

# February 7, 2017

## Tuesday



### Objectives & reminders

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### Appointments

Early morning

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8 a.m.

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9 a.m.

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10 a.m.

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11 a.m.

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Noon

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1 p.m.

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2 p.m.

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3 p.m.

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4 p.m.

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5 p.m.

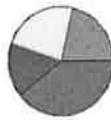
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6 p.m.

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Later evening

### Rural America & Small Town (RAST) Day



Collectively, RAST markets are simply too big for marketers to ignore. About 24 percent of Americans live in small towns or rural areas (although historically the percentages have been much greater: e.g., 94% in 1800, 85% in 1850, 60% in 1900, and 36% in 1950).

RAST Day is unofficial, but appropriate, because the evolution of rural America and small towns probably would have followed a different path had it not been for some innovators and businesspeople like John Deere.

### Happy birthday: John Deere

John Deere was born in Rutland, Vermont on February 7, 1804. The company he founded, Deere & Company, still thrives today. Mr. Deere developed the first American cast steel plow and invented or improved other farming-related implements. Such innovations contributed to the well being of farmers, and by doing so, helped to "cultivate" the broader RAST market. But Deere was more than an inventor; he was a successful businessman too. By the mid-1850s he was selling 13,000 plows annually.

On John Deere's 80th birthday, Deere's son-in-law and the company's treasurer, Stephen H. Velie, attributed much of Mr. Deere's success to his ability to focus:

"[H]e owes his success to hard work, integrity of purpose, and a natural faculty of concentrating all his powers on 'one thing at a time.' Whenever he set about doing anything it seemed to be decided in his mind that that was the right thing to do and now was the time to do it."

Today, many businesses strive to adhere to the principle of focus or concentration en route to pursuing a competitive advantage in the marketplace. They ask basic self-assessment questions such as: "What business are we in?" "What do we do best?" "What are the most profitable parts of our business?" "Which parts of our business are essential?" These questions lead them to debate which business functions can be eliminated or outsourced.