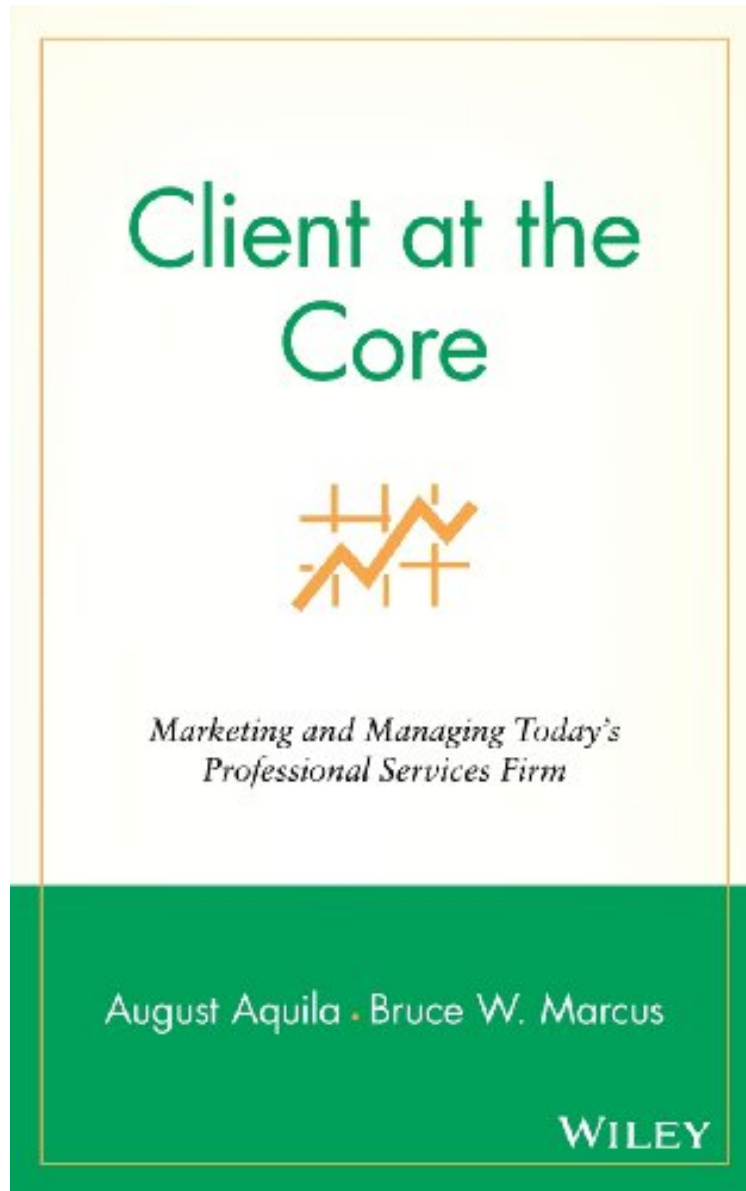


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Client at the Core: Marketing and Managing Today's Professional Services Firm

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August J. Aquila, Bruce W. Marcus : Client at the Core: Marketing and Managing Today's Professional Services Firm before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Client at the Core: Marketing and Managing Today's Professional Services Firm:

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Aquila and Marcus Deliver Practice Advice for SuccessBy Harry CPAIn "Client at the Core: Marketing and Managing Today's Professional Services Firm," (Wiley, 2004) August J. Aquila, based in Minnetonka, Minn., and Bruce W. Marcus, in Easton, Conn., a pair of veteran consultants, combine their considerable experience, skill and insight into a veritable strategic planning operator's manual for today's consulting firm. From the outset, they acknowledge "the professional world doesn't need another book on how to write a press release or write a brochure or run a seminar." Instead, they provide a new perspective on the crucial subject of how to keep firms relevant to the needs of the marketplace -- mainly, creating clients and building a marketing culture. They don't get tied up in ideas like "vision," or "mission." Instead they talk about the new realities of the 21st Century and professions in turmoil: dot-coms gone bust, a stock market meltdown, and a rash of frauds, defalcations, misuse of corporate funds; and then a reformist reaction, still unfolding, that the authors term "a helter-skelter regulatory rush that was at least as punitive as it was appropriate. It would seem that the regulatory garment was cut to fit all, when all don't wear the same size." "The time is past when just the presence of the professional was its own comfort factor. It's long been believed that the concept of the professional was so exalted, and so trusting, that people accepted advice unquestioningly. No more. The scandals of 2002 and 2003 seem to have bred a diminished - if unwarranted -- respect for professionals," they say. "Traditionally, professional services have been a seller's market," according to Aquila and Marcus. But now the tables are turned. "It is now a buyer's market." For today's professionals, here are six lessons you can take to the bank according to the authors: 1. Clients are more sophisticated. They no longer accept advice without questioning, challenging, demanding more reasoning and detail. 2. Because of the complexity of business today, clients demand that their professionals know more about the client's business and industry than ever before. 3. Professional services always function best when trust is at the heart of the relationship, but the corporate scandals of recent years have eroded that trust. That trust must now be regenerated. And the workings of trust are more important in the new economy than in the old. 4. Once the narrow structures of a profession were sufficient to serve clients. But clients now demand a broader spectrum of capabilities. The more broadly educated and well-rounded professional is the one with the greater advantage in meeting the needs of today's client. Clients demand that accountants know more than the basic skills of accounting. 5. Competition is now a fact of life. Clients know they have a choice. Clients know the difference between marketing promises and professional services delivery. Today's client demands more real service and solutions -- not just a warm personal relationship. To Aquila and Marcus, the new paradigm of professional services requires a new demand for partnership with the client and new participatory skills. As they say: It's a buyers' market. Get used to it. (...)

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Required reading for my marketing leadersBy TenaAugust Aquila and Bruce Marcus have written a clear and comprehensive view of what every accounting or law marketer needs to know about this new, unprecedented professional services environment. Their book not only explains the new environment, but it's also a rich primer of practical "how-to" advice on all the marketing tools available to the professional services marketer. Strategy is fine, but I find that few books get down to the step-by-step implementation tactics involved in winning new business like this book does - that's one of its best points of differentiation. After reading it, I bought copies for every one of my regional, industry, service line and national marketing leaders.

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Marketing 101, 201, 301 for Professional ServicesBy Bruce MacEwenThis book should burnish the authors' already high reputations for having cogent, jargon-free, and street-smart things to say about what it's really like to try to market professional services. An unusual blend of (clear and lucidly stated) theory about marketing, and real-world insights into obstacles clients can throw up--not to mention the high barrier of internal resistance that "professionals" instinctively erect when asked to be marketers--this should be your starting point if you're facing the complexities of marketing in this environment. Think that "marketing is just common sense?" Think again; it's both a discipline and an art. Aquila and Marcus will guide your hand at both.

"Clients 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." -Patrick J. McKenna, a leading international consultant to professional service firms "The authors have captured the changing role of professional services marketing and firm management. There is valuable insight [in this] down-to-earth guide to competing successfully in the new environment." -David Maister, author and consultant "The book is a masterpiece! Aquila and Marcus have produced the essential guide for managing a professional services firm. They've marshaled their considerable real-life experiences and far-reaching vision into a veritable operating manual for the successful firm." -Rick Telberg, Editor at Large, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants "At its heart, this book is the running shoe for legal and accounting professionals who want to put the client first. Following the evolution of the industry over the past twenty-five years, this must-have for every professional services firm is the key to leading in the turbulent and highly competitive waters ahead." -Richard S. Levick, Esq., President, Levick Strategic Communications, LLC coauthor, Stop the Presses: The Litigation PR Desk Reference "Client selection and retention is one of the critical success factors for a professional services firm, and

Aquila and Marcus do a masterful job at educating us on the necessary ingredients of each. The chapters on firm governance and paying for performance are 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 essential." -Ronald J. Baker, author, *Professional's Guide to Value Pricing and The Firm of the Future* "Client at the Core is a commonsense approach to keeping your professional services firm relevant in the twenty-first century's client-driven economy. Aquila and Marcus have hit a home run with their insightful analysis and poignant prose." - Jeffrey S. Pawlow, Managing Shareholder, The Growth Partnership, Inc.

From the Inside Flap In *Client at the Core*, internationally renowned practitioners of marketing and managing professional services August Aquila and Bruce Marcus delineate the new landscape of professional services marketing and describe a new path for successfully competing in today's and tomorrow's markets. Aquila and Marcus go beyond the traditional how-to methods for rethinking a firm's marketing and management process and dig into reexamining the entire professional firm and how it can better relate to and serve its market. In-depth discussions look at what works in today's environment and how to build a firm's marketing culture to help it successfully compete and grow in the future. Authoritative coverage also addresses new tools for measuring firm marketing and performance as well as new business models that adapt to the economy. In fact, the authors provide a handbook built on their extensive experience to help the new professional firm survive and thrive in an ever-changing business climate. The current business landscape has undergone vast changes in its global and domestic economic configurations as a result of advances in technology and the regulatory response to corporate and accounting scandals. At the same time, increasing competition among firms has redefined marketing as an integral part of managing a professional services firm and competing in a new and complex arena. Successful marketing is now approached as a process that requires professionals to change their traditional insular view of professional practice and learn how to make their companies function as marketing vehicles by focusing on the client. This is the era in which the client, not the professional, must be at the core of professional practice. For accountants, lawyers, consultants, and other professionals, *Client at the Core*, defines that process and provides the bridge to future competitive environments. From the Back Cover "August Aquila and Bruce Marcus 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 and thorough." Gerry Riskin, Partner, Edge International "The authors have captured the changing role of professional services marketing and firm management. There is valuable insight [in this] down-to-earth guide to competing successfully in the new environment." David Maister, author and consultant "The book is a masterpiece! Aquila and Marcus have produced the essential guide for managing a professional services firm. They've marshaled their considerable real-life experiences and far-reaching vision into a veritable operating manual for the successful firm." Rick Telberg, Editor at Large, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants "At its heart, this book is the running shoe for legal and accounting professionals who want to put the client first. Following the evolution of the industry over the past twenty-five years, this must-have for every professional services firm is the key to leading in the turbulent and highly competitive waters ahead." Richard S. Levick, Esq., President, Levick Strategic Communications, LLC coauthor, *Stop the Presses: The Litigation PR Desk Reference* "Client selection and retention is one of the critical success factors for a professional services firm, and Aquila and Marcus do a masterful job at educating us on the necessary ingredients of each. The chapters on firm governance and paying for performance are 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 essential." Ronald J. Baker, author, *Professionals Guide to Value Pricing and The Firm of the Future* "Client at the Core is a commonsense approach to keeping your professional services firm relevant in the twenty-first century's client-driven economy. Aquila and Marcus have hit a home run with their insightful analysis and poignant prose." Jeffrey S. Pawlow, Managing Shareholder, The Growth Partnership, Inc. About the Author AUGUST J. AQUILA is one of the country's leading consultants in the areas of mergers and acquisitions, succession planning, and management issues for professional services firms. He was an early pioneer and leading force in the accounting professions consolidation movement. In 2003, he was inducted into the Accounting Marketing Associations Hall of Fame. BRUCE W. MARCUS is a widely published author and consultant to some of the nation's largest corporations and professional services firms. The author of hundreds of articles and more than a dozen books on marketing and marketing-related subjects, he is the editor of the Marcus Letter on Professional Services Marketing, read internationally by more than 22,000 lawyers, accountants, consultants, and professional marketers.