

Tired of blending **in?**





Getting noticed has never been **harder**



Every day, each of us receives thousands of bits of information. The 24/7 news cycle, email, constant cell phone access and the Internet all vie for our attention. Many of these messages get ignored. Few get absorbed. Fewer still lead to any kind of action.

When you want prospective customers to understand how you are uniquely positioned to help them, you start off at a disadvantage. Most of the time, your message will just seem like background noise. Certainly it won't readily stand out from similar messages from your competition.

Professional organizations have it even tougher.

Even in this kind of environment, product companies have it relatively easy. They can devote substantial sums to new product development — and even greater amounts to advertising and promotion. Only the largest professional organizations — Big 4 accounting firms, Ivy League colleges, international law firms and world-class research hospitals — can afford to do something similar.

But even spending all that money may not yield the results a professional organization needs to stay profitable. Clients don't come to you for the flashy and new; *they come to you because of the expertise you provide*, and the comfort and confidence they derive from having you provide it.



But don't give up ...

Most professional organizations find marketing highly distasteful — or they do it grudgingly. They express objections like:

- *It won't work.*
- *It's too expensive.*
- *It's not what we are expected to do as professionals.*
- *It will breach the sense of trust our clients need to feel for us.*

Professionals at many of these same organizations wonder why their competitors seem to enjoy an endless stream of top-tier business.

The answer is simple:

Your competitors know how to use the power of marketing to stand out from the crowd.



*What do you need to stop
blending in – and get
the customers you want?*





The four essentials for **effective marketing communications**:

vision

Professionals are known for the amount of time, effort and thought they devote to preparation for their work. They do all the legwork necessary to identify the best possible outcome for their clients and then they put all the elements into place to increase the probability of achieving that outcome. Research is done, goals considered, options weighed and game plans developed.

When it comes to marketing, though, professionals are not always as purposeful. Brochures and websites are developed — often at great expense — without any clear understanding of what they will really do for the organization. Opportunities to advertise are taken up — or not — without exploring how they fit into the big picture. Articles are placed — and presentations given — wherever and whenever an invitation happens to come.

There is no coherence, no strategy and no vision. Typically this means that each individual marketing activity will have a fraction of the impact it could have — and often at a multiple of the cost. Prospects may not even register that the various activities originate from the same place. Without articulating a vision, you will keep blending in — *and you will be paying good money to do it.*

*Where would an overall vision
drive your firm's marketing efforts?*

*M*ost professional organizations are dogged when it comes to getting results for their clients. They will take just about any amount of time needed to produce the desired outcome. Typically, they follow well-established processes, even repeating activities if necessary.

Marketing efforts are all too frequently undertaken in a haphazard manner. Lacking an overall vision for their marketing efforts, professional organizations nearly always lack a defined structure for getting any kind of results at all. Any marketing effort is viewed as a one-time thing, with little follow up, no predictable schedule and no lines of accountability. Even though the organization's most precious resources — time and money — are being spent, there is no roadmap for where you are going.

Professional organizations have processes for their most critical activities for one reason: to get the desired result. Imagine a key service you provide and how it would work if you had no established protocols for delivering it. Chances are good that it wouldn't. Your marketing program needs a structure that supports your vision for it. That structure should define what you are going to do, when you are going to do it, how you are going to do it and who within your organization is going to be responsible. It doesn't have to be fancy, but it does have to be clear — *and tied to desired outcomes.*

How much more business could you bring in the door if marketing were more fully defined – and integrated?

system



personality

One of the biggest assets any professional possesses won't be found on a piece of sheepskin or list of triumphs. Indeed, it may not tangibly be found anywhere. But just because it is hard to find — and define — does not mean it has no value. In fact, it just might be the most valuable thing you have going for you.

More often than not, people hire you because they like you — and your organization. This has a lot to do with your individual — and collective — personality. While professionals draw on personality and firm culture when delivering services, they often neglect to do so when prospecting for business.

Marketing material — and marketing strategies — for professional organizations are notoriously flat, predictable and undifferentiated. Take two brochures — or two websites — from competing firms and place them side by side. In most cases, you could exchange the visuals and the names without seriously altering the message. That is unfortunate — and a lost opportunity to speak to the people who are hungry to hear you.

By leveraging your personality in marketing materials and strategies, you can begin to stand out from the crowd in surprising — *and profitable* — ways.

*Who do clients think they are getting
when they hire you?*

Every professional understands that the fundamental basis of the client/professional interaction is relationship. Unlike product companies, which thrive on one-time sales, professional organizations need to keep channels of communication open. This means continued trust, consistent communication and reliable responses. Most professionals — and their organizations — do this very well in providing client service.

Perhaps predictably, relationship seldom plays its full role in marketing the professional organization. Without the other three elements in place, there is no way for relationship to enter into the picture. If you don't know what you are trying to do, how you are trying to do it, or who you are trying to be while you are doing it, how can you possibly create a circumstance in which prospects will feel related to you?

This is unfortunate from two angles. For one thing, without a sense of relationship, prospects may not have a good reason for choosing you over the competition. For another, if more professionals understood how to leverage the concepts of relationship in their marketing efforts, they would realize that marketing is not so difficult — or really so different from what they already do well. It would make it easy to do more — and more effective — marketing.

Relationship — both established and implied — can be used to give your marketing strategy greater momentum and your marketing plan more impact. It can also help you reach new prospects more effectively and reach current clients *in remarkably fresh ways.*

*When is the right time to begin forging
a relationship with a prospective client?*

relationship



Get noticed!



You are an expert at what you do. You have probably even become a smart business person along the way. But nobody told you that you would also have to be a marketing expert.

That's where Evoke comes in. We help professional organizations develop and execute branding, marketing and communication strategies that help them stand out. We effectively combine your strengths with our own to develop creative approaches that fit your organization — and your professional sensibilities. Our clients rely on us to help them develop brands, evaluate marketing opportunities and integrate marketing into their everyday business practices.

Clients come to us from a wide range of professions. For the most part, they leverage specialized knowledge to build relationships with — and deliver outstanding results for — their own clients. Typically they include:

- Accountants
- Attorneys
- Business Strategists and Consultants
- Coaches and Counselors
- Designers
- Educators, Colleges and Universities
- Financial Service Professionals
- Health Professionals, Hospitals and Service Agencies
- Philanthropists and Nonprofits
- Professional Speakers and Corporate Trainers
- Risk Management Specialists

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If you are in one of these fields — or a similar line of work — and are having trouble getting the return you want from your marketing efforts, we just might be the right firm for you. Depending on your needs, we can serve as your outsourced marketing department, help you push a special project across the finish line or develop your essential messaging and strategies. If your organization is dull, we promise to make it interesting. If it's interesting, we can help you make it irresistible.

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