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Beating the summer slump with quiet communication

Mary Cloonan reflects on why continued marketing activity and visibility during the summer months can pay dividends for professional services firms long term



By late May, many professional services firms quietly disappear.

Their LinkedIn feed slows. Newsletters pause. Articles get parked until September. Marketing plans drift into “we’ll pick this up after the summer”.

Understandably so. People are tired. Diaries become fragmented. Clients are away. Internal teams are trying to get through year ends, completions, audits, transactions and holidays without dropping too many plates.

Using the summer months to get ahead

Summer starts to feel like a holding pattern. Those firms that treat it this way often find September harder than it needs to be, however, whereas those that grow steadily tend to see summer differently.

Not as downtime. Not as peak campaign season either. More as a quieter commercial window during which visibility costs less in terms of attention, and relationships become easier to strengthen.

This matters more than many firms realise.

For clients with December year-ends, the second half of the year is often when advisers' decisions quietly begin to take shape. Panel reviews. Property work. Restructuring projects. Audit relationships. Expansion conversations. Internal discussions about who is trusted, who feels visible and who comes to mind first.

By the time firms decide they need a profile push in September, many of these impressions are already forming.

Strengthening communication when time allows

Firms that stay present over the summer rarely do it by becoming louder. Usually they become more useful.

They publish less, but better. They use the quieter months to strengthen individual partner visibility, not just the firm's. They reconnect with clients without pitching. They make time for conversations that are difficult to have properly when the pressure picks up again in September.

In this context, visibility is not really a marketing issue; it is commercial.

Clients do not instruct firms because of volume. They instruct firms because somebody stayed credible, relevant and present at the right moments over time.

Summer is often when these moments happen.

Across professional services firms in Ireland and the UK, this is a familiar pattern. The firms that build momentum consistently are rarely the ones flooding the market with content. They are usually the firms that pay close attention to timing, relevance and visibility.

One well-judged article in June can do more than five rushed posts in October. One useful client conversation in July can shape an instruction that lands formally months later.

One partner becoming more visible and more confident externally can quietly change how a firm is perceived in the market in the year ahead.

The quieter months also create space for tasks autumn rarely allows firms to focus on fully.

The article a partner has meant to write since February. The speaker profile that never quite gets updated. The active listening conversations with clients that get postponed during busier periods. The internal discussions about positioning that feel slightly rushed when September starts.

Bolstering commercial confidence year-round

These things may seem small individually but collectively they shape how visible and commercially confident a firm feels by the end of the year.

Most professional services firms are not failing. Far from it. Many are technically excellent and highly regarded by existing clients.

Yet somewhere between expertise, visibility, client communication and business development, a quiet wobble can appear. Not dramatic enough to create panic. Just enough to slow momentum.

Summer tends to expose this wobble quite quickly. Some firms step away from visibility entirely. Others use the quieter period to strengthen relationships, sharpen partner profiles and stay mentally present in the markets they want to grow in.

By autumn, the difference between these approaches starts to show. The firms that grow in autumn rarely begin in autumn.

Usually, they started much earlier—in a conversation, in an article or in a moment of being useful when it would have been easier to go quiet.

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