

January 1



Today's appointments & reminders...



New Year's Day is a holiday for federal workers in the U.S., so most government offices are closed, including post offices; mail is not delivered. Like most of the dozen or so days designated as federal holidays, state and local governments, banks, and many businesses follow the fed's lead and also are closed on January 1.

For marketers, the arrival of the New Year is accompanied by numerous opportunities. One is the celebratory opportunity. In fact, New Year's Day and/or New Year's Eve (evening of December 31) is the most celebrated holiday on the planet – celebrated by about three-fourths of the world's population.

Busy period for champagne marketers

Champagne sales spike during the days leading up to New Year's Day – typically accounting for about 20 percent of the year's total sales.

Another window of marketing opportunity opens at this time of year as consumers view the beginning of the year as a “temporal landmark” that seems to arouse their latent motivation to articulate and commit to personal goals or resolutions. Knowing this, marketers of diet and fitness-related products and services tend to spend a disproportionate amount of their annual advertising and promotion budget at this time of year.

Your turn

Consider the New Year's resolutions made by you, your family and your friends. Accordingly, what products and services would be potentially appealing at this time of year?

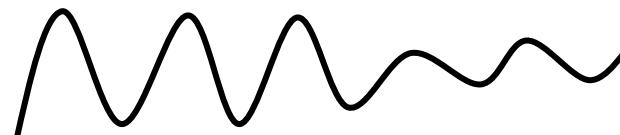
January 2



Today's appointments & reminders...

Seasonal demand

On January 2, 1956, *Time* magazine reported the regrets of Eric Johnston, the president of the Motion Picture Association of America. Due to the increasing number of drive-in movie theaters (about 7,000 at the time, in contrast to only 351 a decade earlier), Johnston concluded that movies had become a “summer business.” Because most movie theaters have returned indoors, the business is much less seasonal today, although demand remains somewhat seasonal as many school-age children flock to theaters while they are out of school for the summer.



Ironing-out unwanted peaks and valleys in demand represents a challenge for many businesses. The issue can be particularly challenging for service businesses because services, *per se*, cannot be produced and inventoried in advance of demand peaks. The would-be winter revenues that fail to materialize in an empty movie theater are lost forever.

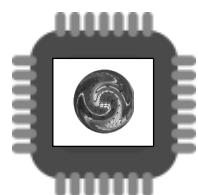
January 3



Today's appointments & reminders...

Technology drives success: Agree or disagree?

“Our product thrust has principally been driven by technology rather than the market or economics. That’s the way it’s been in this business as long as I’ve been in it. People didn’t know they wanted a microprocessor until somebody came around and said, ‘Look what this thing can do.’ And they said, ‘That’s neat. I can use one.’ Then you have to adjust to what people want after that, and keep coming up with what they want. But it starts from the technology. Really new products always do. You can’t go out and do a market survey on a product that doesn’t exist. You don’t get any useful information at all.” – Gordon Moore, co-founder of Intel (world’s largest producer of microprocessors), born in San Francisco on January 3, 1929



January 4



Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Sir Isaac Newton

Born in Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire, England on January 4, 1643, Newton was a man of many talents – a philosopher, astronomer, historian, and mathematician. He wrote numerous books throughout his life. His first book was published when he was only 21 – *Certain Philosophical Questions*. In his mid-20s, Newton began work on the development of a reflecting telescope. By the age of 36, he had formalized his theory of universal gravitation – possibly his greatest contribution to science.



Gravitation theory in marketing

Newton’s theory (or “law”) of universal gravitation proved to be so universal that it was applied to marketing beginning in the early 1930s to delineate trade areas and estimate the strength of the gravitational force exerted by one shopping district relative to that exerted by another. A number of formulas and mathematical models have been developed to measure and predict the phenomenon (for example, see Reilly’s Law of Retail Gravitation), but essentially the marketing theory suggests that the larger of two retail shopping areas is likely to attract a disproportionately high number of shoppers located approximately half-way between the two shopping areas. The larger shopping area will tend to exert a relatively greater “gravitational” pull to attract shoppers.

January 5



Today's appointments & reminders...

Anne Clarke begins January tradition

The first legal divorce in the American colonies was granted to Anne Clarke of the Massachusetts Bay Colony on January 5, 1643. It seems that her adulterous husband, Denis Clarke, had an affair with another woman. He admitted abandoning Anne and the two children he had with her.

Today, January tends to be the busiest month of the year for divorce attorneys in the United States. Apparently married people contemplating a divorce postpone the process until after Christmas, not wanting to mix the unpleasantness of divorce proceedings with the joy of the holiday season.

January 6



Today's appointments & reminders...

Success: Not solely about you

“Success has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It’s what you do for others.” – Danny Thomas, American entertainer and founder of the St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. Thomas was born in Deerfield, Michigan on January 6, 1914.

Business decision-making not always a democratic process

“You’ve got to have the courage of your convictions. If you did everything by consensus you wouldn’t do anything at all.” – Henry R. Kravis, financier who co-founded the investment banking firm of Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co., born in Tulsa, Oklahoma on January 6, 1944

January 7



Today's appointments & reminders...

An alternative price appeal

Product features have always meant different things to different buyers. While some buyers are attracted to a product because of a particular color, size, presence of a handle, or some other feature, others buyers may regard the same feature as inconsequential. That’s why

there is an infinite number of product feature combinations in most product categories.

The same can be said about *price features*, especially prices for consumer durables or big ticket items, such as automobiles. Some buyers consider the total price to be the most important pricing consideration, while others focus on the required down payment amount, the size of the monthly payments, finance charges, or the quoted trade-in value of their existing vehicle. More sophisticated buyers may factor in operating costs, depreciation, insurance and property taxes, repair and maintenance expenses, and so on.

A bright future ahead!

It varies with the ups and downs of the economy, but generally consumers tend to believe that their financial situation will be better one or two years in the future than it is currently. So, businesses that shift price from the present into the future (i.e., delaying buyers’ payments) often increase the appeal of a purchase and create a marketing advantage. Extended financing arrangements, accepting credit cards instead of “cash only,” low down payments, leasing options and rebates accomplish this.

In other words, it’s not always the bottom line sticker price, *per se*, that’s most important to automobile buyers. Realizing this, Chrysler launched a rebate program on January 7, 1975, to attract new car buyers who were sensitive to the up-front money needed for a down payment. In effect, the rebates offset a portion of the down payment, making the down payment requirements more palatable for more prospective buyers. The rebate program was successful and other automakers soon followed with rebate programs of their own. Today, automakers frequently rely on rebate programs to stimulate sales.

Rebate defined

A “rebate” is a sales promotion technique in which a portion of the purchase price is refunded to the buyer *after* purchase. By promising the rebate, the seller (usually the manufacturer) provides prospective buyers with an incentive to purchase.

Did you know this about rebates?

Although rebate offers do stimulate sales for low-priced consumer packaged goods such as items typically found in a grocery store, only about one of every six or seven consumers actually claims the rebate (more say they “intend” to). So, rebate offers often represent a much smaller cost to the manufacturer than their face values suggest – a good deal for manufacturers.

January 8 *Today's appointments & reminders...*

Buyers notice design before other attributes

“Great design will not sell an inferior product, but it will enable a great product to achieve its maximum potential.” – Thomas J. Watson, Jr., former chairman and CEO of IBM (1956-1971), born in Dayton, Ohio on January 8 or 14 (sources disagree), 1914

**Good day to raise your hand?**

“[I]f you’re in a meeting, any meeting, for 15 minutes, and we’re not talking about customers or competitors, raise your hand and ask why.” – Jerre L. Stead, born in Maquoketa, Iowa on January 8, 1943. Over the years, Stead served as chairman and/or CEO for several companies including NCR, Legent Corporation, and AT&T Global Information Solutions.

January 9 *Today's appointments & reminders...*

11,000 welcomed back

The Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA), the major stock index of large U.S. firms, climbed over the 11,000-mark on January 9, 2006, closing at 11,011.90. Prior to that day, the DJIA had not seen 11,000 in about four and one-half years. As the stock market climbs, investors tend to feel wealthier and more optimistic about the future – both positive predictors of consumer spending.

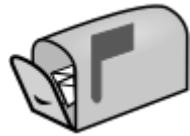
January 10 *Today's appointments & reminders...*

Overcoming inseparability

Whereas a manufacturer can ship goods from the plant to the customer, many service businesses cannot ship their services so easily. Often the customer and the service provider must be physically present in order for the service to take place. For example, haircuts require that the barber and the customer meet together in the same room, and full service dining requires that servers and diners converge in the same dining facility. Scholars refer to this service characteristic as *inseparability*.

There are many business implications of inseparability, but one is the challenge it presents for growth.

Ordinarily, prospective customers are not willing to travel great distances to service providers' facilities, yet the cost for service providers to travel to customers' locations can be prohibitive. So, the trade area for many services is limited, which is one reason why service businesses are often small businesses.



It follows that overcoming the inseparability challenge with new business models can open the door for service marketers to attract new customers. That's what happened early in 1840 when Isaac Pitman of Bath, England, realized the limitations of traditional schools to teach people his new shorthand system, i.e., teachers and students are inseparable in traditional schools. Thinking outside of the school box, so to speak, he ran an advertisement on January 10, 1840, offering the first known correspondence course:

"Any Person may receive lessons from the Author by post at one shilling each to be paid in advance, and enclosed in a paid letter."

That ad, coupled with follow-up ads over the next three years, produced so many students that Pitman formed a panel of teachers to assist him. It is unlikely that he would have attracted as many students if they had been required to attend traditional classes.

An alternative approach

Exactly 23 years after Pitman's advertisement – on January 10, 1863 – Katharine Ryan (later Katharine Gibbs) was born in Galena, Illinois. After teaming with her sister to buy a secretarial school in Providence, Rhode Island in 1912 and developing her own method of shorthand in 1915, she addressed the inseparability issue in another way. She began opening branch campuses of Gibbs College to be more accessible to more students – first in Boston, then in New York City, Montclair, New Jersey and, at its peak, in 21 other locations in 13 states and two Canadian provinces. Unfortunately, inseparability wasn't the only challenge Gibbs College faced, so the school closed its doors after educating students for 96 years.

January 11



Today's appointments & reminders...

Driving becomes less seasonal

Largely due to nature's constraints, the first few decades of the automobile were dominated by seasonal driving behavior. Not only were road conditions poor during the winter, but most cars had open cabs (some were convertibles) – open to the cold winter weather.



However, car designs began to change on January 11, 1913, when the first closed sedan was introduced by the Hudson Motor Car Company. Although closed cars were not widely embraced for the decade that followed, by 1927 closed vehicles represented the overwhelming majority (85%) of new car sales in the United States.

Not surprisingly, closed-body vehicles encouraged more year-round motoring. Headlights became standard equipment to facilitate night-time driving. Windshield wipers, heating, air conditioning, snow tires, de-icers, antifreeze, and other innovations followed in response to what had been calendrical constraints imposed by nature. Further, calendar-inspired infrastructure innovations such as improved roads, lane reflectors, street lights, illuminated traffic control signals, and 24/7 service stations accompanied the automobile's innovation evolution.

Your turn

What innovations in other industries or product categories have helped to make the timing of consumption less constrained by nature's daily and annual calendar cycles? (Hint: See the story for February 2)

January 12



Today's appointments & reminders...

January 13



Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Jeffrey Preston Bezos

Born in Albuquerque, New Mexico on January 12, 1964, Jeff Bezos launched a successful career with several Wall Street firms after graduating from college.

In 1994, while doing some market research, Bezos learned that Internet usage was growing at a rapid rate of 2400 percent annually. Almost immediately he recognized the opportunity to sell stuff online. Because of the enormous number of books published annually and the reality that even the biggest bricks and mortar bookstores could stock only a fraction of them, Bezos decided to focus on selling books when he launched Amazon.com in 1996. Within days, sales were generated from throughout the United States. Today, Amazon.com is the leading online shopping website in the U.S.

Bezos on customer obsession

According to Bezos, Amazon's vision is to be the world's most customer-centric company. He seems to imply that a 5th "p" be added to the marketing mix:

"We see our customers as invited guests to a *party*, and we are the hosts. It's our job every day to make every important aspect of the customer experience a little bit better. If you do build a great experience, customers tell each other about that. Word-of-mouth is very powerful."



Happy birthday: Alfred C. Fuller

Fuller was born in Nova Scotia, Canada on January 13, 1885. Later he moved to the northeastern U.S. After being fired from his first three jobs and having his business suggestions ignored by one boss, Fuller took a \$375-investment and started his own business at the age of 21 – the Fuller Brush Company, of Hartford, Connecticut.

Fuller's business proved to be a simple, yet effective business concept – selling brushes door-to-door. He learned that door-to-door selling provided the opportunity for salespeople to personally demonstrate their products, rather than simply talking about them. By 1919, company sales had topped \$1 million annually. By 1960, annual sales had grown to \$109 million.

Motivating salespeople

Fuller Brush sales reps received no salary from the company. Their compensation was based strictly on commissions. By not committing to salaries, the company was able to grow at a faster rate and with less risk. Further, Mr. Fuller believed that salary-based compensation did not provide adequate motivation for sales reps who worked independently and generally without any direct supervision. According to Fuller, "The only way I learned how to earn money was by giving a definite measure of production for it. There was no loafing on the job, no fringe benefits that encouraged idleness."

Effective publicity idea for Fuller Brush?

Disney retold the famous story of "The Three Little Pigs." In the revised version, the big bad wolf was disguised as a Fuller Brush salesman.



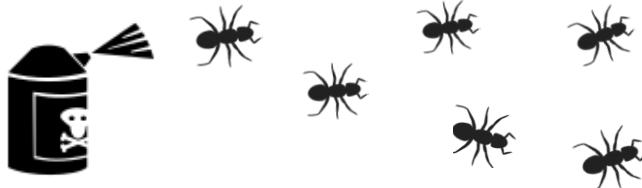
January 14



Today's appointments & reminders...

Dr. Seuss' first career

Long before 400+ million copies of *The Cat in the Hat*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, and other Dr. Seuss' children's books were sold, Seuss enjoyed a career in advertising. On January 14, 1928, Seuss (then known by his full name, Theodor Seuss Geisel) got his first big break after drawing a cartoon for *Judge* magazine in which a cartoon knight made a reference to Flit brand insecticide.



When the cartoon was brought to the attention of the advertising executive handling the Flit account, Seuss was recruited to write ads for Flit. Seuss agreed and went on to develop the first major ad campaign based on humorous cartoons. The Flit cartoon campaign proved to be so successful that Seuss followed-up with other cartoon campaigns to pitch Sears stores, VISA credit cards, York Peppermint Patties, Kellogg's Frosted Mini-Wheats, Nabisco's Ritz crackers, and other companies/brands.

January 15



Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Martin Luther King, Jr.

Born in Atlanta, Georgia on January 15, 1929, Reverend and Dr. King was a prominent civil rights leader who advocated nonviolent protests to achieve equal rights. Tragically, he was assassinated in 1968. In 1986, his birthday was recognized as a federal holiday in the United States, now celebrated annually on the third Monday in January.

Leadership insight

"A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus."
– Martin Luther King, Jr.

January 16



Today's appointments & reminders...

Creative clash

"Creativity represents a miraculous coming together of the uninhibited energy of the child with its apparent opposite and enemy, the sense of order imposed on the disciplined adult intelligence." – Norman Podhoretz, writer and editor (*New York Post*), born in New York City on January 16, 1930

January 17



Today's appointments & reminders...

Consumer zipping behavior condoned

January 17, 1984, was a discouraging day for television advertisers in the U.S. That's the day the Supreme Court ruled that home videotaping of television for personal use was not a violation of copyright laws. The five to four ruling paved the way for consumers to guiltlessly videotape television programs for later viewing, then fast forward or "zip" through commercials they wished to avoid. Within three years, 50 percent of U.S. households owned video cassette recorders (VCRs).

January 18



Today's appointments & reminders...



Happy birthday: Alan Alexander Milne

Born in London on January 18, 1882, A.A. Milne was a British writer and dramatist perhaps best known for his children's books – especially those inspired by his son Christopher and his son's toys, such as *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) and *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928).

As popular as Milne's original Pooh books were, their popularity increased further when Disney acquired the rights to parlay Winnie, Christopher Robin, Tigger, Piglet, Eeyore and the other Pooh-book characters into movies, cartoons, toys and assorted merchandise.

Milne's Pooh-work also inspired Roger E. Allen to consider how modern-day businesspeople might benefit from Winnie-the-Pooh's perspective. Allen's best-selling book, *Winnie-the-Pooh on Management*, includes valuable Pooh-like prescriptions for managerial success in the Hundred Acre Wood.

The Heffalump trap of distractions

"If the manager isn't getting the right things done, then he must be getting the wrong things done, and if he gets the wrong things done, then the manager won't be making progress toward achieving his objectives. That seems simple, I think." – Winnie-the-Pooh, in *Winnie-the-Pooh on Management*, p. 136

January 19



Today's appointments & reminders...

By George, that's a bright idea

George Claude of Paris, France received a U.S. patent on January 19, 1915, for a "System of Illuminating by Luminescent Tubes." His "system" became what we now refer to as neon lights, popularly used in advertising and other signs. The color, brightness, and versatility of neon signs is appealing to both advertisers and consumers.

January 20



Today's appointments & reminders...

Burns' happy birthday "99" promotion

Popular American comedian George Burns was born in New York City as Nathan Birnbaum on January 20, 1896. He proved his versatility and his adaptability with a career that spanned not only multiple generations of admiring audiences, but also multiple media ranging from vaudeville to movies, radio and television. On Burns' 99th birthday, the California-based 99 Cents Only Stores associated the chain with Burns by running full-page newspaper ads to congratulate Burns on his birthday milestone.

Consider how other businesses might have associated themselves with the comedian and how they might have done so tastefully. Use the following quotes attributed to George Burns to spark your creativity:

1. "At my age flowers scare me."
2. "Bridge is a game that separates the men from the boys. It also separates husbands and wives."
3. "Be quick to learn and wise to know."
4. "Age to me means nothing. I can't get old; I'm working... As long as you're working, you stay young."
5. "I smoke 10 to 15 cigars a day. At my age I have to hold on to something."

January 21



Today's appointments & reminders...

Marketing the West

John C. Frémont was born on the southeastern coast – in Savannah, Georgia on January 21, 1813. But he gained his reputation as an explorer and adventurer in what would become the western United States. In the 1830s and 1840s, Frémont led several expeditions to survey, map and note the western frontier.

Thanks largely to his wife's skills as a ghost writer, Frémont's initial *Report of the Exploring Expedition*

portrayed the West in an interesting and appealing way and served as a travel guide for westward-bound settlers. The *Report* was published and so widely read that Frémont and his wife found themselves writing more than two dozen editions over a 15-year period. Tens of thousands of copies were sold, which made it a best-seller in those days. In effect, the *Report* served as a marketing tool as it influenced thousands of prospective settlers to move west. Later, as the territory's first military governor, Frémont continued to market California, in particular.

Salmon for supper!

"[A]ll was going... well. A party of Indians had passed on snow shoes, who said they were going to the western side of the mountain after fish. That was an indication that the salmon were coming up the streams; and we could hardly restrain our impatience as we thought of them, and worked with increased vigor." – John C. Frémont, with Jesse Frémont

January 22



Today's appointments & reminders...

For sleeping, not drinking

It was January 1774 when one of the first hotels opened for business – Low's Grand Hotel, in London. The hotel, named after proprietor David Low, was a redesigned and remodeled house. Prior to the hotel concept, travelers often stayed at inns and taverns, but "refreshment" was the primary focus of these businesses, not the renting of rooms.

Bridges are too heavy to move?

One hundred and eighty three years after David Low started the hotel concept, an American family, the

Marriotts, opened their first hotel – “Twin Bridges” – in Arlington, Virginia, in January 1957.

During the early days of the company, founder William Marriott, Sr. had an interesting criterion for choosing sites for hotels: Build next to highway bridges. His rationale was straightforward: Over the years, highways could be rerouted to bypass the hotel, but bridges were not as likely to be moved. So, if the hotels were next to bridges, neither the highway nor motorists could easily bypass the hotel.

January 23



Today's appointments & reminders...

Simple marketing

“This may seem simple, but you need to give customers what they want, not what you think they want. And, if you do this, people will keep coming back.” – John Ilhan, Turkish-born Australian entrepreneur who founded Crazy John’s mobile telephone retail chain, born in Yozgat, Turkey on January 23, 1965

January 24



Today's appointments & reminders...

Net marketing speed

“A company’s time to market is quicker on the Net. Products a company can bring online today, it tries out

today; if customers don’t show an interest, the company just calls it market research and tries out another one.” – Jim Barksdale, former executive of IBM, McCaw Cellular Communications and AT&T, then president and CEO of Netscape. Barksdale was born in Jackson, Mississippi on January 24, 1943.

January 25



Today's appointments & reminders...

Repetition is key: Agree or disagree?

“The explanation of intuition is the same as that of advertisement: tell a man ten thousand times that Pears Soap is good for the complexion and eventually he will have an intuitive certainty of the fact.” – W. Somerset Maugham, British novelist and playwright, born in Paris, France on January 25, 1874

January 26



Today's appointments & reminders...

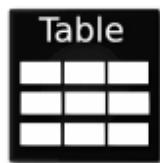
International sensibilities

It is not unusual for global businesses to inadvertently offend people from cultures with which they are unfamiliar. That’s what happened in the mid-1990s when a Karl Lagerfeld dress designed for Chanel was modeled at a fashion show. The sexy black dress was embroidered with Arabic words that Lagerfeld believed to be from a love poem. Instead, the words were from the Muslim holy book, the *Koran*. On

January 26, 1994, the dress was deleted from the season's line. Lagerfeld apologized. The dress and all pictures of it were destroyed.

Fatal flaw of market research: Agree or disagree?

"There is no need for market research. The public does not know what is possible. We do." – Akio Morita, Japanese industrialist and co-founder of the company that became Sony Corporation, born in Nagoya, Japan on January 26, 1921



January 27



Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Henry Parsons Crowell

Born in Cleveland, Ohio on January 27, 1855, Crowell bought a small grain mill while in his mid-20s – the Quaker Mill. To make the mill profitable, he and his business partner – Henry Seymour – took steps to differentiate their oats in a product category that had been considered a commodity. Previously, retailers might have used several suppliers to fill their oat barrels from which unbranded oats would be scooped.

Crowell and Seymour ensured quality, and then began branding their processed "Quaker" oats for individual sale by packaging them in clean and attractive boxes. The picture of the familiar Quaker character on the boxes reinforced an image of quality and honesty (Quaker merchants of the day enjoyed a good reputation). The company's co-founders then used

advertising to explain how their oats differed from those of competitors.

By 1908, the Quaker Oats brand was one of the most widely recognized and highly regarded brands in the world. Today, oats continue to play an integral role in the company's product portfolio that generates annual sales in excess of \$800 million.

January 28



Today's appointments & reminders...

American Graffiti

The first screening of George Lucas's film, *American Graffiti*, was held on January 28, 1973. Among other interwoven themes, the movie took a nostalgic look at the 1950s. After watching the movie, the head of the studio, Ned Tanen, expressed his dissatisfaction and dubbed the movie as a disaster. Tanen was proven wrong when the film became a box office hit.

In hindsight, the nostalgic theme was one reason for *American Graffiti*'s success. The movie fondly reminded middle-aged viewers of "the good ol' days." Today, because manufacturers know that consumers often long for the good ol' days, they tap into those feelings of nostalgia by reintroducing old brands, old packaging, or former (old?) spokespeople. Marketers for retail stores and service businesses also play on the nostalgic theme with "retro" look displays or decorations, "oldies" background music, and some history-based theme promotions.

Did you know?

Anyone can be hit with feelings of nostalgia (a longing for "the good ol' days"), but such sentiments tend to be more prevalent as consumers grow older.

January 29



Today's appointments & reminders...

A Good Hard Kick in the ___: Basic Training for Entrepreneurs

Fill in the blank and that's the name of Rob Adams' book, published on January 29, 2002. The book addresses a number of topics for budding entrepreneurs, including several that are particularly marketing-relevant. For example, Adams argues that most entrepreneurs don't know their customers as well as they think they do. He recommends taking the time to understand and "validate" the market *before* producing the first product. Stresses Adams, "If you forgo market validation, though, you'll be adopting the 'ready, fire, aim' approach to building a business. And you'll pay – the hard way" (p. 47).

Marketing kick

"What is marketing's key role? To extend and perpetuate one of your all-important tasks: validating the market... [T]o be effective, you have to stay close to your customers over time. And that is marketing's central function – to ensure this happens" (p. 184). – Rob Adams

January 30



Today's appointments & reminders...

Goodbye Great Depression

There was little good news associated with the Great Depression of the 1930s – one of the most troubling economic eras in U.S. history. But on January 30, 1940, the Associated Press reported that profits of U.S. firms during 1939 had increased 67 percent over 1938 levels. It wasn't official, but that news was a strong signal that the Great Depression was finally nearing its end.

Unfortunately, for many consumers who suffered through the Great Depression, the economic worries and memories associated with it would never end. That's why many older Americans *today*...

1. Are hesitant to invest in the stock market (i.e., the 1929 stock market crash led to the Depression),
2. Avoid credit (i.e., the inability of consumers to repay their debts during the Depression caused many to lose their homes), and...
3. Are frugal in their spending habits (i.e., for fear that tough economic times may return).

January 31



Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Samuel Loyd

Born in Philadelphia on January 31, 1841, Samuel Loyd first studied engineering but soon earned a living as a puzzle-maker. He devised various chess problems, puzzles and other games, including Parcheesi.

Loyd's most famous puzzle was the 15 Puzzle (1878), which consists of 15 numbered tiles arranged in a four by four tray that can be rearranged by sliding an individual tile into the vacant space to create a new vacant space into which another tile can be moved, and so on. The 15 Puzzle was so popular that many companies posted notices in the workplace prohibiting employees from playing with the puzzle while on duty.

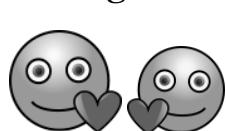


Today, businesses use the same puzzle concept as a promotional give-away item. Rather than numbers, however, a company's logo, slogan or other message may be printed on the tiles. When the puzzle is solved (i.e., the tiles are arranged properly) the message can be read. Because the puzzle player is likely to spend several minutes engaged in the puzzle-solving process, the puzzle's message is likely to make a stronger impression than a more casually viewed traditional advertising message.

February 1

Today's appointments & reminders...

Congratulations and best wishes



February 1 is the beginning of National Weddings Month. No, February is not the most popular month for weddings, but it is a peak

period for *engagements*. More specifically, couples are more likely to get engaged between Christmas and Valentine's Day than during any other time of the year. So, February is the month that brides are most likely to begin serious planning for weddings later in the year.

With the average wedding in the U.S. now costing more than \$35,000 (an average of \$245 per guest), marketers in wedding-related industries (e.g., dress boutiques, caterers, florists, travel planners, jewelers, and so on) don't want to be caught napping during this key decision period.

February 2

Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy Groundhog Day!



Canned Food Month

February is Canned Food Month with roots dating back to 1795. On February 2 of that year, the French military commander Napoleon staged a contest – with 12,000 francs to be awarded to anyone who could develop a workable method of food preservation to enable Napoleon's armies to carry sufficient quantities of food with them on military campaigns. A chef named Nicholas Appert won when he learned how to heat food in airtight glass jars – a process similar to that used by home canners today.

In 1851, 56 years after Appert's breakthrough, American inventor Gail Borden, Jr., learned how to can evaporated milk so that westward-bound settlers in the U.S. would not have to worry about spoilage. Borden founded the food processing giant in 1857 that continues to bear his name today.

In terms of packaging, display and logistics, cans offer several advantages over fresh and frozen foods: longer shelf life (less damage/spoilage, less seasonal fluctuations in sales), limited damage from handling, generally efficient and economical use of shelf space, and ease of display (cans are stackable), storage, transport and inventory-taking.



February 3



Today's appointments & reminders...

Geographic growth opportunities

Where consumers go, business opportunities follow. That's why growing businesses pay attention to population growth trends in prospective markets. Often it is much more lucrative for businesses to grow into new geographic markets than to appeal to "new" market segments within their existing geographic markets.

In the mid-1800s, American writer Horace Greeley seemed to recognize this phenomenon when he offered his famous advice: "Go west, young man." Greeley, born in Amherst, New Hampshire on February 3, 1811, understood that in the historical development of the United States, consumers tended to migrate westward as new territories were opened to settlement. Still today, decades after the geographic growth of the U.S. has ceased, the population of most western states is growing at a faster rate than the U.S. average.

Get + Keep = Have

Texas A&M marketing professor Len Berry once pointed out that the key business imperative is to *have* customers. To *have* customers implies a straightforward two-step process; first *get* them, then *keep* them. In rapidly growing markets, efforts to *get* customers are likely to pay off if they are followed by practices to *keep* customers. For markets growing more slowly, a greater premium is placed on business strategies to *keep* existing customers.

February 4



Today's appointments & reminders...

Who's "first in the hearts of his countrymen"?

Not surprisingly, the outcomes of some U.S. presidential elections are closer and more controversial than others. For example, Al Gore "won" the popular vote in the 2000 election and challenged some questionable voting and vote-counting processes in the courts. But George W. Bush prevailed and was inaugurated as President early in 2001.



In contrast, another George W. achieved the strongest consensus in *any* presidential campaign – George Washington. After a successful record as commander-in-chief of the American forces in the Revolutionary War, on February 4, 1789, Washington was unanimously chosen as the first President of the United States by all 69 presidential electors who voted. Apparently, the choice surprised no one. After a successful first term, he was unanimously reelected for a second term, but refused a third term. When Washington died in 1799, his friend, Henry Lee, described Washington in a famous eulogy: "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

For marketers interested in promotions or other special events to honor former Presidents (e.g., associating with themes of patriotism, democracy, perseverance and leadership), Washington is an easy and non-controversial choice – especially for businesses located in the state of Washington, in one of the dozens of cities, towns, and counties in the U.S. named after George Washington, or along one of the hundreds of streets named after him.

George Washington:
Father of career advice

1. “We ought not to look back unless it is to derive useful lessons from past errors, and for the purpose of profiting by dearly bought experience.”
2. “Speak not injurious words, neither in jest nor earnest; scoff at none although they give occasion.”
3. “Undertake not what you cannot perform, but be careful to keep your promise.”
4. “Reason, too late perhaps, may convince you of the folly of misspending time.”
5. “Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company.”

February 5 

Today's appointments & reminders...

Something special

The Special Olympics promotes sports training and organizes athletic competitions for people with disabilities who are at least eight years old. On February 5, 1977, the first International Winter Special Olympics Games began.

Today, there are Special Olympic chapters in 172 countries. Worldwide, more than 5.7 million athletes compete in 81,000+ events throughout the year, with the International Special Olympics Games staged every two years. Much like other sporting events, there are numerous ways businesses can sponsor or

otherwise affiliate with the Special Olympics. Contact your local Special Olympics International chapter to learn how.

February 6 

Today's appointments & reminders...

**Advertising doesn't inflate prices:
Agree or disagree?**

“Modern advertising in periodicals, on billboards, cards, etc., is another means of bringing goods of all kinds to the consumer's attention. The cost of advertising must be included in the general costs of distribution of an article, and do not add any more to the price of an article than any other means of display, such as store window exhibits, circular letters, and the older forms of traveling salesmen.” – Christine Frederick, home economist and consumer advocate, born in Boston on February 6, 1883. Frederick made these observations in her 1919 book, *Household Engineering: Scientific Management in the Home* (p. 357).

February 7 

Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Sinclair Lewis

Not particularly a fan of rural America, nor consumer decision-making and marketing, writer Sinclair Lewis was born in Sauk Centre, Minnesota on February 7, 1885.

Many of Lewis' writings reflected a critical point of view. For example, small-town values were "mocked and pitied" in his 1920 book, *Main Street*. In 1922, he coined the term "babbittry" to refer to consumers' mindless conformity to middle-class values which he believed to be dominated largely by materialism.

While many people may reject his negative views of middle-class consumers and the RAST (Rural America & Small Towns) market, some of Lewis' marketing-related observations are thought-provoking nonetheless.

Fair observations: Agree or disagree?

1. "People will buy anything that is 'one to a customer.'" – Sinclair Lewis
2. "Advertising is a valuable economic factor because it is the cheapest way of selling goods, particularly if the goods are worthless." – Sinclair Lewis

February 8

Today's appointments & reminders...

A sign of market and media fragmentation

After decades as one of America's most popular magazines, the last issue of the *Saturday Evening Post* was published on February 8, 1969. Like other magazines of the era such as *Look* and *Life* (that soon ceased publication too), the *Saturday Evening Post* appealed to a broad-based "mass" audience. But the days of mass-marketing were numbered as advertisers became increasingly interested in reaching more specific target markets. Hundreds of specialty magazines emerged to cater to niche audiences, which were soon followed by dozens (now hundreds) of niche-minded, cable-television operators.

February 9

Today's appointments & reminders...

Portable crisis management?

Crises come in assorted sizes and represent varying degrees of threat. Crises are not restricted solely to businesses; consumers face crises too – like consumers who travel with small children with "bathroom needs" that can be frequent and difficult to predict. With six



young children, Julia Carter was sensitive to such potential family crises, so she invented a portable nursery chair that had a removable storage pan that could hold waste until motorists found a more convenient time and place to dispose of it. Mrs. Carter applied for a patent for her portable nursery chair, which she received on February 9, 1960.

The nursery chair innovation shows that consumer "crises" – even relatively small ones – can represent opportunities for businesses that are able to identify and solve them. Consumers, like businesses, would prefer to avoid crises whenever possible. But, when crises are unavoidable, minimizing their negative impact is the goal.

February 10

Today's appointments & reminders...

Success is all about branding: Agree or disagree?

“Our success is a direct result of knowing how to market a brand and having the right people representing the brand.” – Greg Norman, Australian professional golfer, entrepreneur and spokesman for a variety of brands, born in Mount Isa, Australia on February 10, 1955

February 11

Today's appointments & reminders...

Market-oriented new product development philosophy

“I never perfected an invention that I did not think about in terms of the service it might give others... I find out what the world needs, then I proceed to invent...” – Thomas Alva Edison, American entrepreneur and inventor (1,093 patents), born in Milan, Ohio on February 11, 1847

February 12

Today's appointments & reminders...

Survival of the fittest

On February 12, 1809, Charles Darwin was born in Shrewsbury, United Kingdom. His well-known theory of natural selection has been of interest not only to biologists, but to businesspeople as well. For example,

the German industrialist Hugo Stinnes (also born on February 12, in 1870) believed that it was in the best interest of society that industries be consolidated in the hands of a limited number of large businesses. To use Darwinian verbiage, Stinnes' extremist view held that small businesses were “unfit.” “It is foolish,” according to Stinnes, “to want to save small businesses; they know neither how to live nor how to die. To speak frankly, it is necessary that they perish.”

More recently, marketing scholar Robert Hartley commented on the evolutionary nature of today's marketplace in which successful – surviving – firms are often those that are best able to build market share by lowering their costs. That is, a firm's cost structure has a lot to do with survival in a hyper-competitive marketplace. Although it is doubtful that Hartley would agree with Stinnes' extreme anti-small-business perspective, it is true that large businesses often enjoy *some* cost advantages over smaller competitors, such as those achieved through economies of scale and through negotiation power with suppliers.

Survival of the fittest in business makes for more fit customers

“The power of lower costs can make for a survival-of-the-fittest environment that results in greater efficiency and price benefits to customers.” – Robert Hartley, *Marketing Mistakes and Successes* (2009, p. 100).

February 13

Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Percy Nils Barnevik

Born in Simrishamn, Sweden on February 13, 1941, Barnevik served as the CEO, chairman or high-level executive for several firms, including AstraZeneca. Understanding the importance of building

relationships with customers, he offers this prerequisite:

"To be a truly customer-driven organization, you must first achieve operational excellence. It doesn't help to love your customer – he won't love you if you don't perform... Then you build customer relations and eventually create partnerships with your key customers."

February 14

Today's appointments & reminders...

Dating statistics for Valentine's Day

The findings of a survey of singles' dating preferences were released in time for Valentine's Day 2017. For example:



80 percent said they are open to the possibility of a kiss on the first date.



67 percent reported a preference for dating someone who's employed in a different industry.



56 percent expressed a preference to avoid work-related discussions while on a date.

Weather can cause havoc for businesses and customers

The potentially enormous relevance of this intuitively obvious principle was reinforced on February 14, 2007, when a major ice storm crippled JetBlue Airways. The inclement weather forced the airline to cancel about 1,100 flights over a six-day period.

While JetBlue tried to cope with the ice, many passengers were left stranded in planes sitting on the tarmac for more than nine hours. With planes out of place, not enough support personnel, and overwhelmed reservation agents unable to respond

satisfactorily to passengers' travel needs, JetBlue's difficulty in managing the crisis created a public relations nightmare and jeopardized the goodwill JetBlue had spent years to build. While JetBlue blamed the weather, many disgruntled passengers pointed fingers directly at JetBlue.

February 15

Today's appointments & reminders...

19th century birthdays

February 15 is a popular birth date among noteworthy innovators. Here are a few examples of 19th century marketing innovators born on February 15:

1809	Cyrus H. McCormick, inventor of reapers and other farm-related equipment. McCormick was also a marketer ahead of his time; he listened to customers, insisted that his farm equipment dealers provide excellent service, and designed products around users' needs (e.g., he was first to add seats to equipment to reduce farmers' fatigue).
1812	Charles Tiffany, founder of Tiffany & Company (jewelry). Tiffany created the first retail catalog in the United States.
1871	Johan W. Nordstrom, co-founder of a shoe store in Seattle, Washington in 1901, Wallin & Nordstrom. After the partnership dissolved, the name of the store was changed in 1930 to Nordstrom. Today, the Nordstrom chain of department stores has a reputation for legendary customer service and significantly above-average sales per square foot.
1885	Hans Henning, psychologist and researcher who identified four primary tastes and six primary scents. Today, business researchers study scents and tastes and the important roles they play in influencing buyer behavior.

February 16



Today's appointments & reminders...

Big week in magazine history

Consumers witnessed the birth of a new media trend this week in 1741 – magazines. Andrew Bradford launched his *American Magazine* on February 13 of that year, followed three days later by Benjamin Franklin's *General Magazine and Historical Chronicle* on February 16.

Since 1741, the growth of magazine publications in the United States and elsewhere has been phenomenal – attributed to several interrelated factors, such as: (1) increased literacy and education levels, accompanied by a thirst for information that magazines can satisfy, (2) increased competition in almost every product and retail category, prompting businesses to support magazines and other advertising vehicles, and (3) increased fragmentation of the marketplace caused by businesses in a highly competitive marketplace seeking to target well-defined market segments that most magazines deliver to advertisers.



Today, several thousand magazines are published annually in the United States (estimates vary, depending on how "magazine" is defined). An

estimated 222 million Americans spend an average of 15 minutes daily reading magazines, including almost one third on mobile platforms.

Although the readership of most magazines is only a few thousand (or less), for many audiences such as consumers with an interest in a particular hobby, or business professionals in a particular industry, magazines are often a cost-efficient and effective means for advertisers to reach prospective buyers. In contrast, other media sometimes reach larger audiences, but because they are less targeted, much of the exposure is wasted on a portion of the audiences that are not part of the target market.

Still, there are a number of U.S. magazines with very large circulations, including *ESPN The Magazine* (91 million), *People* (81 million) and *Forbes* (68 million).

Advertising as a conflict of interest:

Agree or disagree?

Obviously, advertising is an important part of the business model for most U.S. magazines – collectively generating \$9.4 billion in annual ad revenues.

However, a few magazines refuse to print ads. They cite possible conflicts of interest between ads and editorial freedom, or the possible *perception* of such conflicts of interest. *Consumer Reports* is one example of a magazine that avoids advertising; instead choosing to rely on subscribers for its revenue.

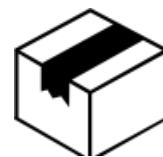
February 17



Today's appointments & reminders...

Packaging as a fifth "P":

Agree or disagree?



"In the past, a package was a mere physical container and a measuring device. In the present market, the package is the image of the product. It is the symbol of the product. It is a communicator and motivator. Present-day consumers buy packages without knowing it... We very often judge a book by its cover, a person by his attire, a product by its package." – Louis Cheskin, innovative American marketing thinker and consultant who founded the firm that became known as "Cheskin," born in the Russian Empire on February 17, 1907

February 18

Today's appointments & reminders...

Marketing success is about more than making money: Agree or disagree?

“Worthiness in [industry] can have reference to one thing only, namely the contribution of industry to the sum total of human welfare... [N]o efficiency of procedure will save from ultimate extinction those organizations that pursue a false objective...” – James D. Mooney, engineer and member of the executive team in the early days of General Motors, born in Cleveland, Ohio on February 18, 1884.

February 19

Today's appointments & reminders...

Cracker Jack: Added value

Cracker Jack is one of the oldest snack food brands still in existence. The candy-coated popcorn/peanut mix was first produced in 1896. Three years later its name was born when a salesman sampled the mix, liked the taste, and exclaimed, “that's crackerjack!”

In case you missed it in the 1960s

Watch this Cracker Jack television commercial on YouTube to see the key role played by the free prizes:
https://youtu.be/xQR_gnXBi6M

Part of Cracker Jack's longevity and success can be traced to February 19, 1913, when the company began inserting toy surprises inside boxes of Cracker Jack. One hundred years and billions of toy prizes later, the toys were replaced with paper prizes in 2013, then with codes to access digital prizes in 2016. Despite the brand's broken tradition, thousands of loyal consumers still cherish their collections of hundreds of different Cracker Jack toy prizes.

Not solely for snack foods

“It doesn't matter whether you're selling to business, to education, to government or to consumers – products that have a free prize thrive.” – Seth Godin, marketing analyst and author

Today, we might refer to the insertion of free prizes or digital codes in Cracker Jack packages as an augmentation or value-added strategy – an attempt to enhance customers' perceptions of value by giving them something extra. The strategy tends to be most effective when the product category is highly competitive and the core product itself is well understood and not particularly differentiated from those of competitors.

Characteristics of the ideal augmentation item

1. The item is meaningful to consumers (i.e., don't give it away simply because you couldn't sell it).
2. Though valued by buyers, the extra item plays a secondary role to the core product – to avoid upstaging the core product and diluting the brand.
3. The item adds little to the offering's costs, relative to the perceived value it adds.
4. The item cannot be duplicated by competitors – at least not as easily, quickly, or inexpensively.
5. The item is promoted as a “bonus” or “extra” to avoid inflating customers' expectations. To prevent customers from expecting the item on a regular basis, some marketers include augmented items “for a limited time only.”

February 20



Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Edward Henry Harriman

Born in Hempstead, New York on February 20, 1848, Harriman used his financial skills from the early 1880s until his death in 1909 to exploit others' lack of financial skills. He bought struggling and bankrupt railroads, improved their operations and better managed their cash flow.

During the mid-1800s the demand for rail transportation in the U.S. was high, so the number of railroads proliferated. Competing railroads ran-up their debts as they scrambled to expand their rail networks. But then the economy faltered in the early 1890s and dozens of railroads were caught unprepared. On Harriman's 45th birthday (February 20, 1893), for example, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad fell into receivership. By the end of that year, 74 railroads had declared bankruptcy. Harriman's understanding of the ups and downs in the marketplace enabled him to prosper.

Key business reality: Shake-out periods

In an emerging industry or product category, a rapid rate of market growth is eventually followed by a period of slower growth or decline, which coincides with the "shake-out period." During the shake-out period, many competitors leave the market as the competition intensifies. Promotional efforts are likely to shift from an emphasis on primary demand (for the product category) to selective demand (for specific brands). Further, smart marketers that had previously emphasized attracting new customers begin to think more in terms of retaining their existing customers.

February 21



Today's appointments & reminders...

TV commercials disrespect women: Agree or disagree?



"The woman who cried out in torment of equal intensity over the loss of a suitor, her inability to make a decent cup of coffee or the unpleasantness of bathroom odors has become a fixture in the folklore of television advertising."

— Fairfax Cone, advertising executive and partner of Foote, Cone & Belding ad agency.

Cone was born on February 21, 1903 — in San Francisco. As the quote implies, Cone advocated a straightforward approach to advertising, rather than portraying brands as superheroes that rescue distressed housewives.

February 22



Today's appointments & reminders...

Origins of relationship marketing?

Newspapers began accepting classified advertisements as early as 1657. The ads were "classified" under various headings such as: Artificers, Lost and Stolen, Physicians, Properties for Sale and To Let, Stage Coaches and Carriers, and Shipping. It was not until February 22, 1886, however, that the first "personal column" was included in the classified pages. This

self-marketing phenomenon began in London's newspaper, *The Times*.

February 23

Today's appointments & reminders...

Forecasting for the horses

On February 23, 1925, *Time* magazine reported the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) concern about the country's declining horse population. The horse count had dropped by about 16 percent from 1910-1925. An estimated 19.5 million horses remained, of which 91 percent resided on farms. The USDA warned that a horse shortage could materialize if breeding efforts were not hoofed-up.

In the decades that followed, the horse population continued to dwindle to a low of 4.5 million in 1959, but in contrast to the USDA's forecasts, horse shortages never materialized. Apparently, the USDA's forecasts failed to consider that after 4,000 years of use, most horse-related technologies were gradually replaced with automobiles and self-powered tractors.

Horse sense?

Good business planning relies on the ability to forecast future demand. Fewer resources are wasted in the future and plans tend to be more effective when forecasts are accurate. Yet, it is not uncommon for forecasts to vary considerably from the demand that actually materializes. Changes in technology, such as farmers' switching from horses to tractors, can play havoc with the accuracy of forecasts, as can changes in the economy, efforts by the competition, and other factors. Sometimes forecasting mistakes can be traced to planners' failure to acknowledge these factors or to their overly optimistic or pessimistic view of the factors' likely impact.



February 24



Today's appointments & reminders...

Good day for an action bias: Just do it!

Mistakes are inevitable, so just do it

“The trouble in America is not that we are making too many mistakes, but that we are making too few.”
– Philip Knight, Nike's co-founder, born in Portland, Oregon on February 24, 1938

Just do it now

“As you grow older, you'll find the only things you regret are the things you didn't do.” – Zachary Scott, American actor, born on February 24, 1914 – in Austin, Texas

Continue to just do it

“I'm convinced that about half of what separates the successful entrepreneurs from the non-successful ones is pure perseverance.” – Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple Computer at age 21, born in San Francisco on February 24, 1955

February 25



Today's appointments & reminders...



Respecting personal space

On February 25, 1966, Edward T. Hall's classic book was published: *The Hidden Dimension*. Hall's research showed how people perceived personal space and how it affected their interpersonal behavior.

Today, the concept of personal space helps marketers better understand consumer behavior. For example, retailers know that if store aisles are too narrow, shoppers are likely to feel crowded and rushed when "their" personal space is invaded by others – leading to more stressful shopping experiences and a reduction in the number of purchases.

February 26

Today's appointments & reminders...

Perhaps the necklace was really made of marbles?

On February 26, 1996, actress Elizabeth Taylor and the company that made the Black Pearls perfume she endorsed, Elizabeth Arden, scored a promotional coup when Taylor made guest appearances on four consecutive CBS-television sitcoms.



Touted by the network as "Liz Night" (which boosted the audience size by almost 20 percent), the evening began when Taylor's black

pearl necklace was lost during the first sitcom. Fortunately, the necklace was found but then lost again during the second show. In the third, Taylor was interviewed regarding the lost necklace, while the mystery was solved and the necklace found again during the fourth sitcom.

The focus and frequent mention of "black pearls" throughout the night was instrumental in heightening the public's awareness of the association between Elizabeth Taylor and Black Pearls perfume.

Consequently, sales of the perfume fragrance took off and became a top-selling brand within a few months.

February 27

Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Ralph Nader

Born in Winsted, Connecticut on February 27, 1934, Nader has used his training as an attorney to challenge business practices and champion consumer rights for several decades. He has never been afraid to voice his opinion on matters of public interest. In fact, Nader believes that in a democracy, citizens have an *obligation* to speak out against the ills of society, in general, and of business, in particular.

Nader first caught the attention of consumers, media, big-business, and government officials in 1965 with the publication of his first of several books, *Unsafe at Any Speed*, in which he accused some U.S. automakers of safety and design flaws. By arousing safety concerns, Nader's efforts led to the passage of the Traffic Safety Act which imposed stricter safety standards on automobiles. Since the 1960s, Nader's consumer crusades have scrutinized food safety, nuclear power, and a range of environmental issues.

Big-business is irresponsible: Agree or disagree?

"Ours is a system of corporate socialism, where companies capitalize their profits and socialize their losses... in effect, they tax you for their accidents, bungling, boondoggles, and mismanagement, just like a government. We should be able to dis-elect them."

– Ralph Nader

February 28



Today's appointments & reminders...

Happy birthday: Gilbert Gottfried

Born in Brooklyn, New York on February 28, 1955, Gottfried has been an American comedian since the age of 15, including a season as a cast member on *Saturday Night Live* (1980-1981). His loud and distinctively rough voice has helped him land numerous voice-over jobs for animals and animated characters on television and in movies. But his



marketing stardom began to shine in 2000 when he loaned his voice to the advertising icon for AFLAC insurance known as the AFLAC Duck.

Why marketers use animals as advertising spokescharacters

“[C]ute puppies or cats or birds or horses that speak English get instant attention and often are remembered fondly for generations... [Further,] animated characters or animals... never grow old and cranky. They never die. They live in a never-never land in [consumers'] minds.” – Steve Cone, CMO for Epsilon and former advertising executive, in his book, *Steal These Ideas!* (p. 38)

In the continuing advertising campaign, the AFLAC Duck wanders through life squawking “AAA-FLACK” at people who apparently need insurance or have the “wrong” insurance, but who are slow to recognize their need for AFLAC insurance. The campaign was so successful that in approximately two years, the company’s sales rose by 25 percent.



Soon after that – in 2004 – Yahoo! polled 600,000 consumers in the U.S. and asked what their favorite advertising icons were. The AFLAC Duck garnered the second most votes (the M&M Characters won) and beat many well-established icons that had been touting brands since the 1950s and 1960s – such as Mr. Peanut (3rd place), the Pillsbury Doughboy (4th) and Tony the Tiger (5th).

February 29, 2020, 2024, 2028, 2032... 2096



Today's appointments & reminders...

WARNING... Skip the day if it's not a Leap Year!

Leap Year? Important note for calendar users

Today is February 29 in Leap Years, i.e., every fourth year through 2096. **If the current year is not a Leap Year, skip February 29 and go directly to March 1.**

If it is a Leap Year and you’re using *Marketing FAME*’s coded marbles to keep track of the day of the week (as explained in the foreword), remember that the marble codes will change after today. That is, *beginning tomorrow* – March 1 – each marble code will represent a day of the week that differs from the day of the week it represented in January and February. Refer to the foreword section at the beginning of the book for additional explanation.

In the driver's seat of Youmobile

“Using the power of decision gives you the capacity to get past any excuse to change any and every part of your life in an instant... More than anything else, I believe it’s our decisions, not the conditions of our lives that determine our destiny.” – Anthony “Tony” Robbins, self-help/motivational speaker and author, born in Glendora, California on February 29, 1960