



# 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 4, Issue 10, Number 42 October 2016

Here is your October 2016 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**

#### **APSS Members -- Win a Free Website in the APSS Free Website Sweepstakes!**

You may have written a new book... Or maybe you have a new business ... Or perhaps your current business has a new service. You want to get it on the web with its own domain on its own site!

Maybe all you need is a nice homepage, an "About Your Business" page, an "About the [Book, Product, Service, etc.] page, a Contact page, and one other page perhaps for testimonials or reviews, etc. You want it today, and you don't want it to cost you - you want it for free. Now you can!

Whatever the reason, one APSS member will get a free website valued at \$599. To enter, all you need to do is send an email to Kim Tuttle at [Kim@bookapss.org](mailto:Kim@bookapss.org) with your name and "APSS Website Sweepstakes" in the subject line. Include your membership number in the body of the email. The winner will be announced on Nov 1.

#### **Save the Date!**

#### **The APSS-Washington State Book Selling University**

Friday, January 27, 2017 from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Location: Bellevue College, Bellevue, WA

#### **APSS Open Mic Every Thursday**

Brian Jud will be online for an open mic session every Thursday at Noon Eastern time to answer your questions about APSS, book marketing and non-bookstore marketing. The access URL is

<https://zoom.us/j/3671572517>

#### **Introducing the October APSS Member Sweepstakes Winner – Jim Culberson**

Each month APSS holds a drawing to randomly select one of our members to be the Member of the Month in the APSS Sweepstakes. Our October winner is Jim Culberson of Sea Bird Publishing. Jim will receive a free half-hour consultation with Brian Jud to talk about how to sell his books to non-bookstore buyers. Our intention is to have him leave the call with a better understanding of how his books can be sold to special-sales buyers -- and create a list of potential buyers for them. We'll announce the next winner on November 15th, and another on the 15th of each following month. You will have 12 chances to win each year -- and you are already registered! There is nothing you have to do but keep your APSS membership up to date.

## APSS Tip for Finding Potential Non-Bookstore Buyers

Some people looked at Goliath and thought he was too big to hit. David looked at him and thought he was too big to miss. You might look at the non-bookstore market for books and think, “Is that market big enough to approach, or is it too big?” The answer is *yes*. A special-sales market of \$14 - \$16 billion is too big to pass up, but it is too big a market in which to compete profitably -- if you look at it as one Goliath market.

The essence of special-sales marketing is the concept of *segmentation*, the act of breaking the mass market down into smaller pieces, each more relevant to your particular title. The total non-bookstore market is actually made up of hundreds of “mini-markets,” each with varying degrees of suitability for your title. These could be defined in a variety of ways. Segment your buyers and find prospect names in each. See Brian Jud’s article below describing different ways to segment your prospective buyers.

## Top Ten List By APSS

### Project an Image of Success and Sell More Books

Before you enter a negotiation, talk yourself into success. It sounds like a cliché, but it has proven to work. The key is to not only say the right things to yourself, but use your physical appearance to reinforce your self-confidence. Here are **Ten Ways to Project a Winning Personality in a Sales Situation**.

1. Not only must you be in the right place at the right time, but you must be in the right frame of mind at the right time. The attitude you project as you enter a meeting can destroy or boost your chances of success.
2. Your influence on other people is partially determined by factors beyond your control (height, gender), but there are things you can do to compensate. Don’t try to be someone you are not – become comfortable with and use what you have.
3. Use your physical presence to create trust— trust must come before a favorable decision
4. Use your physical appearance to enhance your confidence – walk into the room with a poised posture and self-assured smile and you will feel more confident
5. Command others’ respect by demonstrating expertise, competence and commitment, not through a formal bio but through your physical presence and demeanor.
6. Concentrate your pre-meeting self-talk on achieving positive outcomes and rewards
7. Do not only think thoughts of power and confidence, but put them in action
8. Greet people with good eye contact and a firm handshake.
9. Choose clothes that will not distract from your message. Your prospects should pay attention to what you say, not what you are wearing.
10. Visually communicate and reinforce one message: you are a credible source of interesting and important information for your prospective customers.

## APSS Tip for Negotiating Large-Quantity Orders

**Do not reduce your price too quickly.** When buyers sense the negotiation coming to a conclusion, they may ask for a price concession. When this happens, those not familiar with the negotiation process usually offer a lower price, and thereby may lose the sale. Buyers may or may not expect you to automatically give them a better price. They may be testing you to make sure they are getting your best price.

Similarly, do not negotiate just on price. Some publishers who are new to negotiating large book sales think “sale” and “price” are synonymous. But there are many other aspects of a deal, some subjective and some objective. Focus on all the other possible elements, such as personality, trust, payment terms, shipping costs and dates.

## 7 Tips to Boost your eBook Sales Tanisha Williams



More and more publishing success stories these days are coming from eBook publishers as compared to those who deal in print books. As a result, the number of eBook writers has gone up drastically. Though it may seem lucrative to write your own eBook and sell it, making enough sales to earn good money is not as easy as it seems. You need to learn and implement the right techniques and methods to promote your eBook. Here are some tips you should remember when seeking to boost your eBook sales.

**1. Have a professional cover design:** Hopefully, you have used the right tools to format and edit your eBook. The next step now is ensuring that the cover itself captures a prospective buyer’s attention immediately. The cover design is a very big factor in determining how well you sell your eBook.

The first thing is to have a professional create the design (unless you are one yourself). Look online for some of the best eBook cover designs and then use these ideas to help an expert create what you want.

Of course a professional designer will cost money but do not compromise on this. It is an investment you have to make if at all you want to earn from your work.

**2. Sell your eBook on different stores:** Amazon may have a lot of prospective customers, but don’t put all your eggs in one basket. Submit your eBook to multiple stores to make sure that it gets as much exposure as possible. Even small online stores will substantially add to your total revenue.

**3. Give it away for free:** For a writer, it is extremely important to have a loyal following. If you are writing your first book, getting this audience is a big challenge. One way of going about it is by giving the eBook away for free for a limited period of time. Even better, you can give your first book away for free and then use the gained following to make huge sales with your subsequent books.

Free giveaways can also help you gauge the success of the eBook and give you an idea of how much you can earn from it.

**4. Get it reviewed:** A good review can make all the difference in terms of eBook sales. There are sites that provide eBook reviews. Submit your work here. In addition, get satisfied readers and eBook stores to give their testimonials about the eBook. If it is possible, find a well-known author to also write a short review. This will give you a lot more exposure and more people will trust you.

**5. Optimize your sales pages:** Whether you are selling your eBook on Amazon or anywhere else, make sure that your sales page is highly appealing. Fill it with quotes from your eBook, reviews from customers and testimonials. Tell people what to expect and make them anticipate reading your work.

It is advisable to incorporate search engine optimization (SEO) into your sales page to make it easier for people to find it online.

**6. Interact with your readers:** It is very important to connect with your readers, both current and prospective. The best way to do this is through forums and social media networks. This interaction will also attract other people and multiply your following.

**7. Be careful about the pricing:** You may have done everything perfectly well up to this point but then mess up when it comes to putting a price on your eBook. Generally eBooks are priced much lower than printed books due to the lower production cost. In fact, the low prices have been instrumental in driving up the popularity and success of eBooks.

So be careful not to overprice it such that people don't buy it. Ideally, eBooks are sold under \$10. For fiction, it should be under \$7. The most favorably price range especially for new writers is between \$0.99 and \$2.99. This way, you will sell enough books to get good returns.

Once your first eBook becomes a success, don't stop there, publish another one. The more quality work you have the easier it will be to find you and the bigger the following you will have. Most importantly, don't forget to always communicate and interact with your readers. Create a community within which people can share and even spread word about your books.

## Headlines That Generate Attention

By Brian Feinblum



A number of years ago I started taking note of advertising headlines that got my attention, mainly in newspapers, magazines, and the phonebook. I started to see patterns and repetition at times, but with good reason: these ads made the reader stop and think for a second. Here are the final examples of 317 headlines that may inspire you to write your own catchy headline for advertising your books, products and services.

250. Large Selection To Choose From

251. We've Got What You Want...Or Else We'll Order It For you

252. We Service All Foreign And American Vehicles

253. Grand Opening

254. Hidden Treasures

255. Take The Midas Challenge

256. Call For Details

257. We Pay Cash - Call Today

258. 24-Hour Hot Line -- Always Available

259. We Never Close

260. We Pay More - We Charge Less

261. Full-Year Warranty

262. Lifetime Guarantee

263. Spring Fling

264. Fall Fest
265. Why Pay More?
266. Why Receive Less?
267. Free Admission With This Ad
268. You Can Rely On Us
269. Serving South Florida Since '65
270. Single? Jewish? call 1-800-LUV-LINE
271. Become Debt-Free
272. Make Your Taxes Less Taxing
273. Home Protection at \$195
274. Lose 20 Pounds In 20 Days
275. Nothing Is Simple For Someone In Back Pain
276. We-B-Toys
277. Surprise Yourself
278. Treat Yourself To A Hairrahs Super Manicure & Pedicure
279. Stop The Pain - Now!
280. Can We Really Live On \$50,000?
281. How Much Will Your Child Grow This Summer?
282. Where How You Look Is important...Lens Express
283. Save \$ On High Quality Cleaning With Honest Prices
284. The Whole Store - 40% Off
285. 660,000,000 Garments Recommend Woolite!
286. Don't Be Driven Crazy - Call Bob's Auto Repair
287. All You Need Is Hershey...A Taste Of Life!
288. Lady In Red...Man In Blue...Child In White...Clothes For America
289. The United States Of America...Why Go Anywhere Else. US Tours
290. Forget The middleman - Let That 20% Cut Be Yours
291. Hey, Get Your Greedy Hands Out Of My Pocket! Tear Up Your  
Overpriced Estimates And Come To Joe's Auto Repair
292. A celebration Of Great Theatre Since 1971
293. 50,000 Dollars...Free - Wipe Out Big Debts With Bankruptcy
294. Hit The Beach With Your New Ass Tight Bikini
295. High Performance Footwear At Low Prices
296. Often Imitated - Never Duplicated
297. Buy One, Get Second For Half-Price
298. Three Burgers, Three Bucks At Wendy's
299. Specially Selected Bra Fashions For Those Who Want To Lift Their  
Spirits
300. Help Us Be The Best
301. No Nonsense
302. Recycled
303. Introducing New Ownership, New Cook, New Menu, New Prices
304. Below Cost...We Lose On Every Sale
305. Break Even - We Don't Make A Profit
306. Liquidation Sale -- Everything Must Go
307. We Pay Cash On The Spot
308. Shop By Phone
309. Meeting All Of Your Floor Needs - Tile, Wood, Carpet, Vinyl
310. Thank You!
311. Reduced To...\$12...\$8...\$5...\$1!
312. Looks Brand New
313. Eliminate Broker Fees - Buy Direct

- 314. 1 Year Less Tan New - Half The Purchase Price
- 315. Choose From 75 models
- 316. We Want You!
- 317. Forget The Rest -- We Give You The Real Deal

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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](mailto:brianfeinblum@gmail.com).

## **APSS Tip for Making Persuasive Sales Presentations**

Most people can communicate comfortably when speaking one-on-one. But when asked to speak before a larger group they can become very nervous. All the psychological reasoning behind why this happens notwithstanding, the bottom line is that it happens. Expect that you will be nervous, and deal with it.

Some level of anxiety should be present when you are asked to address multiple prospects. This will cause you to practice more before the event. And it will add passion to your voice during your presentation. But too much angst can be debilitating and keeps many authors from pursuing large-quantity sales.

Many presenters have three versions of their presentation: the one they practiced, then one they gave and the one they wished they had given. What this means is that after your presentation you will generally find that it wasn't so bad and that had you been less anxious you probably would have performed better. Knowing that your preconceptions were worse than the reality can be helpful as you prepare for and perform your next appearance. You will know that the upcoming presentation will not be as bad as you think it might be, and that will help you relax.

This brings up an important strategy. You gain control of your unease over time and through experience making presentations. Every one you make is better than the last – but not as good as the next – as you become more confident in your delivery. Therefore, make a few presentations to your “C” prospects for small-quantity orders before tackling a major prospect. If you do not get the order, all is not lost. In fact, much is gained as you hone your presentation skills and learn how to manage and channel your tension.

## **APSS Chapter Spotlight APSS-Colorado Springs**



Chapter President: Mary Madjeski ([missmary.madjeski@gmail.com](mailto:missmary.madjeski@gmail.com))

After many years of life experiences, I found myself being interested in writing. The adventure really began when my friend gave me a flyer from the library, reflecting workshops for aspiring authors. When I went to my first workshop, I was introduced to more workshops. Then, I was able to meet some authors, agents, and publishers that shared their expertise on their current career. Being educated, by learning some useful information, enabled me to hone in on my gift for writing.

Through the years, what I have discovered is that I enjoy myself when I can help others tell their stories, which in turn, may inspire the reader(s) to do something fruitful in their life, like helping some others in achieving their goals, and it becomes a cycle. Hence, the reason I've joined APSS in helping get the Colorado Springs Chapter re-established and running again, is so it can help aspiring authors' dreams, come into fruition.



## Tips for Selling to Non-Bookstore Buyers

By Guy Achtzehn



### Ten Steps to More Profitable Sales

The corporate-sales process begins with knowing what you are selling (no, it's not books) and defining the people who can make large purchases. Then you learn their needs, propose solutions, make presentations, negotiate the terms of each sale and service the business once the order is placed. This takes time, if for no other reason than the buyer's risk of making the wrong decision is considerably higher than in the retail sector where unsold books are typically returned. Here was a description of each of the ten steps required to make a large, non-returnable sale to a corporate buyer

culminating in this final step.

#### Step Ten: Service and maintain the business

There is still more to do once the order is placed. Manage all aspects of production and shipping to confirm that the correct books are shipped at the right time in the right quantity.

The sales process for a large order to a corporation could take several years. Buyers may initially test your recommendation and then wait months before placing an order. Rarely are people in as much of a hurry to buy your books as you are to sell them. So be patient.

Careers could be at stake if poor decisions are made, so the buyers want to make sure every foreseeable event is considered. Smaller orders take less time and effort, but you should still cover all the bases. Use these steps as a general guideline, leading you down the path to more profitable, large-quantity, non-returnable and recurring sales to corporate buyers.

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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

## By Brian Jud



This month's tip for finding prospective buyers described the importance of organizing them in niches to more easily locate them. Here are several ways in which you can segment your prospects.

#### Demographic segmentation

Perhaps the most popular means of dividing a market is by quantifiable, demographic characteristics such as age, income or gender. For example, consider the market for selling job-search books to unemployed people. Not everyone in that total market has the same career needs, skills or aspirations. There are college students seeking their first position. There are 50+ year-old people with families and greater financial obligations. Women, minorities, blue-collar workers and Hispanic people all have different needs, require different information and may look for job-search assistance in diverse places. A title describing the basic functions of how to get a job could -- and should -- be marketed differently to each segment.

#### Seasonal segmentation

You might segment your titles by the time of year. Graduating college seniors represent an annual source of recurring revenue regardless of the economic conditions that might impact your sales to the general public. Marketing titles during specific celebratory periods could be included here. For example, September is Read-A-New Book Month and June is National Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Month.

#### Geographic segmentation

The title *Skiing in Colorado* demonstrates geographic segmentation. Your marketing instincts might immediately suggest selling this book in Colorado ski resorts. But think not only of the book's geographic setting, think of where people who might want to buy your book would congregate. Skiers come to Colorado from all over the world and you might reach them in ski shops, sporting-goods stores or travel agents around the country.

### **Transactional Segmentation**

Categorizing customers as first-time buyers, or those who purchase frequently or in large quantities enhances customer dialogue and repeat sales. This permits reaching prospective buyers with the appropriate message at the right time.

### **Marketing segmentation**

Segmentation also applies to your marketing actions, too. You might seek a review of your novel on the Fantastic fiction website (<http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/>), or your technical book on the Computer and Technical Book Reviews website (<http://victoria.tc.ca/int-grps/books/techrev/mnbk.htm>) instead of submitting them to the *New York Times* Book Review.

Award competitions are also segmented. The Ben Franklin Awards competition has many different categories for fiction and non-fiction titles. You may also enter your science fiction book for The Nebula Award, or your mystery for the Dagger Award presented by the Crime Writers Association, or the Edgar Awards presented by the Mystery Writers of America.

### **Segmentation by Profit Potential**

Segmentation by potential profit points to an alternative marketing strategy. Assume your book is priced at \$15. You would have to sell 1000 books to airport stores (where returns are possible), through a wholesaler taking a 60% discount in order to net \$6000. On the other hand, you would net the same amount by selling only 400 at list price following your personal presentations.

### **Market segmentation**

Segmentation helps you market your book where interested, prospective buyers congregate in special markets. This may save you from wasting time, effort and money -- all valuable commodities to the independent publisher.

You may ask, "Why go through all this?" As a general statement, it will help make your marketing actions more effective, efficient and profitable. It helps you target your promotional copy to the needs of the buyers. For example, buyers in government agencies will purchase your books for reasons different from those at a children's library or airport store. This gives you more control over your business in the following ways:

- **Pricing control.** A strategy of pricing your titles based upon the value they offer the customer can be more profitable. It also yields more pricing flexibility and leeway to offer price incentives, discounts, two-for-ones or coupons.
- **Product control.** In special-sales marketing you are not selling books, you are selling the intangible content of your books. Buyers are concerned with the relevancy of your content to the solution of their problems. The format in which it is delivered, while relevant, is not mandated as a book.
- **Promotion control.** Each segment may demand its own promotional approach with a different mix of publicity, advertising, sales promotion, direct mail and personal selling.



- **Distribution Control.** In non-bookstore marketing you can devise your own sales channels to reach various segments. You might sell your business books through airline magazines or associations; your book about dogs, in Petco; or your book about car safety to driver-training companies. You might choose to sell your romance novel in supermarkets or have cruise ships and limousine services purchase it as a gift for their passengers.

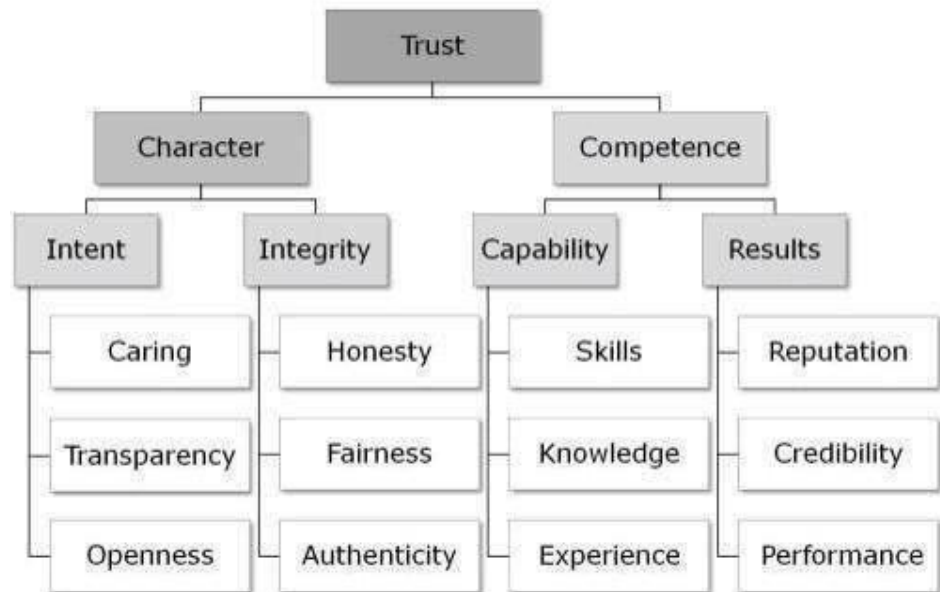
The bottom line is an improved bottom line, since these benefits translate into greater profitability for your business. So take some time to identify individual market segments that may be particularly receptive to your product category. Your marketing actions will be more on target, and the special-sales market will be too big to miss.

*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?

Get corporate buyers to trust you and they will buy more books.

Trust evolves from a demonstrated commitment to work together collaboratively, solve problems jointly and share responsibility for any operational challenges that arise.



## Novel Ideas

### Tips to Help You Sell More Fiction in Special Markets

## Sculpting the Clay for Coverage, by Jodee Blanco

The bottom line is that to execute an effective campaign, you have to look at fiction in a whole new way. See novels as news stories made of clay. The substance is there, but you have to sculpt the clay into the proper shape and dimensions.

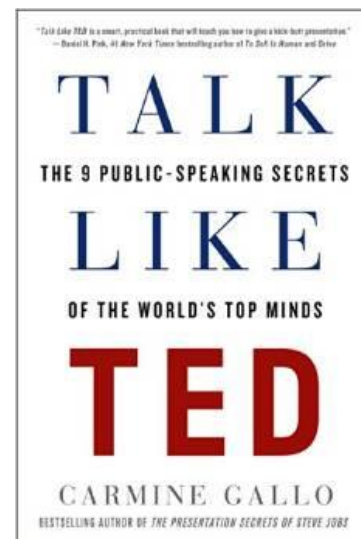
When you're devising a campaign strategy for a novel, ask yourself the following questions:

- What are the main themes of the story?
- Does the book address these issues from an uncommon, controversial, or provocative perspective that's newsworthy?
- Are there parallels between the author's life and the novel that could be used as media hooks or to reinforce credibility?
- Can the author share entertaining anecdotes surrounding the research and writing of the book that could be publicized as news?
- Does the book focus attention on an issue of specific concern to any professional organizations, foundations, or other special-interest groups that would benefit from a co-promotion?
- Can the premise of the book be tied into any stories currently being covered in the news?

## Read It And Reap An APSS Recommendation for a Book That Can Help Your Business Succeed

*Talk Like TED* by public speaking coach Carmine Gallo. He has broken down hundreds of TED talks and interviewed the most popular TED presenters, as well as the top researchers in the fields of psychology, communications, and neuroscience to reveal the nine secrets of all successful TED presentations. Gallo's step-by-step method makes it possible for anyone to deliver a presentation that is engaging, persuasive, and memorable.

Many people have a fear of public speaking or are insecure about their ability to give a TED-worthy presentation. Carmine Gallo's top 10 Wall Street Journal Bestseller *Talk Like TED* will give them the tools to communicate the ideas that matter most to them, the skill to win over hearts and minds, and the confidence to deliver the talk of their lives.



## Tips for Tips Booklets Paulette Ensign



Recently a client expressed concern that the tips booklet she hired to be written for her didn't go deeply enough into the guts of her expertise. She was worried there wouldn't be adequate value put into the publication. Her concern is not new. This worry appears most often among content experts who are the most knowledgeable people on the planet and who are publishing a tips booklet as their first information product.

Of course it's crucial to provide value. No one would argue that point. The bigger deal, though, is providing immediate value so the reader/buyer wants and can handle more. The best way you can serve that first-timer to your knowledge base is by giving them an introduction at a basic level, with a call to action to get the next level when they are ready. That allows them to digest and absorb new information and be reminded of what they may already know, with the confidence you will travel the learning trail with them. Laying that ground work provides a firm foundation on which to build the next level of complexity. They can learn more easily and effectively that way, and you can create a recurring buyer as they come back for more advanced teaching that goes deeper and deeper, a step at a time.

**ACTION** – Look at the 30,000 foot view of how you can serve those who want what you have. Starting at with the basics and going on to intermediate and advanced levels lets you build an ongoing relationship.

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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)

## How to Pitch Holiday Gift Guides

### By Penny Sansevieri



Gift guides can be a great way to give your book some extra bounce this holiday season. Whenever we've pitched gift guides in the past, books that have been accepted get a nice nudge in sales and exposure making even one placement worth the effort for your book marketing plan. So how do you go about pitching your book to gift guides? Well, let's first break down the different types of gift guides.

#### National Magazines

Most national magazines, especially women's magazines, have gift guides that are generally published by November 1 to get out there in time for the big shopping season and though it's likely too late to be included in these for this season, some publish gift guides outside of the big holiday rush. So keep Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc. in mind for your book promotion.

The best way to find editorial calendars for magazines is to look on the magazine website, or just Google the name of the magazine and "editorial calendar" when I looked up the editorial calendar for Self Magazine, I found these two links:

[http://meredithdirectmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/02\\_Editorial-Calendar.pdf](http://meredithdirectmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/02_Editorial-Calendar.pdf)

<http://www.condenast.com/brands/self/media-kit/print/calendar>

You'll see that both of these show the close dates for the issue, which for the November issue is

September 1, so fairly early. Sometimes the magazines will say “gift issue” and other times they won’t, so it’s good to be familiar with magazines that do this.

### **Regional Magazines**

If you’re discouraged about the long lead times with national magazines, take heart because regional magazines (which often have gift guides, too) have a much shorter window. Most cities have at least one regional magazine, most have several. And while regional magazines may seem less glamorous than their big, national counterparts, don’t underestimate how much readership they get. Often when we pitch our authors regionally they get a nice hit of exposure and a decent push in sales.

If you’re not sure which magazines are regional to you, head on over to your local grocery store or drug store because they often have a stack. Some might be free and others paid. We have a mix of them here in San Diego (free and paid) and all of them have gift guides. Much like pitching national magazines you’ll want to go online and look at their editorial calendar. If the magazine doesn’t have one on the website, and maybe just a small staff (this is the case with many regional publications) feel free to reach out to them directly and ask if they do a gift guide and what their guidelines are. If they don’t do one, they may decide just to feature your book or product because you’re regionally connected – which could also be a great way to gain some attention to your book.

### **Regional TV Programs**

The same applies to regional TV talk shows or news broadcasts. Even with a heavy dose of evening news, there may also be a gift guide segment. Most regional morning shows do this and while they often won’t list it online, you can usually just call the front desk person at any local TV station and ask them. If they can’t help, they will help you find someone who can. However if you do call, be prepared with your pitch in case they transfer you right to the show producer!

### **Bloggers**

Whenever we’ve pitched bloggers for their gift guides, and gotten a book included it’s been a great find for our authors. Not just because of the immediate promotional boost a gift guide gives an author, but since it’s a blog post the blog comes up in searches for as long as the blogger is around (which is generally a pretty long time). Much like magazines, bloggers will focus on what their blog is about. So for a cooking blog, they may put up a best-of cookbook guide (click to see this blogger’s guide).

If you have a list of blogs you love, do a quick search on each site to see if they have done gift guides in the past and then see if there’s a post calling for gift guide suggestions. If you don’t see one, email them and ask them if they’re planning a gift guide post this year. Most of the November and December gift guides are collected in October – again early enough for the blogger to be able to ferret through the submissions and see what’s right for their blog.

### **Pitching Gift Guides**

So now that you’re sold on the idea of holiday gift guides, let’s talk about how to pitch them.

#### **Get to know the magazine or blog**

It’s important to know what and who you are pitching so spend some time getting to know them. Do they even do holiday gift guides or are they focused on gifts for the New Year New You model? Each blog is different as is each magazine. Also, as I mentioned earlier, many blogs and magazines don’t just do gift guides one time per year, many do them throughout the year so if you’ve missed the crazy Christmas shopping window, take heart because other, major holidays are right around the corner.

**Make sure it's the right fit**

As I mentioned by each of these suggestions, make sure you are pitching a magazine or blog that is related to your book. If you don't not only will you not get included, but it's a waste of the editor's time and yours.

**Pitch the right person**

As with any pitch, take the time to find the right person to pitch. Especially with gift guides, because editors or bloggers have to often sift through hundreds of submissions, they may have a separate email set up to accept submissions. Follow the rules because if you don't, your entire submission may get deleted.

**Craft your email**

While I always say that you need really catchy email subject lines if you're pitching media or bloggers, the same isn't true for gift guide pitches. In fact I recommend a subject line that reads: "Holiday gift guide:" and then a catchy title for your book or product. Sometimes this may be your book or product name, while others it may be a hook.

Keep the email short, two paragraphs at the very most but less if you can. Since gift guides are highly visual, be sure to include a link to your product and offer to send a sample to the editor or blogger.

**Offer enhancements**

There's no shame in bribing, and by "bribing" I mean offering to do a giveaway to the bloggers readers or if you get picked up by a regional magazine, or local TV shows, offer to give away copies to their viewers or readers.

**Do the follow up**

There's no shame in checking back. Just a simple note asking if they got the pitch and if they need anything further should suffice.

Gift guides can add a great boost to your book and while they take a bit of effort, they are completely worth it. One nod from a publication, TV show or blogger could net you tons of exposure and lots of sales.

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Penny is the founder of Author Marketing Experts, Inc., best-selling author and internationally recognized marketing and media relations expert.

**Upcoming APSS Marketing Webinars**

**Nov 3:** "Blogging for Authors: Unleashing the Power of Community," by Joel Friedlander; 6:00 pm ET; <http://tinyurl.com/z9woun3>

**Nov 8:** Plan to Sell More Books in 2017," Sponsored by APSS-New Jersey; Noon ET; Register at <http://tinyurl.com/z8tdxlz>

**Nov 17:** "How to License Translation Rights and Subsidiary Rights—Plan for Success," By Cynthia Frank; 6:00 pm ET; <http://tinyurl.com/zb4sbrg>