



THE SALES INFORMER

Association of Publishers for Special Sales

**A monthly e-zine dedicated to helping APSS members sell more books
to more buyers, more profitably.**

Volume 3, Issue 7, Number 27 July 2015

Here is your July 2015 issue of *The Sales Informer* e-zine. We intend this to help APSS members sell more books to non-bookstore buyers. This newsletter is sent only to paid APSS members. If there were any problems with this delivery, please let me know.

APSS Update from the Executive Director - Brian Jud



Association of Publishers
for Special Sales

Do you want to sell more books with no returns?

**Attend the APSS one-day Southern California Book
Selling University on September 12**

You can become more profitable selling your books in ways that you never imagined and to people you never knew existed — in large, non-returnable quantities. It is sponsored by Bowker and BookWorks, and will be held from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm at the Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd. Los Angeles, CA. Find details and registration at <http://tinyurl.com/ppjtxbk>

Learn more, earn more

APSS Tip for Finding Potential Non-Bookstore Buyers

An architect can look at the height of a building and give you an accurate estimate of the depth of its foundation; the taller the building the deeper the foundation. It supports the building, keeping it from toppling during stormy weather. It is equally important for you to create a good foundation for your marketing efforts to exploit future opportunities. A steady stream of prospective buyers builds a strong foundation for your future business.

Top Ten List By APSS

Every month *Fortune* magazine interviews a successful entrepreneur. Each is asked for his or her top pieces of advice for budding entrepreneurs in a wide variety of industries. APSS published ten of these tips recently. Here **Ten More Tips From Successful Entrepreneurs** gleaned from recent issues of the “Venture” column in *Fortune* magazine:

Wolfgang Puck

1. **Talk to your customers.** I feel that when people come into my restaurant they’re coming into my house.
2. **Stick to what you know best.** I owned 10% of Eureka Brewery & Restaurant. We had so many

- problems bottling the beer I had to leave.
3. **Look for new ideas.** There has to be evolution constantly. If we stand still and don't pay attention to what's happening today and tomorrow, we'll be in the graveyard.

Marie Gray, Co-Founder, St. John Knits

4. **Never disappoint the customer.** "A customer spilled wine on a white outfit, she said, "Could you please save my St. John." And I offered to re-dye it black.
5. **Make sure your quality is the best.** "A customer might not see an imperfection, but I would see it and remake the dress. It's costly, but I would feel like I cheated her if I didn't give her a perfect garment."
6. **Treat your employees with dignity and respect.**

Robin Chase, Co-founder, Zipcar

7. **Leverage other people's excess capacity.** "I made a partnership with MIT in which they sent an email to their 35,000 staff and students about joining Zipcar."
8. **Know your weaknesses and hire to fill them.** "I knew nothing about cars so I hired my VP of Operations who had managed Hertz's North American fleet."
9. **Be proactive, even if it hurts.** "I had to raise the price on Zipcars twice. People said it would hurt the brand, but if I hadn't we'd have gone under."
10. **Stand out from the crowd.** "To emphasize that Zipcar was different from car rental companies we didn't use any vehicle that they offered. Our Beta car was a green Volkswagen Beetle."

APSS Tip for Negotiating Large-Quantity Orders

Negotiating a sale is a process, not an event, and the end result may look nothing like your original proposal. It is not something you do *to* people but *for* and *with* people. In an atmosphere of cooperation you build out a resolution together, changing details as you discuss alternatives. If two parties want to do business, the details will not prevent it; if they do not want to do business the details will not make it happen.

Top 10 Retailers, With \$954.7B in Sales, Miss The Mark on Books By Brian Feinblum



As Amazon celebrated its 20th anniversary with blowout deals on July 15th, Walmart didn't stand by and let the world's biggest digital retailer eat its lunch. Walmart, the No. 1 US retailer that's 3.5 times its nearest competitor, dropped prices on its products and shipping, seeking to be the dominant force that it's been for decades. Where was Barnes & Noble, the No. 1 book retailer for brick and mortar sales, in all of this?

B&N was busy selling two colossal blockbusters - the debut of *Go Set A Watchman*, the long-awaited follow-up from Harper Lee and *Grey*, the latest installment to the *50 Shades of Grey* erotica by E

L James. But Barnes & Noble is not anywhere near the top 10 retailers in the United States. Surprisingly, neither is K-mart, Sears, Macy's, Gap, Apple, or any toy companies, pet supply

companies, or sporting goods stores.

No. 1	Wal-Mart	334 billion dollars in annual sales in 2014
No. 2	Kroger	\$103B
No 3	Costco	\$79.7B
No 4	Home Depot	\$74.2B
No 5	Walgreen	\$72.7B
No 6	Target	\$72.6B
No 7	CVS	\$68B
No 8	Lowes	\$34.8B
No 9	Amazon	\$49.4B
No 10	Safeway	\$36.3B

Amazon is the fastest-growing company of the Big 10, seeing sales jump 22.8% last year. Only Kroger earned double-digit growth (10.1%) last year, the only other of those 10 companies to do so. Safeway was the only one to go backwards, losing 2.1% of its revenues.

Compared to a decade ago, seven of today's top 10 were in the top 10 then as well, but everyone's shifted spots except for Walmart. Surely in a decade forward Amazon, based on current growth patterns, will surge as high as No. 2 – barring a total collapse by Walmart. Further, you'll see a continued consolidation of dominance between Walmart and Amazon, as they each continue to get in everyone's business and sell every possible product.

Bookstores collectively, if acting as a singular entity, would fail to crack the Top 10 spots for retail. That's a shame. Books should be a force and a leading retail contender.

Maybe the real question is: How can we get each of the top retailers to carry more books, sell more copies, and grow the reading public? Some, like CVS and Walgreens, sell some books. Target and Costco too. Walmart and of course Amazon do as well. Home Depot needs to join in and sell more books beyond a random gardening guide.

As the retail landscape grows and changes, books must remain a vibrant part of the economy.

Brian Feinblum's views, opinions, and ideas expressed in this blog are his alone and not that of his employer, the nation's largest book promoter. You can follow him on Twitter @theprexpert and email him at brianfeinblum@gmail.com. He feels more important when discussed in the third-person.

APSS Tip for Making Persuasive Sales Presentations

Your sales presentation is your “stake in the ground.” It concludes with your request for a decision, and your prospects reply with their initial counter offers. Then the negotiations begin where each side seeks the best outcome somewhere in the middle. Under these conditions selling books is not a battle in which there are two opposing sides, each trying to defeat the other. There is no enemy. You are both on the same side, seeking the best solution to your prospects' marketing problems through your recommendations.

APSS Partner Spotlight -- Author U



Author U (niversity) is a non-profit membership community of authors, writers and publishers and registered as a 501 (c)6 with the IRS. It's for you to if you want to learn about ...

- Writing a book, resurrecting a book, or just supporting a book;
- Creating one that will find a following;
- Strategizing the steps to be successful;
- Developing a game-plan that has roots;
- Designing a book that is the right fit for your audience;
- Publishing a book that turns heads;
- Marketing moxie that creates results;
- Social media strategies that are book and author friendly;
- Publicity tactics that work;
- Crowdfunding for Authors and Books;
- Gizmos, gadgets and technology; and
- Achieving Amazing Results

Is there a book in you? Or another? Or does your book need a makeover? Author U will show you how to create, develop and publish your book without being hoodwinked. If you already have a book out, you will find a supportive and brain-storming community that is connected and creative.

Author U brings in national experts for its BookCamps as well as regular Brunch & Learn, Dinner & a Program, Google+ Hangouts, Webinars ... meetings, Tech Tool Boxes and Salons. Every May there is the Extravaganza—a three day event the first full weekend in May held in Denver, Colorado that will create, alter and soar you and your book empire. The Author Resource, its online newsletter, is content heavy.

Top 25 Interesting Instagram Facts For Indie Authors

By AS. S.Chung



I don't use Instagram as a book marketing tool. But I love using this application personally. Therefore, I have decided to collate a list of interesting facts that will help me decide if I should adopt another platform (not that I don't already have enough!). Yesterday, I explored Instagram for Self-Published Authors, as a general research piece to convince me it's worth thinking about. However I felt that I needed more evidence to propel me further in making this commitment.

So here are some fascinating and interesting facts:

1. Facebook owns Instagram
2. There are over 300 million Instagram users in the world today
3. There are more than 70 million photo and video shares each day
4. Overall there have been 30 billion photos shared through the application
5. 41% of Instagram users are aged between 16-24 years
6. 20% of internet users have an Instagram account
7. 95% of these users have a Facebook account whilst 83% of them have a Twitter account
8. The breakdown of users over the continents is: 25% in North America, 33% in Latin America, 16% in Europe, 34% in the Middle East/Africa and 16% in Asia

9. 61% of Instagramers like at least 1 posting a day
10. 51% of users are male while, 49% are female
11. 70% of Instagramers have already taken part in a contest or might do so
12. Top 3 reasons why users follow brands on Instagram: 62% because they love the brand, 54% to discover new things, 48% because they find content interesting or funny
13. On average, posts by top brands receive 216 comments, with 50% of comments being posted in the first 6 hours
14. The average caption on Instagram is 138 characters long, including hashtags
15. On average, posts that include another user handle in the caption receive 56% more engagement than those that don't
16. Adding a location results in 79% higher engagement
17. 47% of adult users access Instagram from a smartphone. 53% use a tablet
18. There are around 2.5 billion Instagram likes every day, or 8500 new likes each second. 1000 comments are left each second
19. Around 25% of Fortune 500 companies use Instagram actively. They usually post on Thursdays
20. The more hashtags you add, the more likes and comments you will get. Instagram allows up to 30
21. Instagram users prefer desaturated photos. They get up to 600% more likes!
22. Don't leave too much blank space in your Instagram photos. Busier photos get more likes
23. The number of Instagramers in the U.S. will reach approximately 106 million by 2018
24. 26% of users earn an income of \$50,000 – \$74,999 whilst a further 26% earn over \$75,000 per annum
25. The average Instagram user spends 21 minutes per day using the app.

There are many more statistic I could have filtered however I felt this was sufficient to paint the picture. There must be at least a couple of facts above which caught your eye or perhaps peaked your interest in how you could use it sell your books and increase readership. Please feel free to share your Instagram experiences.

A.S. Chung is an award-winning author of children's picture books *A Brand New Day*: about divorce and *Wishful Wedding*: about LGBT equality and same gender families. Creator of Pigeonhole Books and blogs about self-publishing, writing, online book marketing, peer bloggers and illustrators.

Give Your Books Away? For Free?

By Guy Achtzehn



There are two general worlds in which we market books. The first is through bookstores and the second is to non-bookstore buyers. In both cases, you can increase your sales by giving your books away in limited quantities.

In the familiar world of trade sales, publishers know that they must give books to reviewers and as samples to get on television and radio shows. These exist in the world of non-traditional sales, too, but here there are additional reasons to consider giving books away in special markets as an investment in future revenue.

One example is to get exposure through blogs. Rather than start your own blog, find one that already

exists on your topic -- one with a large following – and send the blog owner a copy of your book to review.

Another technique is to send a book to the newsletter editors at associations aligned with your topic. Allow them to excerpt from your book periodically, with attribution to you as the author of the content. While on the associations' websites, send a free copy to the membership chairpeople. Their job is to increase membership, and they could give people a copy of your book as a "thank you" for joining or renewing their membership.

If you are a speaker, send a copy to an association's meeting planner with a proposal to hire you to speak at their next conference. Similarly, if you are a consultant, give your book away to prospective clients. In this way, your book becomes an expensive brochure that could generate consulting fees far greater than the cost of your book.

Corporations could use your book to help them sell more of their products. Send a copy to the appropriate marketing manager or sales manager with your proposal for using your book as a premium, advertising specialty or self-liquidator. Give Human Resource Managers a copy, too. They may be able to use your content to help educate, train or motivate employees.

Invest in your future by giving books away now. But only do so with the expectation that by doing so you will be repaid with additional revenue over the long haul.

Contact Guy Achtzehn at The Promotional Bookstore, guy@msgpromo.com or (717) 846-3865. Provide your APSS membership number for a 10% discount on promotional items

Expand From Your Core Business to Build Your Sales and Profits **By Brian Jud**



The process of selling books has not changed much in many years. Publishers publish books that are sold through bookstores to their customers. Granted, the arrival of Amazon.com altered the dynamics of the playing field, but it is still the same field.

Some publishers think more strategically and try to break from this crowded turf by differentiating their content from competitive titles. But that is still not enough.

Long-term success will not be achieved through product differentiation alone, where the focus remains on the book and competitive titles. This strategy is akin to rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.

A smaller group of entrepreneurial publishers recognizes that long-term business growth comes from content differentiation, and using it to generate fresh demand in new markets. Few publishers make this transition because of their need to conform to "the way it's always been done." This self-induced trance becomes an impediment to progress, and will eventually crush the possibility of significant long-term expansion.

The payoff to developing new markets for your content can be enormous. Consider the difference between Apple and Microsoft. Between 2001 and 2015 Apple has made significant moves to create or enter new markets by introducing the iPod, iTunes, the iPhone, the App Store, the iPad and the iWatch (and soon, online television). Its sales and profits increased massively. Over the same period

Microsoft's revenue went from nearly five times that of Apple to about half of Apple's. Close to 80% of its profits resulted from two businesses (Windows and Office) with no compelling market-creating moves.

It is difficult to step out of one's comfort zone and go against ingrained assumptions to think about how books *could* be sold. But here are a few things that you can do to develop new sales opportunities without causing undue mental stress or discomfort.

1. **Focus on your non-customers.** Book sellers focus on their customers -- the people who have always purchased (or could purchase) their books. Their sales are limited to the number of people in that group. Conversely, market-busters think about the people who *do not* buy their products, and why they do not.

Think back to 2006 when Sony introduced its ebook reader (the Portable Reader System). Their goal was to open the e-reader market to a broader base. They researched e-reader customers who were dissatisfied with the size and display quality of the existing selection. Sony introduced a thin device with an easy-to-read screen. Yet, Sony lost the battle to Amazon's Kindle because it failed to understand why people were not buying e-readers -- the shortage of worthwhile books to read. Amazon understood this and offered four times the selection available from Sony's reader and captured the market.

Instead of dwelling on why people buy your books through bookstores, think about prospective buyers who are not purchasing your content. How could people in corporations, associations or schools use the information in your books to help them solve a problem?

2. **Focus on commonalities, not differences.** Defining the needs of buyers in ever-narrowing niches is not the same as identifying new markets. The latter often requires de-segmentation by defining key commonalities across buyer groups. This creates differences in strategies and tactics.

Here is an example of applying this to book marketing. When selling my book, *Job-Search 101*, I initially sought to define niches -- graduating college students, high-school students, blue-collar workers, unemployed people who were 55 or more in age -- and tried to sell to them with different approaches. But the common element across all these niches was that people wanted a secure future and a source of that security as quickly as possible. I changed my promotional strategy to address this subtle difference and increased my sales, revenue and profits.

3. **Do not confuse the terms "book" and "content."** People do not buy books per se, they purchase what the information in the book will do for them. With non-fiction they purchase wealth gain (success), weight loss (beauty) or health (longevity). Fiction readers want relaxation, distraction, a sense of romance or adventure.

4. **Capture a leadership position in your new market.**

When *Job Search 101* was first published, I could have sold it through bookstores and gone head-to-head with the entrenched market leader, *What Color Is Your Parachute*, by Richard Bolles. I knew that would be a difficult battle to win.

Instead, I sought to gain a foothold in new segments, then build my name-recognition and product line to create a leadership position. I began selling *Job Search 101* to buyers in other markets who could benefit from my content. These included academic markets and state governments. I began conducting on-site presentations and workshops as well as personal

consulting. When I introduced new titles (*Coping With Unemployment* and *Help Wanted Inquire Within*), people purchased them with little hesitation because I had established a reputation as a reputable supplier with unique and valuable content.

Similarly, I soon determined that little job-search information was available to Hispanic job seekers. I had *Job Search 101* translated into Spanish (*Elementos basicos para buscar trabajo*) and captured a leadership position in a non-competitive market.

5. Sell in new markets more profitably, even at a low selling price.

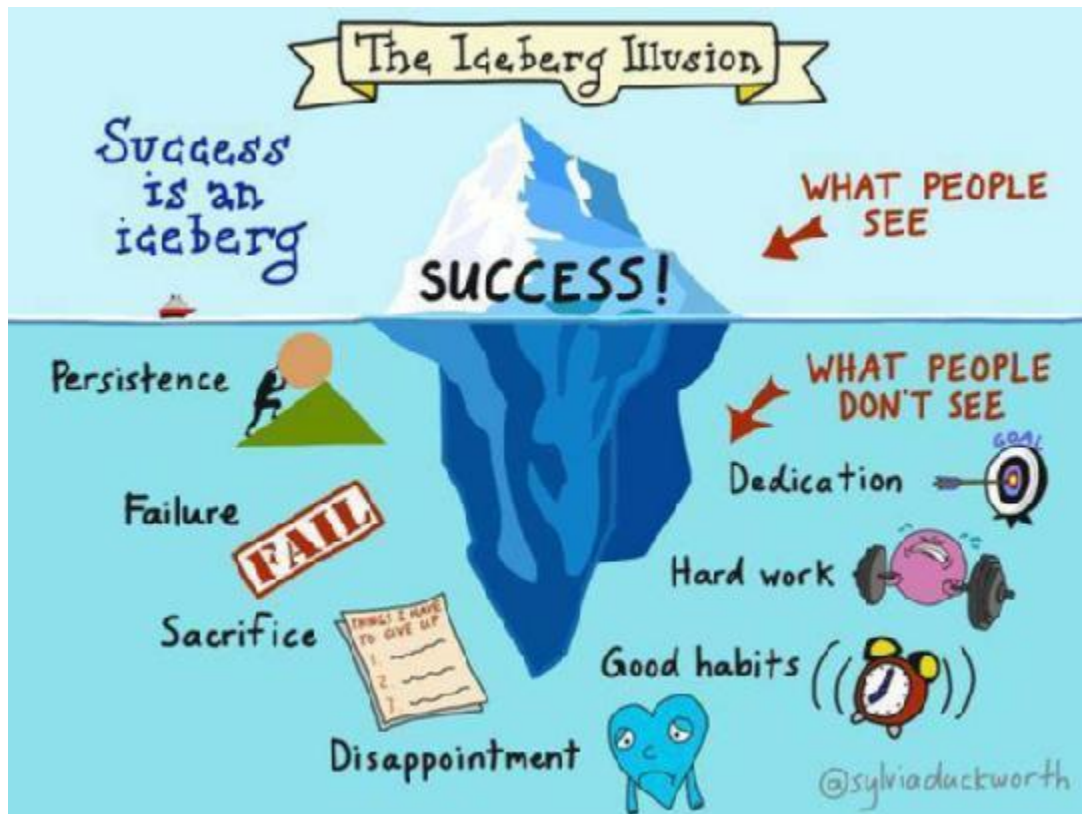
When selling to non-retail buyers in corporations and associations, sales are made directly to the people making the purchase decision. There are no fees for distributors. Discounts are based upon the number of books ordered, sometimes with no discount for small quantities. And when selling to non-retail buyers, books are sold on a non-returnable basis and the buyers pay the shipping charges. With these lower costs you can sell your books at a lower price but more profitably than if sold through bookstores or other retail stores.

You do not have to abandon bookstores to pursue a strategy of entrepreneurial publishing. Expand upon your core business to develop additional revenue streams. This long-term strategy for business growth does not necessarily entail a different physical product, nor must you find new ways to differentiate your content from competitive titles. It requires marketing to new buyers, communicating to them all the ways in which they will benefit from your content, in terms that are important to them.

Brian Jud is the Executive Director of APSS and the author of How to Make Real Money Selling Books. company offers commission-based sales of books to buyers in non-bookstore markets. For more information contact Brian at P. O. Box 715, Avon, CT 06001-0715; (860) 675-1344; Fax (860) 673-7650; brianjud@bookmarketing.com or www.premiumbookcompany.com @bookmarketing on Twitter

What's The Big Idea?

Editorial by Brian Jud



Use Stories When You Make Author Appearances

By Jeff Davidson, MBA, CMC



Seven minutes. That's how long studies say an audience's attention span is for one given topic. If a speaker retains the same posture, voice, or focus, he has little hope of reaching his audience. To keep a high level of interest, many of today's best speakers add short narratives to their presentations that reinforce a certain point or theme. Some of these stories are personal, some are funny. They all, however, serve to keep a speech dynamic and interesting.

Universal Appeal

Stories are an effective tool because they are something to which we can all relate. One of the most effective ways to grab the attention of an audience is to calmly say, "let me tell you a story." Immediately, you've got them. The association they have with a story being an interesting and entertaining form of communication resonates so deeply that they might not even be aware why they are ready to listen, but the fact is, they will be.

Story topics can range from heavily emotional tales to the frivolities of everyday life, but in all cases they can further a speaker's point while keeping the audience entertained and engaged. There are several different ways speakers insert stories into their presentations.

Emory Austin, from Charlotte, tells stories of a personal nature that lend insight into the life lessons she has learned. Austin shows portrays to her audience a life filled with experiences to which they can relate. With her comforting, compelling voice she immerses herself completely into the narrative to keep her audience riveted.

Dan Clark, from San Francisco, uses a similar approach by taking his audience through his battle with cancer. He relies upon evoking certain emotions in the audience members to open them up to an understanding of his particular point. Like Austin, Clark uses his personal tales to grab and hold his audience's attention.

'Lite' Could Be Right

Many speakers take a light approach to story telling: some speakers talk about teenagers. This is effective because it is a topic to which everyone can relate. Whether audience members are now parents or simply recall their own teenage years, everyone feels a natural affinity between these stories and their personal experiences.

Tony Alessandra, from La Jolla, often uses quick "slice of life" stories that last only a minute or two. These stories succeed at grabbing the audience. Alessandra uses stories that are both entertaining and illuminating, a great way of getting the audience to remember his point. Audience members can take with them a short joke or a story that will serve as a catalyst for remembering the main point of the presentation.

All of these speakers present stories in different manners. Some are funny, some are sad, and some are personal, while others might only be little quirks of life. What they have in common, though, is that they all help make an entertaining and effective speech.

A Quick Example

Here is an example of a story I've used about not heeding the advice of others. It takes roughly four minutes to deliver this story to a live audience:

When I was 21 years old, I took a trip to Europe, and using the Eurail Pass, visited numerous countries over the course of 66 days. When I got to Switzerland, a bit tired of planning my own itineraries day after day, I signed up to be part of a small touring van. One of our stops was the quaint town of Zermatt, which was located at the foot of the Matterhorn, one of the tallest, most striking, and majestic mountains in Europe.

One afternoon, walking down from the hotel where we were staying, I didn't realize that the trek back, after dark, would be a bit more difficult to navigate. The hotel concierge told me it would best to return before dark, and that the trail back could be difficult to navigate. I ignored the advice and stayed in town for quite a while; there was much to see and do.

As I made my way back a little after dusk, the trail looked easy enough to follow, but I had another 30 minutes or so to go. As darkness began to fall, somehow, somewhere along the path, I strayed.

Suddenly, I realized that I had ventured onto some minor path, which could not be correct because it was falling in elevation. Since I had walked down to the village, I needed to walk back up to the hotel. I scrambled around in the semi-darkness for a few minutes, and then heard the sound of rushing water. It had to be one of the many brooks that trickled down from higher elevations.

I came upon a sign that I could barely make out via the moonlight, which was impeded by so many trees and branches. I moved up close to the sign and looked at it from the most favorable angle in terms of illumination. As with most signs in Switzerland, it contained the same message in four languages. The first would be in French, the second German, the third Romanish, and the fourth English. I settled on the English message, which said, "Warning: This area subject to flash flooding. Move to higher elevation immediately." That was all I needed to know.

I scrambled through the brush and the bushes as fast as I could, getting scratched and cut, here

and there, but who cared? In a matter of about 90 seconds, I had made my way to higher ground, where the sound of the rushing water was growing more and more faint.

Gosh, that seemed like a close one. Eventually, I found the larger path, made my way back to the hotel, and related the story to my van-mates. So much for venturing off without a flashlight, map, compass, or any idea of what I was doing.

Did You Come on the Trip with Me?

It would be easier and more effective to tell you this story in person, than to type it up and have you read it. Still, while you were reading, did you “come on the trip with me?” If so, then the story worked, for both of us!

To begin finding your stories, look no further than your own past. You can start by walking yourself through the memories of your earliest days. Review pictures, yearbooks, and school notebooks; there are stories in them all. Don't worry about how they'll fit in your speech or what point they could assist you in making. You will find that a good story fits into several different contexts and can be used in a variety of circumstances. The important thing is to begin to collect your stories.

Once you have amassed a library of these stories, you can begin to work on the best of them. You'll find that you can recall them easily with only a keyword or two, so that you can carry them all with no more than an index card or cell phone screen. Then, when you're preparing for a speech, you can pick two or three that fit easily with your topic and your audience. Your meeting participants will be appreciative.

Jeff Davidson is "The Work-Life Balance Expert®" whose passion is helping organizations achieve rapid progress for their employees. The premier thought leader on work-life balance issues, Jeff is the author of 59 books, among them "Breathing Space," "Simpler Living," the "60 Second Innovator," and the "60 Second Self-Starter." Visit www.BreathingSpace.com for more information.

Tips for Tips Booklets

Paulette Ensign



You'd rather write and create new products than market OR you'd rather market more than write. Does one of those statements sound more like you than the other? If so, you're definitely not alone. And no matter which one sounds closer to who you are, there are options you may have never considered to get both accomplished with less pain than you believe is part of the deal.

If the first statement seems to have your name on it, you probably have beliefs about what marketing is, how it has to look, and how it all lines up with your personality and your life. How differently would you feel if, instead of labeling it marketing, you thought about visiting with people who will appreciate what you have to provide them that will improve their life in some way? Or what if you focused on sharing your expertise or that you realized how much you're helping people?

This could sound like it's more semantics than anything else. However, it's true. Marketing is about letting people know what you've got that could help them solve a problem they have. They then get to decide if it really does have value to them or not. Once they decide it does, they will understandably want to know what it costs and when they can receive it. And all you did was tell them in some way about what you have that may be helpful or useful to them.

Look where that went from your thoughts about the word and concept of "marketing." You could share an electronic sample of your bite size brilliance with someone who is looking for a way to let their own people know about a new service being launched. Your electronic sample may be just the thing to capture the interest of someone at an association or a company, and before you know it, they can't wait to get the whole thing from you. It's perfect, for you and for them. All you did was share.

If the second above statement is more who you are and you would rather be out in the world somehow, sharing what you've got all day long, yet you are not so thrilled with writing, then talk your content into a recording, get it transcribed and designed, and now you have the product. In fact you have more than one product - you have the original recording as a downloadable file; you can burn it as an audio CD; you have the PDF of the transcription; and you can get printed copies of the booklet. Now you've got four (!) products to let people know about as you're marketing all day long!

ACTION- Notice where your resistance is in the product development and product marketing process. Now that you have clear suggestions on how to handle your resistance, identify one step to take, one single step. Who is one person you'll visit to let them know about the latest booklet you wrote or other content delivery formats you've developed? One person, that's all. You're choosing them to see if and how you can help. Or what list of how-to tips from your expertise will you record TODAY? The recording can be as short as 20 minutes, and you've got four products without you writing a thing!

Paulette Ensign is founder and Chief Visionary at Tips Products International. Since 1991 Paulette has personally sold well over a million copies (so far!) of her one and only tips booklet in multiple languages and formats, without spending one cent on advertising. Contact her at Paulette@tipsbooklets.com

What Makes a Powerful Call-to-Action?

By Susan Gilbert



A loyal following is like gold when it comes to building a personal brand. While online marketing is very effective in this process it's also important to include a strong call-to-action with that, otherwise known as influence or permission marketing. In order to effectively harness the power of this method, it is important to craft your message the right way.

How can brands attract followers who will return again and again? Through the process of understanding who your target market is and where their pain points are. The combined efforts of a stand-out website, great content, and a solid social media marketing strategy will all be enhanced with a strong call-to-action. And it's even more important to have this speak directly to your brand's audience.

A personal brand should become in-tune with the needs of its audience and customers in order to be successful with this method. Marketing and branding has a lot to do with influence along with guiding your followers to what matters most to them.

Creating a strong call-to-action is not enough to generate a buzz for your brand. Here are some key steps to focus on in order to be most effective:

- Create a colorful sales page – After determining the main message your brand will need to create a sales page directly on your website or through a service like LeadPages. The copy should be simple,

to the point, and use strong, web-friendly colors.

- Make it attractive – As your personal brand creates a call-to-action across as many of your web pages as possible in a conversational way your prospects will be more likely to respond. Help them along in what action to take next, which works best with a nice incentive.
- Tap into analytics tools – The moment you have a new subscriber from a strong call-to-action the next step is to analyze the activity, and optimize from there. Google Analytics is one of the best resources out there for brands to accomplish this, and can also help provide insights into the competition.

The purpose of a call-to-action for your personal brand is to direct your prospects where you would like them to go. Over time your loyal followers will begin to interact more on your content, and will be more willing to make a purchase.

Susan Gilbert uses her laser focus knowledge to coach and provide online marketing and social sharing programs for authors, speaker, experts and small businesses. She is the author and publisher of several books including “The Land of I Can,” and “KLOUT SCORE: Social Media Influence, How to Gain Exposure and Increase Your Klout,” Susan combines online marketing with strategic thinking to create successful programs. Working most often with authors and entrepreneurs, she understands promotion at a personal level as a regularly quoted resource in USA Today, Entrepreneur, Inc. Magazine and many more. Follow her Digital Marketing Tips at her blog: www.SusanGilbert.com

News From APSS Partner Organizations

The Florida Authors and Publishers Association is holding our annual conference in Orlando on August 7-8, 2015. This will be a 2-day event, culminating with our Annual President's Book Awards Banquet on Saturday night, August 8. Because of additional marketing we've done for the awards and FAPA hosting a booth at BEA in May, we've had more awards' submissions than ever before. You can learn more about our conference on our website at <http://www.floridapublishersassociation.com/annual-conference>.

Attend the APSS one-day Southern California Book Selling University on September 12

You can become more profitable selling your books in ways that you never imagined and to people you never knew existed — in large, non-returnable quantities. It is sponsored by Bowker and BookWorks, and will be held from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm at the Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd. Los Angeles, CA. Find details and registration at <http://tinyurl.com/ppjtxbk>

Upcoming Marketing Events

Marketing and Monetizing: Online Promotion and Revenue Streams for Authors, Speakers and Consultants

APSS webinar by Stephanie Chandler

August 6 -- 6:00pm Eastern time

Many writers struggle with two major components of their businesses: marketing and revenue generation. In this content-rich presentation, Stephanie Chandler shares real-world strategies that you can use to build an audience online and add lucrative revenue streams to your business. You will learn how to:

- Choose a niche and establish authority in your field
- Grow your audience online with key foundational components (a professional website, blog and social media presence)
- Leverage powerful tactics including guest blogging, podcasting, video and more
- Create profitable revenue streams from corporate sponsors, online events, member sites and more
- Expand your platform with information products
- Work less and earn more (really!)

Whether you're just getting started or you've been around for many years, this presentation is jam packed with practical strategies that can help you achieve your goals—provided you implement them!

Register here: <http://tinyurl.com/pv8xdmu>