crucial to a successful marketing strategy, says *Marketing*. That means using such outlets as the press, advertising, direct mail, and a good, solid public relations campaign. However, the authors caution that the strategic management of a marketing

plan is vital. They argue that an image may be made or broken, depending on how you present it. Although it's very important to make the most of every marketing opportunity, it is equally important to be aware of your limitations. Too often firms attempt to do it all themselves, even in areas where they aren't thoroughly knowledgeable. Therefore, if the expertise does not exist within your business in some area, say advertising, then you should hire an outside firm to do it. In other words, leave what you can't do well to the experts.

*Marketing* is a “how to” you shouldn't do without. It will help you obtain the highest level of marketability for your services. And it's for agency heads and their staff alike, so it shouldn't just sit on your shelf and gather dust. —Reviewed by Ana Restrepo

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## Excerpt

“Your firm's primary task is to **sense, serve, and satisfy** the needs of its clients at a reasonable profit while handling an increasingly expanding ‘pending actions’ list. Client-centered marketing is essentially relationship development, and the relationship is based on a complex array of technical and personal factors that create a high degree of interdependence. The client is the target and the beneficiary of all the professional's experience, planning, and actions.”

