

# New Year's Resolutions You Just Might Stick With

It's that time of year – the end of it, to be precise – when many people think about New Year's resolutions. Various polls show that only about a third of people make resolutions each year, but of those who do partake, many share the same goals. Also, experts in human nature (I'm not sure how they earn that certification, by the way) advise making only a short list of resolutions, since we tend to have short attention spans when it comes to self-improvement. On that note, here are five of the most-popular/common New Year's resolutions, and what those might look like when applied to our jobs and aspirations as legal public relations professionals and marketers.

**Make new friends or improve relationships.** Try expanding your network either among legal marketers or the media, or both. This coming year could be when you finally join or take a more active role in industry peer groups such as the [Legal Marketing Association](#) (LMA) or [Public Relations Society of America](#) (some of the best connections and ideas don't always come from your own field). Your new friends in these organizations can be great resources for ideas and strategies that can directly [enhance your own PR](#) and marketing efforts, as well boost your own professional stature. It's also always a good time to make new friends among the media. We can never be too chummy with our media contacts, since they are still critical to effectively publicize our clients and projects among mainstream audiences.

**Learn a new skill or make self-improvements.** Do you still lack confidence in your mastery of social media? Although it's almost omnipresent, even in the legal profession, social media is still a challenge and even a mystery to some. The reality is that learning how to tweet, post, blog, share, and generally build and expand a lawyer or [law firm's social media presence](#) and voice is increasingly critical for legal marketers. If social media is your Achilles' heel, there are many websites and apps that can facilitate and make your online world more manageable, effective and even fun. Maybe you want to improve an existing skill, such as writing, public speaking or [working with media](#). Consider taking in a seminar or attending a conference or class in one of these key areas that could enhance your public relations or marketing successes.

**Get organized.** This can mean different things to different people in different jobs, but there are some universal office organization tasks that can put you in a productive frame of mind. According to this [article](#), there also are legitimate health benefits to a workplace cleanse, including boosting energy, reducing stress and lowering risks for certain health problems, as well as leading to better eating and sleeping habits.

Obviously, a new year is a logical time to update calendars and address books, delete or archive old emails, and file or delete duplicate or useless electronic files to help clear your desktop and your mind for better productivity (and less stress). Reorganizing computer



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files is also a good reminder to make sure you're backing up all your data – a huge stress reliever for the next time you misplace a file.

Taking it old school, don't forget to purge and reorganize what's sitting on and around your desk and in your drawers and file cabinets. Consider traveling further down the paperless road by using Dropbox, Box and similar tools for files and online notekeeping apps to save time and the environment.

The crux of this resolution is to declutter and discard anything and everything that's unnecessary or unwanted. If you haven't touched or needed it in a year, now may be time to jettison it forever.

**Read more.** Self-enrichment and generally gaining knowledge for its own sake are great reasons to resolve to read more. Expanding knowledge for professional development is also a worthy goal. Taking just 10 minutes a day or an hour each week to peruse online resources could help legal PR and marketing pros solve a nagging problem or fuel inspiration for a project. Online, you can find valuable insights from professional marketers, solo attorneys and trade organizations. Their topics and issues are relevant and up to the moment, unlike static, published books about marketing that may miss the mark in our fast-changing industry. Of course, the list of resources and blogs is too long to replicate here, but why not start with the LMA's [Strategies+](#) blog – from the leading professional organization serving legal marketers? [Jaffe's blog](#) is also a great source for current and archived inspiration, advice, tips and insights about how to be the best possible legal marketer.

**Do more good deeds or volunteer.** This is about giving back, making meaningful contributions to individuals or communities, and helping society as a whole. Sometimes it just takes the right idea or impetus to nudge us to get involved. Plus, it doesn't require a significant budget for a law firm to show compassion, help others and, in the process, deliver tangible cause-marketing benefits to an organization.

At Jaffe, for example, one cause we care deeply about is fulfilling humanity's vital need for water. Jaffe provides pro bono marketing and PR services to [Wine to Water](#), which is committed to providing clean water solutions to people who lack clean water, whether displaced from a natural disaster and living in a refugee camp, or living in a remote region or developing country. One of the organization's projects, which Jaffe supports, is the distribution of water filters – each one removes 99.99 percent of organic contaminants and can provide a family of five with clean water for more than 10 years. At the 2018 LMA annual conference, Jaffe turned its [marketing booth into an assembly line](#) devoted to building water filters for Wine to Water. LMA attendees assembled 226 filters during the conference, which were shipped to people in need around the globe. We also have encouraged many of our clients to develop their own "filter build" events as part of their law firms' community service efforts.

Now that I've shared some ideas for New Year's resolutions you can bring to your job, consider these quick tips for helping them come to fruition:

- Set goals that are clear, measurable and attainable.
- Write down or otherwise document your goals at the onset for easy reference

throughout the year.

- Share your goals with colleagues – having someone else who can remind you or prod you along makes it easier for you to remember those goals and more likely to succeed at achieving them.

What are your resolutions for becoming a better PR or marketing pro in 2019? Looking for some ideas about how to be more successful at your job? Send me your comments at [rlabuzinski@jaffepr.com](mailto:rlabuzinski@jaffepr.com).