



# 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 10, Number 30 October 2015

Here is your October 2015 issue of *The Sales Informer* ezine. 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



**Freight discounts for APSS members**

**Fast, Free, and Straightforward Freight Quotes**

As a member of APSS, you have access to the most competitive freight rates in your industry. PartnerShip®, the company that manages the APSS Shipping Program, is here to help you save time and money on every LTL (less-than-truckload), truckload, tradeshow, or expedited freight shipment!

Visit [www.PartnerShip.com/Quote](http://www.PartnerShip.com/Quote) to request a free, no obligation rate quote and see how much you can save with the industry's top freight carriers! If you have any questions about freight services through PartnerShip, call 800-599-2902 or email [sales@PartnerShip.com](mailto:sales@PartnerShip.com).

### APSS Tip for Finding Potential Non-Bookstore Buyers

There is a way product knowledge can shorten the selling process: know your costs at a variety of order quantities. This may sound simple, but how will you respond if the buyer says, "How much will it cost me to buy X0, 000 books, with my logo on the cover, delivered in six weeks?" Don't give an evasive "ballpark" figure, because inevitably you will be wrong. Instead, be prepared with an accurate answer and you may be able to close the order on the spot.

### Top Ten List By APSS

Barbara Bradley Baekgaard co-founded a handbag and apparel company out of her basement (named after her mom, Vera Bradley) and 33 years later it generates a half-billion dollars in sales. Here are **Ten Tips for Building a Successful Business** from an article about her in *Fortune Magazine* (September 15, 2015)

1. **Notice your surroundings.** At an airport in Atlanta she noticed no one was carrying anything

colorful or fun. So she decided to start a company to make handbags and luggage for women.

2. **Work with people who have faith in you.** When seeking a loan, the banker reluctantly agreed to grant the loan. Barbara rejected it and went to another bank.
3. **Get advice from experts.** Early on she didn't know how to price items or do cost analysis, so she got in touch with people from SCORE, a non-profit that provides free business mentoring to entrepreneurs.
4. **Appreciate your employees.** "When we first started we'd put \$50 in employees' birthday cards. Now, with 3,000 employees we still put \$50 in their birthday cards."
5. **Words make a difference.** "I hate the word 'boss.' At Vera Bradley we say that we work *with* someone, not *for* someone."
6. **Having fun creates better teamwork.** Barbara's Happy Committee is composed of associates who plan special, fun events like shopping trips to Chicago, kayak trips and treats of ice cream or cookies to celebrate company accomplishments.
7. **Sell yourself first.** In business you sell yourself first, your company second and the product third.
8. **Form relationships.** Business is all about forming relationships and having a company that reflects your values.
9. **Network. You never know where a contact will lead.** "In 1984 we took a small booth in the Chicago Gift Show. There was an exhibitors' party and I saw a little girl and started talking with her. I had a pair of magnetic earrings in my purse and put them on her. She showed her mother, who invited us to sit with her. It turned out the woman was the wife of Will Little, the head of the gift show, and we became good friends. The following year Will came to see our booth and moved us to one of the premier aisles, and a year later nominated me to its board of directors. I ended up marrying the president of the show, Peter Baekgaard."
10. **Stay positive.** "Knowing my attitude, if I had a failure, I probably wouldn't recognize it as one."

## APSS Tip for Negotiating Large-Quantity Orders

A negotiated sale must be good for both sides if it is to set the stage for a long-term relationship with recurring revenue. There are two things you can do before you enter a negotiation that will prepare you to come away with a mutually profitable deal. The first is to know your parameters for a profitable order. The second is to have alternatives available should any negotiation deteriorate. Both serve to relieve the pressure on you to accept a potentially unprofitable transaction.

## 10 Things Writers Must Embrace For Success By Brian Feinblum



As a writer, you've done something correct. You discovered and then nurtured a talent within you. As a writer, you give back to others by sharing your ideas, experiences, and stories. But what does it take to be you? Here's a look at certain values and insights that may just speak to you:

1. Do you tend to make a lot of thoughtful observations and note them for future reference? Looking at the world around you is the first step to being a writer. You need to be aware of what is and what isn't, with a mind on what if and what could be.
2. Do you write about the future in a way that helps us live in the present? We can't get to our destination without a map. Writers provide society a map to where we're headed – if we don't correct course – and they give us a blueprint of how to improve things and change ourselves and the world for the better. Be a visionary.
3. Invest in yourself. You need to take care of yourself before you can assist others. Get enough sleep, eat the right diet, and engage in healthy interaction with friends and family. Be balanced, even if your focus tends to drill down on your writing. Love life with a purpose and passion. You can be a great writer and live a really good life. You don't have to be angry, depressed, addicted, or out of control to be a great writer.
4. Strive to be extraordinary, not just decent or better than some. To achieve great heights you must dream great things. Don't settle and don't lower your standards – ever.
5. Stretch yourself. Instead of writing for 30 minutes today, write for 40, then 50, even 60 minutes a day. Review what you wrote. If you can do better, then do so. Work at it. Push yourself to improve. Better research could lead to better writing, and better editing will lead to a stronger, final product.
6. Act on the best advice. First, be open to advice and second, seek it out. Listen to many voices, of all stripes and sizes. Determine what's true for you.
7. Experiment. Be willing to try a new style, or a new word, a new subject to write on. Don't get so comfy in a formula that appears to work but perhaps limits just how far you can go with your writing.
8. Become whom you know yourself to be. Live your vision and mission. Step out of the sidelines and capably replace ideas with action, fantasies with reality. You could be more than you've been, but it may already be who you are. Now go out and live that life, the one you've believed is right for you.
9. Think like an entrepreneur, an innovator, a leader. You can show others how to enjoy life more, to live a fulfilling life, to embrace an ideology or approach that will make the world a better place. Writers are the poets who legislate life not thorough power or politics, but through the hearts and minds of readers in search of a better way.
10. Be informed and understand the world. It's hard to write when you don't fully have an appreciation of where the world is at, where it's been, and where it's heading. Writers should expose themselves to all kinds of information and ideas from a diverse collection of experts on an array of subject matter.

There are many skills, values, and facts that writers need to possess, believe, and know, but writers can only take in so much before their creative genius explodes with insightful, inspiring, and visionary

writings. Writers, above all, should read the works of others, and find a way to build on what exists while uniquely creating something new and useful.

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

**Maintain good eye communication.** If you use your visual aids properly you can break up the sometimes uncomfortable feeling of "eye lock" when you hold eye contact too long. As you look to your flip chart or handout, you can direct their attention to it, thus focusing them on your points. This will help them *see* your message as well as *hear* your message.

### APSS Partner Spotlight – Fifteenth Annual La Jolla Writers Conference



#### APSS discount for the Fifteenth Annual La Jolla Writers Conference

**November 6 – 8, La Jolla, California**

Writing is a business, and there is no better place to network while learning about the art, craft, and business of writing than the La Jolla Writers Conference, at the Hyatt Aventine in La Jolla, California, November 6-8, 2015. Each fall in San Diego, the conference provides an inexpensive, informative and intimate gathering of established authors, agents, editors; all volunteer, teaching the art craft and business of writing to writers of all levels.

Named by *Writer's Digest* as one of the 84 conferences in the country worth the money, The La Jolla Writers Conference features workshops and lectures with *NY Times* bestselling authors, agents, publishers, publicists, and others who are integral to and successful in the publishing industry.

- \* An approximately 1:6 faculty / attendee ratio.
- \* Unparalleled access to faculty, including agents and editors.
- \* Approximately 70 classes to choose from during a three-day intensive weekend.
- \* A real sense of community.

The \$395 price includes the Friday evening keynote reception, the Saturday lunch keynote, and the Saturday keynote dinner. **For APSS members, the cost is discounted to \$335.**

I encourage you to join us – **I will be there – November 6-7.** Indulge yourself with great weather, great venue, and a real opportunity to become a part of the larger writing and publishing community.

Check out [www.lajollawritersconference.com](http://www.lajollawritersconference.com) and for the discount go to <http://lajollawritersconference.com/group-military-registration-special/> The password is LJWC15

## Nine Ways to Find the Agent You Need By Michael Larsen



**Your writing community:** Writers and other publishing pros can recommend agents.

**The Web:** Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, other social media, Google, agents' websites, databases such as publishersmarketplace.com, agentresearch.com, firstwriter.com, authorlink.com, predatorsaneditors.com, and agentquery.com, which lists 2,000 agents.

**The Association of Authors' Representatives (AAR):** The 450 agents in AAR are the best source of experienced, reputable agents. Members are required to follow the AAR's code of ethics. The directories talked about in number six indicate when an agent is a member, aaronline.org.

**Writers' organizations:** They're listed online and in *Literary Market Place*.

**Literary events:** Writing classes, readings, lectures, seminars, book signings, conferences, and book festivals are opportunities to meet and learn about agents.

**Directories:** *Jeff Herman's Insider's Guide to Book Publishers, Editors, and Literary Agents*; *Guide to Literary Agents*; *Literary Marketplace (LMP)*. Directories vary in the kind and amount of information they provide, so check what different directories include about the same agency.

**Magazines:** *Publishers Weekly*, *The Writer*, *Writer's Digest*, and *Poets & Writers* have articles by and about agents. If you don't want to splurge on a subscription to *Publishers Weekly*, read it at the library. There's a free condensation of it available at publishersweekly.com.

**Books:** Check the dedication and acknowledgment pages of books like yours.

**Your platform:** Let agents find you—be visible online and off, get published and give talks, publicize your work and yourself. When you're visible enough, agents will find you

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Contact Michael through the Larsen-Pomada Literary Agents / [larsenpomada.com](http://larsenpomada.com) / [larsenpoma@aol.com](mailto:larsenpoma@aol.com)

## Tips for Selling to Non-Bookstore Buyers

By Guy Achtzehn



Your prospects will not become customers until your offer beats their no-deal option. A necessary condition for an equitable agreement is when both parties do better than their alternatives. Your prospects have at least three possible alternative courses of action other than accepting your proposal.

**Do it later or do not do it at all.** When they use this as the reason for not accepting your proposal it is usually a negotiating or delaying tactic. You are with your prospects at the table because they saw the potential revenue opportunity in your initial proposal.

**2) Implement the plan with a competitive company.** Part of your proposal includes a competitive analysis. Be familiar enough with your competition so you can quickly describe how your book is uniquely positioned to meet their objectives economically. Similarly, most marketing campaigns fail due to poor implementation of a plan, not the plan itself. Demonstrate that you or your employees are



exceptionally knowledgeable on your topic and offer services that your competition cannot match.

**3) Do it themselves.** Your prospects may think they can create the necessary content in house. This is not out of the realm of possible with large corporations in highly specialized fields. First reiterate your author's exceptional credentials on the topic. If necessary, go on to describe how firms that contract with an external provider are 12% more likely to succeed in a new venture than those firms relying on internal development

Remind them that the addition of a full-time employee (FTE) increases fixed costs and makes an exit strategy more expensive. Hiring one person to write the book could cost \$100,000 (including benefits) with recurring annual employee expense and no guarantee of success.

Should you take the money, or run? Ask that question of yourself before signing on the dotted line. After you sign, it's too late to change any part of the agreement. Know when it is best for you to commit to an offer, or go to the next deal.

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

## Why Bad Things Happen to Good Books

### By Brian Jud



In some ways, books are like humans. They enter the world as babies, full of potential and opportunity, with proud parents boasting great visions for their children's success. But as they grow, something happens and very few become the success their parents hoped they would be.

When the same thing occurs to books, their authors usually never fully understand what went wrong. But you can improve the chances of your offspring's success by using a checklist to predict if a particular book has a chance of becoming successful. Here are general characteristics of a potentially winning title:

1. The industry is in a growth stage with demand, sales and profits all increasing
2. The content has diverse market attraction (mass market appeal; wide acceptability)
3. Broad availability (readily distributable to markets via present or existing channels)
4. Little reliance on ups and downs of economy (or able to be repositioned)
5. Little or no seasonal variations
6. Customers congregated in easy-to-reach geographical concentrations
7. A unique point of difference (fills a market need; not a me-too title)
8. Priced competitively and easy to produce at a marketable cost (not a lot of die-cutting, shrink-wrapping of components, etc.)
9. Lends itself to existing promotion and advertising techniques
10. Saleable to present customers (you already know who and where they are)
11. Has a low break-even point
12. Suitable for rights sales (foreign, serial, movie)
13. The author has a recognized reputation in the target niche
14. The publishing process is not hurried to meet artificial deadlines or an imposed number of titles to publish annually
15. Published with adequate marketing support planned throughout its life cycle
16. Adequate planning
17. Proper implementation of the plan

18. Good production quality
19. Introduced into the right market
20. It has a good title
21. Properly priced
22. Proper forecasting
23. Proper financing. Don't spend so much on production that there is little left for promotion.
24. The author has a long-term perspective
25. Don't relying on distribution channel for selling activities
26. Applicable to sell through bookstores and in special-sales markets
27. It is marketed with perpetual promotion

*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](mailto:brianjud@bookmarketing.com) or [www.premiumbookcompany.com](http://www.premiumbookcompany.com) @bookmarketing on Twitter*

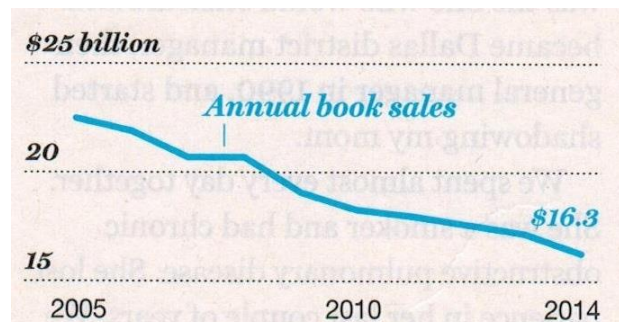
## What's The Big Idea?

Editorial by Brian Jud

Bookstore sales have been declining for years. Now is the time to seek new sources of revenue in non-bookstore (special-sales) markets. The term *special sales* is commonly used to describe revenue opportunities outside of bookstores. It can be a profitable source of new sales if you divide the opportunity into two manageable segments and sell to buyers in each according to their traditional ways of purchasing.

**1) Selling to retailers.** You are already familiar with this sector. You find distributors or wholesalers to get your books into retail outlets where they are sold off the shelf to consumers. Payments are made in months and unsold books are returned.

**2) Non-retail sales.** Corporations, associations, foundations, schools, government agencies and the armed services buy books directly from publishers for use as premiums, incentives, sales promotions, for educational purposes, and sometimes for resale. The factor differentiating this segment from the retail sector is that you sell directly to buyers in these organizations. Sales are typically made in large quantities, returns are rare and payment is received more quickly.



### THIS STORY IS A DOWNER

Sales at bookstores (as opposed to at e-tailers such as Amazon.com) have steadily dropped over the past decade.

Special-sales marketing is not a separate way of doing business. It is not even a new way of doing business. It is an integral part of overall marketing strategy. Simply divide non-bookstore marketing into its two component parts and you may find hundreds, if not thousands of prospective customers for your titles.

## Getting Good Help

By Jeff Davidson, MBA, CMC



New York Life Insurance became so disgusted with the poor verbal and written skills exhibited by domestic job applicants, that the company ended up shipping their forms for processing to Ireland, to an educated, eager work force. Xerox, Motorola and growing numbers the Fortune 500 have poured hundreds of millions of dollars into remedial education programs for legions of their under-educated employees.

As authors, essentially operating small businesses, most of us don't have the option of spending substantial sums or finding European labor-market gold mines to conduct company business. We're stuck with the unenviable options of making do with the skilled, educated and competent employees we can find, hire and retain, or doing without. I believe that the times call for new ways of approaching staffing. Part-timers, student interns and retirees must now not only be considered, but actively sought.

### **Many Types to Choose From**

There are numerous types of part-timers including part-time regular employees, temporaries, students (high school, college, and graduate school), home-based entrepreneurs, retirees, foreign exchange students, college interns, and of course, your kids (or spouses or relatives).

Our high schools still offer intelligent, perceptive college-bound young men and women, many seeking an opportunity to gain real-world experience. Because they are part-time help doesn't mean they're less effective. Many can take a "divisible" unit of work – proof reading a chapter – and do a bang-up job.

From Phoenix to Boston, skilled, educated retirees, possessing years of productive life would appreciate hearing about part time or short term posts. Are you making any attempts to reach them? Do they know that you exist?

### **Try Them and Reap**

In talking to members of my local writers group, I've discovered that the reticence of many authors to staff-up in these non-traditional ways is based on three erroneous assumptions:

1. The part-timer won't be as loyal as other employees.
2. He/she won't be as controllable.
3. Much time will be wasted teaching and supervising those who will be on the job a few hours a week, for a few months.

Let's look, however, at the typical needs of author/entrepreneurs. They want help that arrives on time, get started easily, takes directions, does the job, and rarely gets sick. Increasingly, the skilled part-timer is today's solution.

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*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](http://www.BreathingSpace.com) for more information.*

**Tips for Tips Booklets**  
**Paulette Ensign**





It can be easy to develop new products and services in your business because something appeals to you or someone requests it, without an overall strategy or master plan on your part as much as simply reacting to the moment. Before you know it, your product line has overgrown itself, adding more and more and selling less and less. It seemed like a good idea, yet it's not turning out that way. Now what?

Like an overgrown beautiful flowering bush, it's time to trim it back to maintain and enhance its beauty, to truly enjoy it again and let the flowers get the nourishment they need to thrive. A recent prospective client is who highly successful in certain parts of the business was discovered to have 47 links on the home page of the business website. 47 links! That means any visitor to the site had a possible 47 choices to make. And that was just on the home page before proceeding to the products or resources pages of the site, which had similar numbers of links and choices. Can you imagine how you would feel arriving at a site like that, a site that had really great things on it? Simply too many great things, so much so that the site was not generating sales at the site.

Numerous clients over the years have expressed the intention to create a substantial series of tips booklets from the get-go. While their enthusiasm is admirable, there is usually no strategy attached to it. How many will be written and released in what time frame to what audience? Is success more likely by limiting the number of booklet titles or topics and expanding the delivery formats offered for each title or topic? How about doing time limitations for each topic, putting things "back in the vault" for a defined period of time as a well-known mouse-oriented company does with its children's films, temporarily retiring certain products?

Is your information created and presented on a graduated level of difficulty or certain functions that make sense to identify the starting point for a newcomer or advanced person or for someone in management or marketing?

Like so many situations, less is more. Giving a clear road map is also helpful in guiding someone coming to you or your website so they clearly know what step to take and when to take it. Make a "by when" date on an offer genuine rather than a false effort to force a sale or extend it beyond when you say it's available.

**ACTION** -Think about how you feel when you visit a website or talk with a vendor who gives you too many choices and/or lack of clarity about what they have that best suits what you need. You may ask a few questions, dig around for a bit, or you may instantly bolt from the situation as fast as you can, never to return. Looking at your site and how you speak with clients and prospects gives you the opportunity to test what is working and what can work better to serve your people and your business. Any choices you make leaves space to make new choices, to replace things you remove and add new things along the way to minimize confused minds coming to you and saying no.

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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](mailto:Paulette@tipsbooklets.com)

## **The Interim Strategy** **By Seth Godin**

We say we want to treat people fairly, build an institution that will contribute to the culture and



embrace diversity. We say we want to do things right the first time, treat people as we would like to be treated and build something that matters.

But first... first we say we have to make our company work.

We say we intend to hire and train great people, but in the interim, we'll have to settle for cheap and available. We say we'd like to give back, but of course, in the interim, first we have to get...

This interim strategy, the notion that ideals and principles are for later, but right now, all the focus and resources have to be put into the emergency of getting successful - it doesn't work.

It doesn't work because it's always the interim. It never seems like the right time to stop doing what worked and start doing what we said was important.

The first six hires you make are more important than hires 100 through 105. The first difficult ethical decision you make is more important than the one you make once you've (apparently) made it. The difficult conversation you have tomorrow is far more important than the one you might have to have a few years from now.

Exactly how successful do we have to get before we stop cutting corners, making selfish decisions and playing the short-term game?

All the great organizations I can think of started as great organizations. Tiny, perhaps, but great.

Life is what happens while we're busy making plans. The interim is forever, so perhaps it makes sense to make act in the interim as we expect to act in the long haul.

## **News From APSS Partner Organizations**

### **MIDWEST BOOK AWARDS: CALL FOR ENTRIES**

APSS members in the Midwest are invited to submit entries to the 26th Annual Midwest Book Awards for excellence in books published in 2015. The awards recognize creativity in content and execution, overall book quality, and the book's unique contribution to its subject area. All entries must have a 2015 copyright and an ISBN.

The awards are sponsored by the Midwest Independent Publishing Association (MIPA), and MIPA is working hard to make the awards even stronger than ever. This competition will have three independent judges in each category to give publishers more feedback; all entries receive copies of the judges' scoring sheets. MIPA has streamlined the award categories to 30 and is limiting entries for a single title to a maximum of three categories. This will help the judges give more attention to each and every book.

Don't miss the new deadline: December 30, 2015. Previously, the Midwest Book Awards accepted submissions into January, but that is no longer the case. The earlier deadline will allow the judges to take more time and provide better evaluations.

Get a discount on your entry fee: Join MIPA for \$50 and get a discount on your Midwest Book Awards entry fee. For a complete set of rules, visit [www.mipa](http://www.mipa).

## **Upcoming Marketing Events Only for APSS Members**

### **A Social Media Primer for Authors and Writers**

By Barbra Drizin

Today, it's not a choice. It's a necessity for authors /writers to have a social media presence in order to succeed. Even publishers will ask you, "What social media platforms are you on and how many followers do you have?" So what are the top social media platforms today? Which ones will benefit you? Why? How? Barbra presents a practical overview of social media platforms with live examples. Our tour includes:

- Facebook
- Goodreads
- Blogs
- YouTube
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- E-Newsletters
- Pinterest

Nov 12 6:00 PM EST

Register at <http://tinyurl.com/qa89hjj>

## **Polishing Your Work for Publication**

By Ally E. Machate

Each year, more than a million new titles are published by traditional and self-publishers. Every writer knows—or soon learns—that it takes multiple revisions to create a piece ready to compete for book buyers' attention. This talk will introduce you to the most common problems that plague written works and offer simple ways to identify and resolve them in your own novel, short story, or memoir. You'll receive tips on improving your work to keep readers' attention, polishing your manuscript at the technical level, and getting objective feedback before you submit or go to press.

Nov 17, 6:00 pm ET

Register at <http://tinyurl.com/owl4lbo>