



October 5, 2021 | Issue 217

The Message vs. **The Truth**



*"Manners are a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others.
If you have that awareness, you have good manners, no matter what fork
you use."*

– Emily Post

Early this morning I had the opportunity to give a keynote address and moderate a panel for the **Law Firm Marketing Summit** in London on *Brand Authenticity: The Message vs The Truth*. It was, of course, a great deal of fun, with a terrific panel on **Multidisciplinary Perspective on Brand Authenticity**.

We make our money usually by defending companies and countries in the court of public opinion, so I am reluctant to criticize companies and feed the beast; but truth, as they say, demands honesty. If there is a "versus" between your truth and your message, you are not authentic. Fish rots from the head and so do organizations. There is no more current example of a company struggling with the versus between its message and the truth than Facebook, which is having a bad fortnight, including a long outage, a brilliant and highly critical multi-part *Wall Street Journal* series, leaks, an exceedingly articulate and sympathetic whistleblower, congressional hearings and more.

Facebook has been using the same communications playbook for years, which includes three parts: 1) Denial and shock; 2) Diversion – 'Look at all the good things we are doing;' and 3) A promise to do better the next time. A promise seldom kept.

If Facebook was a movie, it would be Casablanca with Captain Renault on an endless reel. "I'm shocked, shocked to find that gambling is going on in here!" Is it any surprise that Facebook's algorithms are modeled on gambling algorithms?

If we want to come across as authentic, we have to be, well, authentic. This means that communications is never about spin, it is about fixing the problem – saying *and* doing the right things...[Read more](#)

Richard Levick

Ask Richard



Getting DEI Right

Bendita Cynthia Malakia leads Hogan Lovells' global diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategy with the aim of ensuring that historically underrepresented professionals can thrive. She speaks with Richard Levick on *In House Warrior*, the daily podcast for the *Corporate Counsel Business Journal*, about the importance of encouraging underrepresented colleagues to be their authentic selves in the workplace...

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Michele DeStefano, Legal Rebel

Michele DeStefano, Professor at the University of Miami School of Law, affiliated faculty at Harvard Law School Executive Education and Founder and Director of LawWithoutWalls, joins *In House Warrior* to discuss the practice of law, legal education, law firm recruitment and the importance of humility, inclusivity and risk...

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Brand Authenticity and the Law Firm

James Batham, a partner at Eversheds Sutherland in London, joins *In House Warrior* to discuss his approach to selling longer term, annuity clients, which involves active listening and a "you, we, I" approach, which centers on the clients' needs and not the lawyer's expertise...

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Law Firms & The Next Frontier

Moray McLaren, founder of Lexington, a premier global legal consulting firm, speaks on *In House Warrior* on the latest challenges for law firms including resilience, price sensitivity, doing too well in COVID-19, an age of unhappy but well compensated associates, new competition and more...

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The Struggle for Law Firms to Get Technology Right

Kenny Robertson, the head of the Outsourcing, Technology & IP legal team at the Royal Bank of Scotland, speaks candidly on *In House Warrior* about what law firms get right and get wrong in their effort to be more technologically savvy and how they can improve their services to clients...

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The Great Middle

In *CommPRO*, Richard Levick discusses the importance of free speech in the United States and the disappearing middle ground in politics...

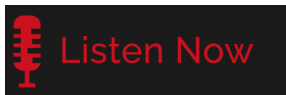
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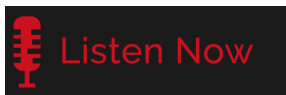


Recent guests include: Alan Dershowitz • Best-Selling Author Molly Ball • Former Lt. Governor Michael Steele • Former Congressman Tom Davis • Former Congressman Charlie Dent • Former White House Counsel John Dean • Former Ambassador Andrew Young • Former White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart • Former DOJ FARA Chief Brandon Van Grack • Former Deputy FBI Director Andrew McCabe • Founding Partner of Jipyong Sung Taek • Best-Selling Author Martin Lindstrom • Former MD Attorney General Doug Gansler • Former Ambassador Norm Eisen • Professor Jeffrey Sonnenfeld • Tom Clare • Former Congresswoman Elizabeth Holtzman • Abbe Lowell • Grammy Performer Freddie Ravel • OLLAA Director Seenaa Jimjimo • Former Congressman Mike Andrews • Jamie Gorelick • Journalist Brian Krebs • NYT White House Correspondent Peter Baker • New Yorker Columnist Susan Glasser • Enron Whistleblower Sherron Watkins • Lucinda Low • Washington Post Columnist James Hohmann • Historian Allan Lichtman • Former Congressman Albert Wynn • Former Deputy White House Counsel Stefan Passantino • President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, Dr. Raphael Bostic • Former Congressman Tony Coelho • Theodore Boutrous, Jr.

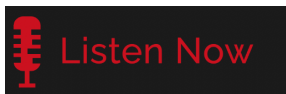
If you want to be on a show, [please let us know.](#)



Law Firms & The Next Frontier



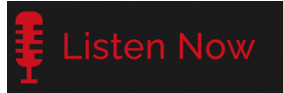
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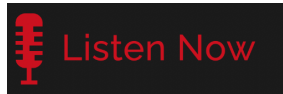
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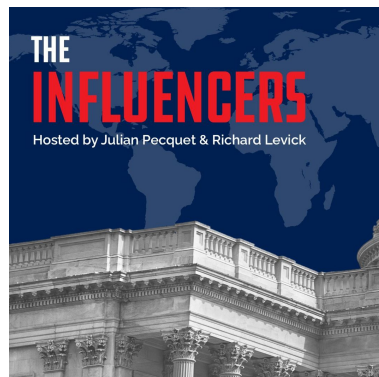
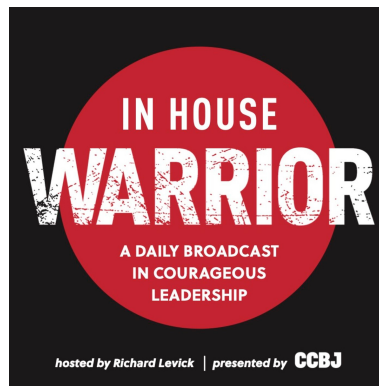
Time to Get Cynical – Cyber Attacks and Security Breaches

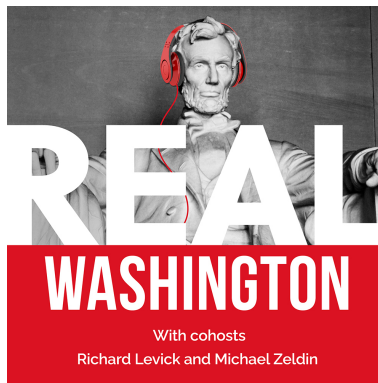


Brand Authenticity and the Law Firm




Getting DEI Right





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PRO BONO: Each year, LEVICK commits resources to pro bono activities. In 2021, we're developing a great many resources for DC SCORES, which provides academic and athletic opportunities for disadvantaged youth, and cc-TDI, a non-profit biotech looking to make all childhood cancers universally survivable.



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