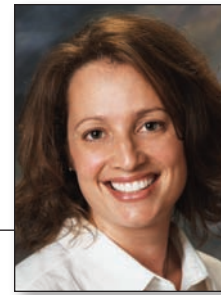


MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Spring Cleaning: When Old Becomes the ‘New’ New

By Melissa Hoff & Jeff Scalzi



She Said

It's that time of year. The flowers are out, the sun is replacing the rain, and the days are getting longer. And then it happens: That itchy feeling I get when I see papers stacked on my desk, when my file drawers are brimming with old and useless items, and my shelves are buckling from the weight of back issues of *American Lawyer* magazine. It can only mean one thing: My office is in desperate need of a spring clean.

It began innocently enough. But as the minutes turned to hours, I found myself knee-deep in articles I'd saved for future reference, samples of work I'd done at prior firms, binders of information, templates I'd saved, and books I'd notated and highlighted. Some of it no longer seems relevant in today's climate, but much of it was as good as the first time I read it—or even better.

So in honor of spring cleaning and rediscovering what was once new and exciting, I offer a list of a few items on which I stumbled that might be worth checking out.

- ▶ “Why Satisfied Customers Defect,” *Harvard Business Review* (Nov. 1995), by Thomas Jones and W. Earl Sasser—This article is more relevant than ever. Read it if you haven't already. Read it again if you have.
- ▶ *Selling the Invisible*, by Harry Beckwith—Another oldie, but goodie. A fast read about marketing a service and selling a brand.
- ▶ *Leading Leaders: How to Manage Smart, Talented, Rich and Powerful People*, by Jeswald Salacuse—A recommendation for anyone in your firm charged with “herding cats.”
- ▶ “Ties that Bind,” *American Lawyer* (Dec. 2008), by Peter Zeughauser—For firms who tout their “collegial environment,” this article crystallizes what it really means to have a strong culture.
- ▶ *The Trusted Advisor*, by David Maister—A canonical text on building trust and being more than just a service provider. Relevant for marketers, relevant for lawyers. A must read.

Like classic literature, some things get even better when you read it a second (or third) time. “The more things change, the more they stay the same” seems more applicable than ever.

So if you're inspired to do your own spring cleaning, be sure to let me know what treasures you stumble on. I'm always up for a new discovery—or a rediscovery. ■

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He Said

Darkness has once again descended on Manhattan, and I look up from my desk and out toward the skyline. There's the MetLife building. ‘Hmm, that's my new dental insurance carrier,’ I think to myself. What can I say about “Spring” in the June issue of *Strategies*? As usual, Melissa has delivered her column on-time, and I am slipping my contribution under the pressroom door at the 11th hour. Out of the corner of my eye, I spot the requisite stack of ancient *American Lawyer* magazines that I have on a shelf. Maybe I will need to refer to one of them some day. After all, the boxes that I moved from Boston containing my collection of legal trades (shout out to *InsideCounsel* and *ACC Docket!*) weren't *that* heavy—even when thrown from my running car to the office services staff in the midst of an apocalyptic rain storm one early-morning during New York City rush hour.

Then I think, what would I have done if that Schnitzel vendor (don't ask, all I know is that there is a line hundreds deep at lunch time) had reversed his truck inadvertently, and my *Corporate Counsel* magazines became legal marketing road kill? Would I have been able to do my job effectively? Would new ideas stop flowing? Would years of knowledge be lost?

Probably not ... It's amazing the things that come back to you when you are faced with change. As I shared in last month's column, my new haunt is a mixture of the last two. I now find myself adding a dash of knowledge from my high-tech days to my thinking, and even a sprinkle of learning from my short-lived (and not very glamorous) publishing career. From someone who usually can't remember if I took my Claritin on any given morning, I've realized that all of the “old” knowledge is actually still there, and it effortlessly returns when least expected to become new again.

Where am I going with all of this? Well, *Strategies* readers, you also have this knowledge within you. Don't discount how valuable your experience is, even when it seems so remotely disconnected to what you are doing today. You don't need volumes on your shelf to harness your own creative vigor and imagination. At *Strategies*, we look forward to continuing to share *your* success stories and your knowledge with our colleagues. Spring has sprung, indeed. Now, about that Claritin.... ■

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