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

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Here is your January 2017 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



2017 Publicity Planner

Every year Paul Krupin (paul@directcontactpr.com) creates a forward-looking publicity calendar to help identify opportunities for people which is available in a free pdf file download. It contains a lot of unusual holidays so that you can get creative, think ahead, and identify ways to tie-in to calendar events well in advance of the day they occur. Paul gave me permission to pass this on to APSS members, so here is the link to his Publicity Planner for 2017: http://presari.com/media/2017publicityplanner011517original.pdf

APSS Tip for Finding Potential Non-Bookstore Buyers

Have you ever heard people say, "break a leg" and wondered where that phrase originated? In the early days of Greek theater a stage was built as a temporary platform. After a performance, people in the audience would surround the actors on the stage to congratulate them. The better the actors' performances, the larger then number of people who would approach them. If too many converged on the stage the supporting legs could – and often did – break.

The concept of your marketing platform is analogous to a stage. You are the only person on it, clearly visible to all your devotees. But your fans are in the audience looking up at you on your platform, which is propped up by a number of legs. Your attention should be directed to building a strong foundation of "legs" -- relationships with people who will support you through and beyond the introduction of your book.

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*

- 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 with everybody**. "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. 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

Negotiating is the act of getting all the facts on the table and then discussing them without confrontation. Do not come into the event with the need to defend your proposal, or to make it with a take-it-or-leave-it attitude. Be willing to let others add their nuances to the developing campaign so they become part of the solution, too. If you lead this discussion properly the numbers become secondary to the relationships you develop as the presentation unfolds.

APSS Tip for Making Persuasive Sales Presentations

Once you begin your presentation, people in your audience are skeptical. Are they in for a sales pitch? A boring monologue? Or a professional, interactive discussion about how they can eliminate one of the problems weighing on their minds. They await your opening remarks to find out if this meeting will be worth their time.

Your first words are critical. You set the tone for the next hour or so. Deliver a few sentences to let them know that they have chosen to spend their time properly, because you are here to help them solve a problem.

A brief statement that interests the recipient can be critical to your future relationship. In 1994 Barnett Helzberg, Jr. was walking by the Plaza Hotel in New York City when he heard a woman call out to Warren Buffet. Helzberg approached the celebrated investor and said, "Hi, Mr. Buffet. I'm a shareholder in Berkshire Hathaway and a great admirer of yours. I believe my company matches your criteria for investment. "Send me more details," Buffet replied. A year later, Helzberg sold his chain of 143 diamond stores to Buffet.

10 Points for Publishers to Focus On in 2017 By Karan Bedi



2016 was an interesting year for publishers as there were changes in the political landscape, rising Asian influences and further headway into the digital publishing domain. All of these factors will contribute to the publishers' focus in the coming year as well as meeting the needs of the dynamic consumer. On that note, here are the 10 points that publishers will need to focus on in 2017.

1. Marketing – The main aim of all publishers is to sell more books. In 2017, publishers will put more resources into maximizing their profits through some of the latest marketing techniques available.

Increasing visibility – More publishers are interested in having their books reach a wider audience. There will be an increased reliance on the effective use of keywords, rich metadata tag descriptions, book recommendations and targeted book marketing.

Automation – Automated marketing has seen an uptick this past year and will certainly become more of a trend as more publishers adopt the system. According to Nucleusresearch.com, "Marketing automation drives a 14.5 percent increase in sales productivity and a 12.2 percent reduction in marketing overhead." It identifies and maximizes the critical data needed for marketing campaigns, which has proved useful to publishers worldwide.

Social Media – More businesses in various industries, including publishing, have increased their investment in social media marketing. Social media AD spending is likely to exceed \$35 billion in 2017, representing 16 percent of all digital AD spending globally. More publishers are likely to follow suit in the same direction.

2. Going Mobile – In the last 15 years, there has been an increase in the usage of mobile devices such as smart phones, tablets and iPads. It's estimated that 80% of internet users own a Smartphone. In education, more users are getting educated via mobile content, also known as m-learning. It's more to do with practicality, adaptability and instant access through the use of apps.

In the workplace, more workers are using mobile devices, due to an increase in the number of employees working remotely. According to Global Workplace Analytics, employees are not at their desk roughly 50 to 60 percent of the scheduled workday. In essence, training employees is being conducted via mobile content. Publishers would be wise to invest in this sector as there is a demand for customized mobile content such as interactive material, multi-lingual text as well as audio-video content. Investment in m-learning will continue to rise in the years to come.

3. Consumer Behavior – Consumer behavior illustrates how each reader reads various titles and records their actions after reading it. Simply put, it provides clear insights to publishers into how readers are responding to various eBooks and other forms of content on a variety of media devices. One of the key applications of reader analytics is to allocate precious marketing dollars on the right books. Superior analytics lead to a higher profit margin. In 2017, this is more likely to receive additional attention in the industry.

- **4. Quality Control** According to a recent survey for digital publishers, a topic that continued to generate interest was quality, with more than 56 percent of respondents saying it was a major concern. Other concerns were 'retaining formatting' and 'errors caused by automated conversion.' In the digital world of eBooks, there is no room for error as more readers are consuming this format on a daily basis. Publishers should focus on the overall quality of content that is being generated.
- **5. Securing New Rights In 2017**, more publishers will be prioritizing copyrights and rights distribution in various countries. In the last 12 months, there have been changes in the political landscape. In the United Kingdom, the effects of Brexit is being felt with a decrease in consumer confidence and spending. In the European Union, there is a proposal for a Digital Single Market (DSM) where the free movement of persons, services and capital is ensured and where individuals and businesses can seamlessly access and exercise online activities under conditions of fair competition. Similarly, in the United States, the American Association of Publishers (AAP) sent an open letter to President-Elect Donald Trump in regards to current laws being ill-equipped to protect their intellectual property.

This brings about the larger issue of monetizing assets and the need for publishers to secure new rights for their assets. Publishers will need to keep a checklist of their assets, reduce liability and research costs.

6. Growing Indo-China Influence – There will be more investment from China in the publishing sector. According to an article by Publishers Weekly, the state-owned publishing Zhejiang Publishing United Group became the fifth Chinese publisher in the global top 50.

India is also poised for substantial growth as more people in India are becoming literate. By 2020, it's estimated that the country's literacy level is projected to reach 90%. The unique features of India's demographics in terms of a growing population present tremendous opportunities for the growth and expansion of the publishing industry in all sectors.

7. More Multi-Media Investment – Over the last few years, publishers have seen growth in this sector with more interactive video and audiobooks being offered to clients. Part of this move has to do with audience engagement. Unlike articles, which tend to be skimmed through, videos have a 75%+ view completion rate; plus, research shows that people are more likely to buy a product after watching a video about it. Similarly, audiobook sales in the U.S. and Canada jumped 21% in 2015 from the previous year, according to the Audio Publishers Association.

In 2017, it will be prudent for publishers to invest in areas of education, corporate training as well as trade publishing, using these formats to their advantage.

- **8.** Go Beyond Digital In 2016, Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) had an impact on the wider spectrum of popular culture. Especially accompanied by the impact of the AR mobile game, Pokémon Go, with an estimated 500 million downloads, since its launch in July. While it's true that both these concepts are still in their infancy, there is still massive room for further development and investment. Immersive storytelling, ever-changing demands of consumers and an interactive experience are some of the main reasons why publishers could see greater returns in these formats.
- **9. More Publishing Platforms** Going into 2017, publishers around the world will seek to bring down their overhead expenditures. They're more likely to invest in more publishing platforms to streamline the production and editorial process, and simplify the publishing workflow to lower costs for a greater return-on-investment.
- 10. **Rise of Independent Book Stores** Bookstore sales rose 2.5% in 2015, marking the first time

since 2007 that sales in the sector were up. This was largely due to an increase in the number of independent bookstores as sales rose more than 10% from 2015 than in 2014. It continued well into 2016, with better prospects in the coming year. While it's an anomaly as many thought that book stores were declining, it's something that publishers should keep their eye on in 2017.

8 Top Blog Traffic Killers Authors and Bloggers Should Avoid Doing By Tanisha Williams

If you want to increase your blog traffic, then give your readers a reason to keep coming back. While every blogger works towards this goal, most of them have the tendency to stumble into pitfalls that debilitate their efforts. There are certain mistakes you must avoid while building your blog audience or else your traffic will never gain momentum. Here are the top 8 blog traffic killers to steer clear of:

To become a successful blogger, you need to increase your blog traffic. It's plain and simple – the higher the blog traffic is, the more readership you will get. While every blogger works towards this goal, most of them have the tendency to stumble into pitfalls that debilitate their efforts. The truth of the matter is that it's much easier to lose blog traffic than to gain it. There are certain mistakes you must avoid while building your blog audience or else your traffic will never gain momentum. Even worse, these mistakes may lead to a rapid decrease in your current readership. Here are the top 8 blog traffic killers to steer clear of:

1. Not Enough Posts

Frequency matters when it comes to blogging. You cannot build solid blog traffic without frequent posts. The online community responds to consistency. They want to know that they can rely on their bloggers to publish content on a fairly regular basis. A failure to post frequently, or at least as frequently as promised, will kill a blog's traffic relatively quickly. The more often you post the greater the traffic.

2. Too Many Posts

Readers have a tendency to run from content overload. While they generally respond negatively to blogs that do not publish posts as frequently as required, they are just as unforgiving with blogs that produce too many posts within a short period of time. It is better to focus on writing one post per day than several mediocre ones. The key is to find your frequency sweet spot and stick with it.

3. Lengthy Posts

Most readers have short attention spans. As such, lengthy posts may cause them to lose focus and chase them away. Try not to go overboard by posting blogs that exceed 1000+ in word count. Some readers may skim through your lengthy content but others might choose to ignore it altogether. If you cannot produce content in small chunks that readers can consume with ease, your blog traffic will begin to dwindle.

4. Lack of Engagement

A lot of new bloggers spend so much time crafting well-written posts and wonder why their hard work isn't translating into blog traffic. It's quite possible that not enough effort is being put into producing the type of content that engages readers. As a blogger you need to give your readers a reason to comment and converse about your posts. Keep your posts open ended and even try ending your post with a question. Doing this will not only encourage revisits to see the comments left by others, but it'll also pique their interests about other posts you've made.

5. Personal Content

Some blogs fail to garner traffic and, in fact, see the little traffic they have fade over time because the bloggers get too personal. Personal content rarely attracts interest. Readers don't care if all posts are

about you in their entirety unless you're a famous, mega-celebrity. The best posts include personal references while giving readers something informative and concrete to take away.

6. Lack of Focus

Every blog needs a brand and a specific focus. It is easier to attract blog traffic when the audience flocking to your blog knows exactly what they will get. The worst thing you can do for your blog is to play with a mishmash of ideas, concepts and subjects. Once your blog loses its niche and its unique voice, it will start losing traffic. The trick is to pick a focal point and stick to it. A tighter focus can lead to higher blog traffic.

7. Poor Headlines

Headlines are critical. People decide whether or not to read your posts based on the titles and headlines you use. Poor headlines will cause readers to ignore you. Your headlines need to be interesting enough to get your readers' attention. If you cannot write catchy headlines, you will have a hard time attracting the blog traffic you desire.

8. Writing for Search Engines

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) might be one of the biggest challenges in the world of blogging. It sets out a series of rules that authors have become so determined to follow that they tend to neglect the quality of their content. It's true that SEO plays a major role in increasing blog traffic. However, an obsession with SEO and attempts to over-optimize your content (e.g. overstuffing keywords or using false headlines as click bait) will cost you the traffic you already have.

All-in-all, the key to successful blogging is to put your readers first. If you want to increase your blog traffic, then give your readers a reason to keep coming back. Otherwise, yours will become a blog they visit once in a long while but to which they will refuse to commit.

APSS Chapter Spotlight



Brian Jud will go through his proven, creative system for selling books to non-bookstore buyers. You can use this system on a limited budget, you don't have to be a professional sales person, and you can sell your books without leaving home. Juan Roberts will give the three essentials of an effective book cover, and Janet Squires will demonstrate how to prepare a cover letter for credible book reviewers and the steps of a successful sell sheet. For more information visit http://tinyurl.com/h6fqj35 or contact Chapter President Willa Robinson at willa@knowledgepowerinc.com or BrianJud@bookapss.org



On March 21, APSS-New Jersey is hosting a one-day event during which members can meet one-on-one with Brian Jud. We can discuss book marketing in general and special sales in particular for each member's books. To register for your time contact BrianJud@bookapss.org

Tips for Selling to Non-Bookstore Buyers By Guy Achtzehn



Know your Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA)

Invariably, there will be times when you will feel a deal approaching a disappointing conclusion. You may have tried every tactic you know to improve the pending agreement. But eventually you come to the decision point. Do you accept or decline the offer?

Another negotiating concept helps you answer the deal/no deal question. If the offer on the table does not meet the criteria you have set for yourself, it may be best to

move on to the next prospect. Knowing that you have a potential "next deal" makes that decision much easier. That can relieve the pressure you may feel to take a large, but potentially unprofitable offer.

How do you know your alternatives? Before you sit down with your prospects, create a list of potential prospects that could purchase your book in large quantities. The reason you create that list is to provide a back-up plan when any negotiation goes sour. This is called your Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA)

Invoke your BATNA at the point beyond which it is not profitable for you to accept an order. If prospects say they will place an order for 10,000 customized books at 75% off, with a nearby delivery date, it is tempting to accept the check even though you know the deal may not be profitable for you. But if you know there is another prospect on your list that could purchase the same books with more favorable terms, you will pass on the unprofitable deal.

How do you know when you have reached the point that will trigger taking your BATNA? Not being able to fulfill the terms of your initial objectives is one indicator. Or, you may just get a feeling that something is not right. Your intuition may be telling you that a particular deal could be difficult for you to fulfill and still make money. Having a BATNA benefits you in several ways:

- It keeps you focused on your best interests. Inexperienced negotiators become preoccupied with tactics, trying to improve the potential deal while neglecting their own objectives and BATNA. The real negotiation dance is "profitable conclusion and BATNA" not one or the other in isolation. It is more likely that the end result will conclude on favorable terms.
- It gives you confidence to decline an offer. If you know you have an alternative in your back pocket you can smile when they think they have you in a corner. You know that if this does not work, you have other potential customers that may be willing to meet your terms.
- It improves your negotiating position. The better your BATNA appears the more credible is your threat to walk away. Never reveal your BATNA, but let people know where you stand by accepting or declining terms that do or do not meet your criteria. When the other party recognizes that you are not going to cave in to their demands they may be more willing to discuss options.
- It sets the threshold that an acceptable agreement must exceed. Once you decline an offer, you have drawn your line of demarcation beyond which you will not cross.
- It defines a zone of possible agreement. As you participate in the negotiation process, both parties begin to understand each other's upper and lower limits. The zone is established by each party's objectives on the upper level and each party's BATNA at the other extreme. Now you can both work within that framework.

However, do not be too quick to invoke it. If you sense you are sliding away from a mutually profitable solution, look first for ways to check the spiral. Retain your composure and search for solutions. Your prospects may be testing you to see how far they can go before you balk. Attempting to back out when there is still hope for a negotiated solution can cause irreparable loss of negotiating position.

Always be aware of your BATNA, but do not be too quick to invoke it. If you sense you are sliding away from a mutually profitable solution, look first for ways to check the slide, regain your composure and search for solutions. Your prospects may be testing you to see how far they can go before you balk. Backing out when there is still hope for a negotiated solution can cause irreparable harm.

For example, the requested additional price discounts may not be the answer. If you give in it may give the impression you are willing to cave on others. If nothing else, it may also destroy your margins to the point where you are losing money. Instead, apply assertive pacifism. Do not fight but do not let the prospect take advantage of you. Use your skills to control the direction of the discussion and move on to non-price, soft issues if everyone else is talking about your high price.

Be prepared with a variety of alternatives for each issue that might arise. The more variables you have them more options you have to work with and the more likely to close the deal. You can avoid "take it or leave it" situations and keep the discussion going as long as it is leading to a possible solution and not closer to deadlock.

Assume price is one area in which you will probably be at odds. Use the tactics described earlier to take the focus off price and place it on cost or non-price issues. Focus on variables where the customer's interests and yours have more in common. Find and agree upon the best package of product, terms and service that most increases the value for your prospect without sacrificing your needs.

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

The New Way to Market Books By Brian Jud



The traditional path for selling books is changing. There are more books available to fewer readers every year. Bookstore shelves are crowded with undifferentiated books viewed as commodity items, and shoppers increasingly base their purchasing decisions on price. Yet prices are increasing, not because of greater value to the reader, but because of increased costs due to shorter print runs.

Unfortunately, publishers continue to produce more books to sell through bookstores even though competing in this environment is increasingly less profitable. They do

not understand that there is a real opportunity to create new sales in uncontested market space among non-retail buyers.

In this segment, demand is created, books become specialty items and sales can be more profitable. There is ample opportunity for growth that is both large and rapid for those who overcome outmoded boundaries. However, there are three reasons most publishers do not exploit this opportunity.

1. Traditional book marketing assumes that the structural conditions are a given, and people prefer to compete within their comfort zones. Yet, market boundaries can be reconstructed without anxiety simply by looking beyond the bookstore.

- 2. Some believe that producing ebooks or audiobooks is a solution, but this creates a false sense of progress. These products do not increase the size of the opportunity pie, but change the number of pieces that compete for the same consumer.
- 3. Large budgets or reputations are not the key to market expansion. To the contrary, small publishers can compete against the largest publishers in non-bookstore segments. Here, value is based on the applicability of content to buyers' needs.

The answer is in making the right strategic moves, understanding that boundaries, product form, and budgets are fluid concepts because they change over time and are unique to each publisher, title and market segment. An example of recognizing and responding strategically to this fluidity is Amazon Prime. In 2005 it was initially focused on reducing costs and saving time for its customers by providing unlimited two-day shipping for a fixed annual fee. Then Amazon expanded Prime to include streaming media (adding value through access and entertainment) and unlimited photo storage on Amazon servers (to reduce risk). Each new element attracted more customers and increased the value to existing ones.

Non-retail selling rejects the fundamental tenet of conventional strategy that a trade-off exists between differentiation and cost. Companies can be successful by pursuing both strategies simultaneously. Differentiate your products by proving how they solve buyers' problems. Eliminate the most expensive elements of bookstore sales (distribution fees, shipping costs and returns) to significantly reduce your cost structure.

Instead of following conventional logic, outpace the competition by offering a better solution to your book-marketing efforts. Here is a description of the old book-marketing barriers and new book-marketing opportunities that, if implemented, can increase your sales, revenue and profits.

Traditional Book Marketing	New Book Marketing
Sell books through brick & mortar bookstores	Create new sales opportunities by selling to non-bookstore buyers (retail and non-retail)
Sell books through Amazon	Sell through Amazon and also through niche bookstores online
Everybody is a potential reader	Market to a narrowly defined audience in a targeted niche
To sell 10,000 books I have to find 10,000 new buyers	To sell 10,000 books I have to find one person to buy them
People buy physical books	People buy what the information in the book can do to help them, and in the form they desire
Books have a short life because of the copyright date	The relevancy of content and its ability to solve business problems is paramount
Returned books are inevitable	Non-retail buyers do not return books
Distributors sell books	Distributors fill the pipeline to retailers with books sold by the author

Price my book the same as competitors	The cost of the book to the buyer varies, based on the quantity purchased and the value its content provides
Non-retail buyers do not purchase fiction	There are many ways in which fiction can be used by corporate buyers as a gift with purchase, for example
There is no competition for my book	Every book has competition: for shelf space, air time, and from coffee mugs, golf shirts, etc.
I can maximize revenue per book sold with a short discount	I can maximize my total revenue by selling in large quantities and making less per book
The availability of more books forces lower prices and profitability	Compete profitably in an expanding marketplace where books are a novelty, not a commodity

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?

Sell Through Bookstores AND to Non-Bookstore Buyers (Not one or the other)

You have two possible avenues in which to sell your books: retail and non-retail outlets. As a general rule it is not necessary to choose only one of the two options, because some combination of them will most likely optimize your profitability. This is the concept of dual distribution. APSS can show you how to combine these two strategies to maximize your sales, revenue and profits. It's a zip.



Novel Ideas Tips to Help You Sell More Fiction in Special Markets

Use a three-step process for marketing fiction (By Jodee Blanco).

Steps One and Two were published in the November and December issues of *The Sales Informer* and here is Step Three: *Sift through the subplots of the story for possible peripheral media angles*. Every time a media contact says "no" to a pitch, you want a bucket full of other ideas that you can pull out in a flash. In other words, if the idea of publicizing a novel makes you shudder with insecurity because, on the surface, fiction seems like such a tough sell to the media, don't panic and shut down creatively. Look at how it can be done, and not why it can't be done.

Upcoming APSS Marketing Webinars

Jan 30: "How to Sell More Books to Non-Bookstore Buyers," By Brian Jud; 6:00 pm ET; http://tinyurl.com/gvekg6g

Feb 7: "How to Write About Real People Without Ending Up in Court," by Helen Sedwick; 6:00 pm ET; http://tinyurl.com/h8skccq

Feb 9: "What's the Big Deal? How to Negotiate Large, Profitable Book Orders" by Brian Jud; 7:00 pm ET; http://tinyurl.com/hdudsqo

Feb 16: "Drive Traffic to Your Website and Sell More Books," SEO techniques by Jeniffer Thompson; 6:00 pm ET; http://tinyurl.com/gs4ymww

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

Confessions of the Pricing Man By Hermann Simon

Pricing is one of the most critical decisions a company can make, but the vast majority of executives give it an educated guess, at best – leaving 25% to 100% of their potential revenue on the table. Turn what you charge into a strategic weapon with this crash course on the psychology of pricing

