



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.**

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Here is your December 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



Association of Publishers
for Special Sales

Launching APSS-Canada on March 25-26, 2016

Save the dates -- this will be a life-changing event for authors, professionally and monetarily. There is so much movement and support in store for you on becoming a member of APSS-Canada, too. To join, please visit <http://bookapss-canada.org/to-join.html>. While you are there, take some time to visit the other pages, particularly <http://bookapss-canada.org/services.html>

APSS Tip for Finding Potential Non-Bookstore Buyers

Deciding how narrowly to define your target customer is more of an art than a science, but in general, you should err on the side of being specific. Business owners often make the mistake of defining their customer base too broadly, making it very difficult to engage in effective marketing efforts.

Remember: A solid definition of your target customer serves as a foundation for all your marketing activities. The more carefully you've defined your target market, the more likely your marketing efforts -- even simple, low-cost methods -- will bear fruit.

Top Ten List By APSS

There are almost 400,000 ISBNs issued annually for new titles that are published. Yet statistics have shown that 93% of all these books will sell less than 100 copies. Why? Of course, some people publish a book simply because they always wanted to, and do not intend to sell it. Or they may choose to leave a legacy. But many people write a manuscript and publish it with an expectation of success. In addition to the fact that it is easy to have a manuscript published, APSS believes most books do not sell more than 100 copies because people write and publish without understanding what it takes to be successful. Here are our **Top Ten Reasons Most Books Do Not Sell More Than 100 Copies**.

1. Writing with the assumption that the content is different from anything ever written on the topic, or that no other book exists on the subject

2. Thinking one's book is for everyone and not defining the target reader or niche.
3. Describing a personal experience under difficult circumstances ("Everyone said I should write a book about that.") and assuming, a) that it applies to other people, and b) that they will be interested
4. Publishing without a fresh perspective on the topic, one that target readers will perceive as different, important and relevant
5. Expecting a book to sell with no – or limited – marketing support from the author
6. Publishing a book without using the services of a professional editor and experienced designers for cover and page layout
7. Not understanding the publishing business (distribution, pricing, competition, promotion, finances)
8. Selling only through bookstores (bricks and clicks) and not pursuing non-bookstore buyers
9. Pricing a book based on page count or competition, and not considering its market value
10. Not preparing strategic, practical and objective marketing and financial plans

To paraphrase an age-old question, "If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?" The APSS corollary is, "If a book is published and no one is told that it exists, will it make a sale?"

APSS Tip for Negotiating Large-Quantity Orders

As the presentation draws to a close, you ask a committing question that calls for some action to take place. Regardless of how good your presentation is, rarely is your initial proposal accepted in totality. Your prospects need to justify their decision and want to be perceived as having done a thorough analysis of the facts. The negotiating process begins when you try to close the sale and the buyer disagrees with, or is unclear about one or more of the terms you propose.

5 Reasons Why New Year Resolutions Are Usually A Waste Of Time

By Ralf Weiser



How can you tell that it is resolution time at the beginning of a new year? Very simple: The ads for weight loss and smoke quitting programs are off the hook on TV. Sure, it makes sense because the end of a year lets you reflect upon the year that has passed and you ponder what you should do with the upcoming year. Before you know it you think about a resolution and come January 1st you start with it.

Problem is that they typically do not work in the long run. The vast majority of folks barely make it through a week or two before they light up again, or they end up gaining weight and quit regular exercising. It happened to me, and I am certain it has happened to you as well.

In fact I no longer believe in making New Year resolutions (mind you that is different from goal setting). Here are a handful of reasons why they do not work in the long run:

It is not organic. So you wait around for the end of the year to roll around and then all of a sudden you come up with a completely new pattern you want to establish overnight. Good luck with that. Most changes in culture take time - a lot of time and certainly more than the weeks or months you have dedicated to reach your short term goal.

Guilt is not a good motivator. Most resolutions are based on "guilting" you into staying on course while you are implementing your new behavioral pattern. What happens when you are sick and tired getting stressed out about your personal guilt trip? It's stress and neither body or soul like that stress.

Peer pressure isn't powerful enough. You put yourself out on Facebook and perhaps you are brave enough to fess up to your family and friends what you promised you would do to get to your desired goal. So what? Most family, friends, and even co-workers are too polite to ever say a word to you. What is the point then? I do stand corrected with one measure that I have recently come along. Having an accountability partner has been fun and may prove to be the only worthwhile peer pressure tool though.

It does not deal with the triggers. Your patterns and habits all have certain triggers why and when you do things. You do not deal with the triggers and of course you will go down the old comfy ways - it's like you are going down a beaten path with the know reward at the end.

Rarely is there a plan for what comes after reaching your goals. If you are part of the group of people who are successful at sticking to their resolutions and reach their goal, you may end up running through open barn doors. Meaning, that without the pressure and end goal on your mind, your mind will most likely fall into the same habits again eventually as the triggers and rewards will still be around and you just blindly follow them again. Ouch!

Sound familiar? If it does, there is a different way of dealing with changing your bad habits. How do habits, good, bad, or indifferent work? You need three key elements:

Trigger: Habits have a trigger that is so engrained into your brain that it initiates a certain behavior / action anytime that it comes along. Keep a log of what is leading up to a habit that you want to change. Raise your own awareness about what happens and when. Do not worry that it happens; make sure that you know when the triggers come your way.

Action: Any trigger sets off a certain behavior that follows it. This is the behavior that you want to make a lasting change to. Log your behavior again and keep this in the back of your head for the time being.

Reward: Any action has a reward. This is why addicts become addicts. The reward can be so powerful and all but intoxicating you with positive endorphins. This is a drug like substance your body produces and it provides you with a sense of intense well-being - even if the activity is super bad for you.

Now you have 3 key areas where you can make a lasting change. Amend any of the three and you will get to have different results. Instead of telling your brain constantly what you do not want to do, you tell it what you should be doing in order to get a reward. Now you need to define what the reward is. That is the tougher part as you want to come up with something that is fun, or exciting as the bad stuff you want to get rid of.

Do not get me wrong, I am not telling you to not make resolutions. If it works for you, the better. I am asking all the others of you to make sure that you do this with the right reasons and end in mind. Overall I still think that resolutions are the telex and telefax of yesteryear and even e-mail is too slow anymore. Dinosaurs. They are also not around anymore. Take a look at your old dinosaur behavior patterns and think about how you can alter trigger, action, or reward in your favor.

And when you fall off the wagon, do not worry. We are all humans and stuff happens. We will love you the way you are anyway.

Full blog article:

<http://ralfweiser.com/2015/12/10/5-reasons-why-new-year-resolutions-are-usually-a-waste-of-time/>

7 Tenets of Author Branding

By Brian Feinblum



Entrepreneur magazine listed the 7 tenets of branding in its August issue. It suggested if one follows the basic principles and practices followed by today's cutting-edge businesses that one would be successful. Let's examine how these could relate to authors.

1. Simplicity

"While it's tempting to try to be everything to everyone, one of the most impactful ways to stand out in a crowded marketplace is to do one thing well." –Entrepreneur

As a writer, you can brand yourself as being known for a specific thing, from plot themes to character development to vocabulary used to story pace and length to something else. This doesn't mean you shouldn't be strong in all areas of your book and writing, but think about your style and which thing should stand out and become known as your signature style. In other words, what will distinguish your work from that of another? What's your writing DNA going to be?

2. Disruption

"Strategies that break from norms can force an entire category to reevaluate its behaviors" –Entrepreneur

So, as a writer, you can adhere to the norms and patterns out there or break away and do something not commonly done. Will you have a 99-page book or a 990-page book? Will your book add in or hold back something unusual? Determine what will be unconventional about your book.

3. Original Expression

"A bold statement or expression can establish a new narrative and original attitude." –Entrepreneur

You can make bold statements about your writing. Or, your writing can make a bold statement. In either case, do you give off a feeling of attitude or of providing a fresh voice? To be different, sound different.

4. Big Ideas

"A groundbreaking idea that evokes emotion can generate brand loyalty in unexpected and lasting ways." --Entrepreneur

Touching people's hearts is a good way to get people to like you. What will you provide them? What can you say, do or be that will get people behind you?

5. Symbolism

"Powerful symbols transcend words to trigger emotions and create a meaningful impression."
-- Entrepreneur

Symbols come in many forms. Some could be in a gesture, as in a symbolic act. Others could come in the form of public statements. Another could be a visual symbol. However you want to use symbolism, say something that will leave a lasting impression.

6. Meaning

"Commit to making a genuine connection with your audience, and you better your chances of evoking an emotional response." -- Entrepreneur

So as a writer, you need to speak to your audience. Determine what demographic you are seeking. Is your likely reader or fan a man or woman, old or young, white or not, educated or wealthy, etc. Then seek to say and do things that sincerely speak to the experiences, needs, desires, and feelings of those people. Get them to feel that you understand, appreciate, and identify with them.

7. Depth

"Layers of meaning and purity of purpose create a sense of warmth and emotion around a brand." -- Entrepreneur

Show some depth. You offer a real voice, personality, vision, and past when you write or speak. Show others that there's more to you than the surface, that you have insight to -- and understanding of -- things that matter to your readers.

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

When you ordered a sandwich in a delicatessen, did it come with a pickle? You did not order that, but it came anyway. What value-added, unexpected advantage can you give your prospects that they did not expect (nor expect to pay for)? What added benefit can you provide that increases the perceived value of your product without increasing the price (or your cost) inordinately?

APSS Chapter Spotlight – APSS-Canada



President: Monica Palmer (MonicaPalmer@bookapss.org) Monica Palmer, who also writes under the pen name T'Sheba (the tactic "T" is silent), is a Jamaican-Canadian holistic health author, and certified book & magazine publisher, residing in Toronto. Her life's work as a mind-body nutrition coach for over 25 years, as well as a community service worker, has transitioned into a full-time writer and inspirational speaker. She has found her niche audience with those enterprising individuals – entrepreneurs and artists – who cannot afford not to be in good health.

Her first self-published book, “Body Alignment: the creative person’s guide to fulfilling life’s work and purpose,” published in 1999, is still being sought after within the used book trade. “In Praise of the Pomegranate – the symbol of human immortality,” her second book, was published in February 2015. As one of her first readers wrote to her, after reading it: “I saw myself between the pages and could actually see where my malady was coming from. A doctor could not have explained it better.... How apt. This is a must read for everybody.”

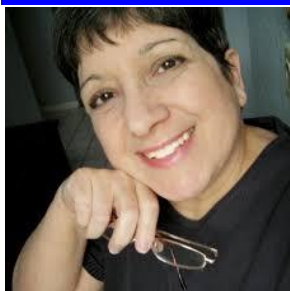
It is just the kind of influence Monica seeks to hold sway over readers and listeners of her words. She writes and speaks from an understanding that her words are but seeds, which, unless they can give birth to some form of transformation in a person’s life, they are non-operative, or useless.

Find the form to join APSS- Canada at www.bookapss.org/chapters/JoinAPSS-toronto.pdf

Attend The 2016 APSS-Canada Book Selling Extravaganza

Three events in two days that can help you sell your books in large quantities with no returns: March 25 - 26, 2016 at Ryerson University, 350 Victoria St, Toronto, ON M5B 2K3, Canada

Why Book Reviews Are Important and How to Get Them **Michele DeFilippo -- 1106 Design**



How do you choose a particular book to read? I’m willing to bet that you base your choices on:

- A friend’s personal recommendation
- An endorsement from a person whose opinion you value
- A book review published in a source you respect
- A “Best Seller” list
- A recommendation from library or bookstore staff
- Books featured in a display.

Your reasons for choosing a book are the same as those of other readers, meaning that you need to think about your own independently published book and how to convince people to read it. So let’s figure out how you can get these same recommendations and reviews for your book!

A Friend’s Personal Recommendation

“Friend” means friends of your readers, not your friends. Don’t print endorsements from your friends on your book cover. You could, however, ask your friends to read your book and post a customer review on your Amazon bookseller page or recommend your book over social media, on Goodreads, or on one of the other top book recommendation websites (see <http://lifehacker.com/five-best-book-recommendation-services-1577706074>). Make sure you open a Goodreads account and that your book is “live” on that website. Why? Your readers respect the opinions of others like them—their community or “tribe”—which exists on social media. Being a member of Goodreads is like being a member of the world’s largest book club, and what could be better than a recommendation from another book club member?

Endorsements from People Whose Opinions Are Respected

It is essential that your book cover, flap, and website include endorsements from people related to your book’s genre or topic. How do you get these? Print a quantity of advanced reading copies (ARCs)—copies of your book with a cover that makes it clear it’s an advance copy. You can arrange for this through your book designer. Forward your book with a personalized letter to people who are respected in your field or genre and ask them to review it.

Aim for endorsements from professionals in your book’s genre whose names and titles you can print

under their endorsements, for example, John Doe, President of ACME Corporation, or, Jane Doe, author, “How to Get Great Reviews.” Never, ever, include endorsements that do not include the reviewer’s last name and title or position. Your readers must be able to place this endorsement on their own internal “trustability” scale: whose endorsement would be more worthy of trust—Gerald M., or Gerald McAbee, Vice-President of Marketing, XYZ Corporation?

You can also send advance book copies (or PDFs of your book) to bloggers who review books and to the top reviewers on Amazon. Send a personalized email to bloggers and ask for a review. Take a look at the Top Reviewers page on Amazon (<https://www.amazon.com/review/top-reviewers>), which lists the readers who post the most reviews. These people love to read books and post reviews, and they welcome inquiry emails.

Your goal should be to obtain several online reviews that will appear on your Amazon bookseller page, plus some book reviews by bloggers to which you can link from your website. You should start obtaining reviews six weeks before your book launch date. Plan your launch date and schedule a “launch week,” during which reviewers will post their reviews. Don’t let your book languish with no reviews!

A Review of the Book Published In a Respected Source

See the above regarding bloggers, Goodreads and Amazon top reviewers. But also consider giving an advanced copy to a book reviewer at your local community newspaper or, if your book is nonfiction, get your book reviewed in a trade magazine. Which media do readers of your book’s genre go to for information: websites, magazines, newspapers, radio shows, community television? These are the media outlets you need to contact for reviews or interview opportunities!

Best Seller Lists and Featured at the Library or Bookstore

It’s hard to help you with the best seller list, but if you have a good product and happy customers, with lots of positive reviews and some savvy promotions, you may just find yourself moving up the rankings at Amazon. However, you can approach your local library and offer a free copy or two. Offer to do a reading and book signing for free, in return for your book being featured in a display or written up in the library newsletter. Ditto for your local independent bookstore. Arrange for author appearances and book signings in your community; most community groups are delighted to have authors come and speak.

Push past your natural shyness and fear of criticism and ask for those reviews. Be strategic in whom you approach. Your potential readers need some help in deciding which books to read. Help them pick yours.

If this all sounds like too much, we can refer you to trustworthy experts who will look after getting reviews for you, and more.

Tips for Selling to Non-Bookstore Buyers

By Guy Achtzehn



Selling books to professional purchasing people is a new way of doing business for many book publishers. When so doing, you are no longer acting as a book publisher, asking people to place your books on their shelves for resale. You are now a creative sales consultant working with professional buyers, convincing them to use your book as a marketing tool to solve their business problems. When you understand the steps in this unfamiliar selling process, making a successful transition to it may be easier than you think.

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

Short-Term Actions to Reach Long-Term Goals

By Brian Jud



Entrepreneurial book publishers are continually faced with a dilemma. They recognize the need to focus on long-term growth and they create five-year plans to achieve it. On the other hand, they understand they must generate short-term revenue to stay in business long enough to reach their ultimate goals. The dilemma? How to survive during the short term to achieve long-term success?

The answer is not to find better books to sell, but to find better ways to sell books. Create and implement an array of marketing tools that allows each to fulfill its designated function over a specific time period.

Some actions facilitate awareness and others are intended to generate sales. Some operate in the short term while others take more time to develop and have an impact on revenue. Others require a sequence of actions with some preparation needed for full impact. If you can balance actions as they function over time they can act like an IV drip, sustaining life with the proper solution delivered at the right time.

A format to help you organize this approach is shown below. It forces you to plan your actions according to their ability to maximize the return on your investment of resources.

	Short term	Long Term
Exposure	Quadrant 1	Quadrant 2
Sales	Quadrant 3	Quadrant 4

The rationale for this process is that before sales can occur, people in your target segments must be aware that your content is available and understand how it can benefit them. They are more likely to buy after they are exposed to -- and understand -- your message.

How to define each label

Definitions of the quadrants are open to your interpretation. You may choose to rename “Short term” as “next year,” or “Sales” as “Revenue.” The important thing is that the labels help you organize and plan your marketing strategies and tactics.

Short and Long Term. The positions of items in the graph are made according to two considerations. First is the approximate time it takes to implement it. “Building your platform” is

something that should be started immediately, but it is primarily a long-term function because its benefits accrue over time. Second is the impact they have on exposure and sales. For instance, planning and design and production quality can impact your short-term sales and can also have a long term effect.

Exposure. This is defined as the number of people who hear and understand your message and the frequency with which that occurs. This can be accomplished personally (media appearances, launch party) or indirectly (publicity, virtual tour). The relative success of generating awareness depends on how carefully you segment your prospects so your message is targeted to their specific needs and circumstances.

Sales. Once your exposure-generating plan is underway, sales should begin to follow as you begin your selling activities. Many publishers measure growth in terms of units moved or revenue generated. But you cannot control sales. You can only influence them by your marketing actions. This chart focuses on what you can control (promotion, distribution, pricing), not what you can't control (sales and revenue). Additionally, sales can be increased through one-on-one activities (personal networking, telephone sales) or indirectly (direct mail, website). There are sales actions appropriate for any personality type.

Examples of actions in each quadrant

The lists below illustrate some of the actions you can take in each of the four quadrants. This is not an exhaustive list of available actions, nor are they ranked in any particular order. These are simply examples of things you can do balance your business growth.

Quadrant 1: Book-marketing actions to stimulate short-term exposure

Appearances on television and radio shows
Print publicity
Awards
Reviews
Launch party
Virtual tour
Endorsements and testimonials

Quadrant 2: Book-marketing actions to achieve long-term exposure

Social networking
Trade shows
Website
Personal presentations
Newsletter
Blogging
Podcasts
Webinar series
Contributions to associations' newsletters
Series of articles
Sales promotion items (bookmarks, pens, pads)
Advertising
Sales literature
Building your platform
Trailer
Business cards, company literature
Participation in discussion groups and forums

Quadrant 3: Book-marketing actions to generate short-term sales

Personal networking (if network is already in place)
Direct marketing (snail mail or email)
Telephone sales
Website (if set up as a selling site with shopping cart)
Seminars
Consulting
Affiliate partnerships
Sales through bookstores
Sales through non-bookstore retailers
Retail-store events
Personal selling
Home shopping networks
Product extensions
Sales through display marketing companies
Library tours

Quadrant 4: Book-marketing actions to achieve long-term sales

Large-quantity, non-returnable corporate sales
Recurring revenue for non-retail buyers
Sponsorships
Membership in the Association of Publishers for Special Sales (www.bookapss.org)
Sales to government agencies
Planning
Creating and maintaining retail-distribution partnerships
Design and production quality
Pricing decisions
Sales through book clubs
Sales through catalogs
Positioning and branding
Sale of rights
Foreign translations
Sales to associations
Sales to the armed services
Brand extensions
Author extensions

There is no mandatory position on this chart for any particular action. Placement is unique to your titles, resources and authors' involvement in the marketing process. Nor are the contents of the quadrants mutually exclusive. Some activities could be placed in all four quadrants. For instance, a website that is designed to communicate a message, reinforce a brand, sell books and describe consulting opportunities could create exposure and sales immediately and over time.

The marketing tools included in this list represent only the visible function. Most require significant background activity. Before the authors conduct media appearances they must create their one sheets, find and contact producers and take media training. Before they make personal sales calls, the publishers' representatives must learn selling techniques, find prospective buyers and plan their approach for making each large-quantity sale.

This system is applicable to other circumstances. It could be adapted for the introduction of a specific title where the short term could be 90 days. In addition, the entrepreneur's dilemma may be particularly unnerving if there is a shortfall of sales and revenue at the beginning of the fourth quarter.

As the pressure builds to reach annual goals they revert back to their short-term-sales actions.

The point is that instead of blindly charging ahead, doing everything you can to grow your business, take some time to plot the impact of each action to generate sales and revenue over time. This strategic combination can contribute significantly to your long-term success.

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

Networking can help you break the ice with people and enhance your book sales. Networking is an organized method of making links from people you know to the people they know, gaining and using an ever-expanding base of contacts. It is the personal process of connecting with others to exchange information, advice, contacts and support. Networking is power. If you have the right information you are more likely to be in the right place at the right time.

10 Tips For Breaking the Ice Through Networking

1. Be genuine and authentic
2. Prepare for each contact
3. Meet as many people as possible
4. Hold volunteer positions in organizations
5. Ask open-ended questions
6. Become known as a powerful resource for others
7. Know your Unique Value Proposition
8. Be able to articulate what you are looking for
9. Follow through
10. Follow up



Top Content Marketing Tricks that Made Companies Successful in 2015

By John Boitnott



As we come to the close of 2015, it's time to look back on the year that was and note the importance that the consumer played in the development of content marketing strategies. Engaging audiences, producing helpful content, and tailoring content to suit consumer needs and trends all proved successful in building and maintain customer relationships and loyalty.

These things will only get more crucial in 2016. With content creation and publication reaching an all-time high in 2015, a huge number of marketers have recognized it as their most pivotal strategy for achieving results. Here are some content marketing strategies that companies used this past year to create undeniable progression and success.

They Got Timely

With the constant influx of promotional emails and spam clogging our inboxes, time was of the essence in 2015. Brands always want the assurance their messages will not only be received, but also read and responded to. There is of course no way to truly get that assurance. The bombardment of digital information constantly pouring in from digital devices leaves everyone overwhelmed, and inevitably messages are missed. And with email marketing strategies often declining in terms of effectiveness, the time was ripe in 2015 for tactics that would target consumers when they were most receptive.

Enter services like Intelligent Delivery by Appboy, a message delivery feature that identifies windows of time during which a consumer is most responsive and likely to actually view a company's message. Approaching timeliness this way will prove crucial in the future of content marketing as efforts to build a broader customer base become more and more strategic.

They Got Personal

The static websites of yesteryear are being replaced by the dynamic website in 2015. This is a website that adapts to user profiles and tailors its content according to past activity. This need for dynamism and innovation requires marketers to be the old dogs learning the new tricks: stepping up to the task of reinventing themselves and getting on the personalization bandwagon.

Sites such as Urban Outfitters and Nasty Gal use personal stylists and machine algorithms to determine a customer's particular taste and style and refine their recommendations from there. You can expect content to personalize too. Companies and publications will target patterns such as location, interest, behavior, and referral to better tailor the experience of their offerings to consumers. It is hoped this will ultimately create a happier consumer/brand relationships. This is only accelerating now through the increased use of new platforms and products that can help companies juice up their website and turn it into a tool that synchs up with the visitor's personality, buying tendencies, and other patterns.

They Got Even More Social

With a continual flow of information being synched across multiple platforms and reaching nearly every corner of the globe, social media is a gold mine of content marketing opportunities. social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn have increasingly become mainstream methods of captivating consumer interest. Social media strategies have long been shown to improve brand loyalty, help build a following, and convert new customers. I've written endlessly at this point about how content marketing and social media are joined at the hip. And it's cost effective too! According to Hubspot, 84 percent of marketers saw that only six hours a week of social media marketing was required to produce increased traffic.

2016 and Beyond

Without a shadow of a doubt, 2015 was a big year for content marketing. The need for personalization to build brand loyalty and nurture a following is becoming highly important, with data collection platforms and logarithm apps becoming more prominent tools. Social media continued to be heavily relevant and participation is mandatory for any marketing team seeking success.

These tactics improved companies' ability for foresight and prediction of market trends while simultaneously creating a cozier, more tailored experience for the consumer. In 2016 I foresee a continued focus on personalization and customer experience, with online strategies extending into offline consumer experiences.

John Boitnott is a journalist and digital consultant found on twitter @jboitnott

Tips for Tips Booklets

Paulette Ensign



Determining what your clients want seems like a simple enough thing to solve, doesn't it? Ask them what they want, and then provide that to them - again, seems simple enough. And yet it is anything but simple, and is more about knowing the questions to ask especially if your clients don't know what they want and what is available.

It is highly unlikely your client wakes up in the morning and says "tips booklets will solve my business problem." And yet tips booklets are what you are offering them. Until you suggested that particular information product and that delivery format, your client may not have ever known about tips booklets, much less that they could be a solution for their concern.

Many have suggested the concept of finding a hungry market and feeding them. Identify the buying population first and then create the products and services those people want. While that idea sure has merit, it does not necessarily address the idea of introducing a new product, a new idea, something that group of people never considered as appealing or as a solution.

Looking through different filters and revisiting the question of what your clients want, the answer can be more than one solution. When they want a way to stay in front of their prospects that is easy to do, inexpensive to implement, useful to the recipient, differentiating them in a crowded marketplace, and has a long shelf, the solution can be many things. In part it is why the promotional products industry that offers thousands of imprinted products of every imaginable type has been alive for as long as it has.

Yet you have a completely different set of solutions to the challenge expressed in the previous paragraph by the client. You have your bite size brilliance, your tips in various delivery formats in hard copy and as downloads. You can help your client accomplish a presence in front of their prospects that has either instant access as downloads or long-lasting value in hard copy, or both. Your information products branded with your client's company name and website help distinguish them in their industry as providing something useful to their customers and prospects. You can even accommodate providing your bite size brilliance in a language other than English when your client wants to reach a non-English speaking population. You have solutions that your client never realized existed until and unless you made them aware of what is possible, once you realized what they actually wanted.

ACTION - Ask your clients and prospects what they want, then listen or read between the lines. They may describe a situation or a set of characteristics that are important to them and they may never say the words "booklets" or "information products" yet their challenges may well be resolved by your suggesting those products and ways to use them. Once you do mention those items as possibilities, be prepared for a range of reactions from great enthusiasm to instant rejection to everything in between. When you stay in the conversation and dig a little deeper, you just might come up with a solution that is a brand new one that you and your client identified together.

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

Better Writing: When to Use “Like” vs. “Such As”

Barbara McNichol



This is part of a series by editor Barbara McNichol to provide tips that help you write like a pro.

Have you ever wondered about the distinction between “like” or “such as” in your writing. Here are two phrases to consider:

... the answers that so-called geniuses like / such as Newton seem to embody.
... centuries of innovations like / such as the airplane and the space shuttle have resulted.

In these examples, “such as” is preferred over “like” because the word “like” implies comparison while “such as” implies inclusion. That means being like something doesn’t include the thing itself.

In the first phrase, Newton is intended to be included as a so-called genius, so “such as” is the correct choice. In the second phrase, the airplane and space shuttle are examples of innovations meant to be included within this context. In contrast, the sentence “he’s like a fish swimming upstream” provides a clear comparison.

Your challenge: When you’re about to write “like,” ask this question: **Would I include this point in a list or exclude it?** The answer becomes your clue to select either “like” (exclude) or “such as” (include).

When you know how to write with precision and accuracy, your professional reputation builds and your career can soar. Barbara McNichol is passionate about helping business professionals add power to their pen. To assist in this mission, she has created a word choice guide *Word Trippers: The Ultimate Source for Choosing the Right Word When It Really Matters* with details at www.WordTrippers.com.

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.com.

Upcoming Marketing Events

How to Boost Your Biz with a Book

By Ally E. Machate

Jan 6 6:00 pm ET

Studies reveal that publishing a book is the top "credible" marketing method for today's service providers, suggesting that becoming a published author can increase your credibility factor by as much as 300%! There's a reason "author" is the root word of "authority." But a well-written and edited, attractively designed, and successfully published book can also help you raise visibility, attract ideal clients, open doors for media opportunities, launch a speaking career, create and promote spin-off products, and more. This talk will show you how a book can be so much more than an income-generating product in and of itself.

Register at <http://tinyurl.com/zj4k4w4>