



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 5, Issue 3, Number 47 March 2017

Here is your March 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



Association of Publishers
for Special Sales

New APSS Contract With Staples for Member Discounts

APSS has reached an agreement with Staples to provide you with your own Staples Business Advantage account. You can get discounts on your in-store and online purchases plus special discounts on other services.

APSS has paid the registration fee for all members to join – there is no charge to you

You will have a Staples Business Advantage account in your name. You pay directly to them

Examples of discounts are 25% off copies and documents and 15% off office furniture -- in addition to free ink and toner recycling and monthly deals and special offers

You have a Staples customer representative assigned to you to answer your questions and help with your purchases

Get discounts on other services such as:

- Up to 30% off Avis and Budget
- 20% off flowers and gifts at FTD
- 10% off professional chauffeured car service at GroundLink. Plus 25 off your first ride!
- Free procurement service for hard to find items
- Up to 50% off event planning services at GoGather with a free 1-hour consultation and free site selection

Get more details at www.bookapss.org/StaplesBusinessAdvantage.pdf

Register at <http://tinyurl.com/lfm98fl>

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

Ask about who uses -- or could use -- your content in large quantities. You can sell 10,000 books to 10,000 different people one at a time, or you can sell 10,000 books to one person at one time. Clearly, the latter is more profitable. People who can buy in large quantities may be in associations, government offices, corporations, schools, military offices or many other places.

Top Ten List By APSS

Marketing consultants stress the need for long-term planning, five years or more into the future. But a question we frequently get is, "How do I make it to the long term without short term revenue?" The answer is to create a series of short-term wins that together lead to positive long-term success. Here are **Ten Ways to Generate Short-Term Revenue to Fuel Long-Term Growth.**

1. Create a business model that builds stable and profitable growth from several different sources (retail sales, non-retail sales, consulting, seminars) and recognizes the difference between maximizing vs optimizing sales, revenue and profits.
2. Write a rolling, multi-year business plan with realistic and specific objectives. Describe what to do as well as when and how you will accomplish your goals.
3. Establish a steadily growing base of cash flow on which you can count as regular income. This could be built through actions over which you have most control, such as speaking, conducting seminars or consulting.
4. Reinvest in your business to increase growth, and in your employees to reward success.
5. Recognize that some promotion generates exposure (media appearances, social networking) and other stimulates sales (direct marketing).
6. Understand that promotion has impact on sales in the short term (trade sales or through non-bookstore retailers) or long-term (personal selling to corporate buyers). Use this Promotion Planner as a guide to plan promotional actions.

	Short Term	Long Term
Exposure		
Sales		

7. Stop selling your books. Instead, think of how you can sell your content in the form most desired by your target readers and buyers (printed books, ebooks, audio books, booklets, seminars, webinars).
8. Apply strategic thinking to adjust your product list, promotional effectiveness and efficiency, and growth from your core business to exploit changing markets, readers and buyers.
9. Create a Board of Directors in the form of a mastermind group of dissimilar, positive thinkers who meet regularly to seek creative ways to stimulate growth in response to the changing business environment.
10. Grow personally by reading stimulating and informative material from a variety of sources, attending conferences, testing new ideas, asking yourself, "What's next?" and always thinking, "What's the best use of my time right now?"

APSS Tip for Negotiating Large-Quantity Orders

Effective negotiating requires a focus on your prospect's issues, interests, positions, priorities and constraints. But people are reluctant – or unable -- to reveal their real objections, sometimes because they cannot defend them on a rational basis. They may re-direct the discussion to issues that are more tangible, such as price. This “dance of positions” is a surface game, and there are three steps in its routine:

- **Issues.** These are the basic, definable topics out in the open for explicit agreement. Price, delivery date and customization are examples of issues that typically dominate a negotiation.
- **Positions.** The participants in a negotiation take a stand on the issues. For example, your prospect's position on the price may be that it is too high.
- **Interests.** *Interests* are the reasons that your prospects asked to see your proposal in the first place, i.e. they want to increase their company's sales, revenue or profits. You could address your prospect's position that the price is too high by showing that the *cost* of your proposal best serves their interest in increasing profitability.

Real action and progress focuses on your prospects' interests. Successful negotiating is usually based on recognizing and addressing these interests, then resolving the issues while allowing others to “save face” if they need to concede on their positions. Don't try to prove people wrong, but give them new info upon which to change their minds. They can get out of an embarrassing situation by saying, “Well, if I had only known that...”

APSS Tip for Making Persuasive Sales Presentations

In order for you to be taken seriously, your creative sales presentation cannot be so outlandish as to reduce its credibility. Something that is true is not always believable. It may be true that you have the best book on your subject, but your prospects may view this skeptically unless you can provide proof to document this statement. Use examples, case histories, testimonials and stories to make your claims realistic and believable. You can also lose credibility by using superlatives. If everything you say is *the greatest or most awesome thing ever attempted*, your prospects will soon question all of your statements.

Book Marketing Mistakes to Avoid

You have written your book at last, and it is finally available on Amazon, Kindle and all the other retailers. So the next thing to do is open a Twitter account, start a fancy looking Facebook page and perhaps design a new website, and maybe get back to using your blog, which you had forgotten all about while getting your book written and published. Then the sales will roll in.
So very, very wrong! If you are new to self-publishing, avoid making these assumptions, and book marketing mistakes.

Mistake No. 1. Thinking that you need to sell your book is probably the most common mistake new authors make. Cars need sales people to sell them. Real estate needs agents to sell houses. Books cannot be sold like this. They are bought by readers, with no one pushing a pen and a contract across a desk and pressuring them to sign.

Mistake No. 2. Thinking that social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook can help to sell books. Social media is very useful for an author in building an interested following. But in saying that, you need to be seen as an interesting or informative person to gain these followers and friends. People want interaction, information or light entertainment on social media. Not book covers and Amazon links.

Mistake No. 3. Releasing a book with no marketing plan. Readers can only buy books that they have heard about. A marketing plan is the means by which you plan to make your book known to potentially interested readers.

Mistake No. 4. Thinking that the world is a huge book market, and that your book will appeal to everyone. In reality, your book, like all books, will only be of potential interest to a very tiny part of the market. This is your niche market. If you don't know what it is, you need to find out.

Mistake No. 5. Thinking that having the title of an author will impress people. It doesn't, and especially nowadays when everyone can or is an author. Basing your online presence around the title of author is not going to sell books. 'Author of the Up The Spout', is now so common, it is an instant turn off. Being someone interesting, though, can and does attract book buyers.

Mistake No. 6. Not understanding the importance of metadata. In some respects, book marketing can be as simple as getting your books in the right place. Books at the front of a bookstore always sell better than those at the back. But today, this means at the front of an online store. To get any attention at all, a book needs to be published with precise metadata, which includes categories, keywords, a short book description, ISBN and title. Metadata is how book buyers can find your book – and buy it.

Mistake No. 7. Using 'kill' words online. These include check out my book, buy my book, check out my blog, get my book for free, free for two days only or five-star reviews for my book. These 'call to action' words and phrases might work for dishwashing detergent, but not for books. The mistake many new authors make is in not thinking how they themselves react to these 'kill' words. Most often, the honest answer is, negatively.

Mistake No. 8. If you haven't invested any money into your book, don't expect a return on your investment. Money spent on a great cover, good editing (or at least thorough proofreading) and online promotion before during and after the release is money well spent. It does not need to be a huge investment, but you get what you pay for.

Mistake No. 9. Promoting a free ebook. Why waste time and probably money on promoting something that has no possibility of making a cent in return? The days of giving away 1,000s of free ebooks to help a book's ranking on Amazon are long gone. On top of that, free ebooks are a great way to attract one-star troll reviewers. Why give them a chance?

Mistake No. 10. Failing to use your book's themes and topics as the cornerstones of attracting interest. Telling the world that your book is a crime thriller is of no real interest, but if its theme is about mafia gangs in Naples in the 19th century, this may well be of interest to some readers. Follow blogs related to the theme of your book, comment, interact and inform people of your knowledge and build an audience, but leave any mention of your book aside. If you interest people they will discover your book, and discovery is by far the most powerful bookselling tool in your marketing cabinet. Use it.

Free Bonus Mistake. Not having a second book underway or almost ready. Relying on one book will rarely bring in a lot of royalties. Writing a second book will help, as will a third. Most importantly, the lessons learned from a debut book can be invaluable in not making the same mistakes again. Writing and self-publishing is a steep learning curve and only those who persevere and are willing to learn succeed.

An Extra Free Bonus Mistake. Not reading advice articles such as this. There is no shortage of sound advice available on the Internet for new and not so new self-published authors. Use other people's experience to help you understand how to give your book its best chance of success. Keeping up to date on news in the industry, changes, which are constant, and trends in online publishing all help in making better decisions.

**Is there a secret to being a successful self-published author?
(An interview with Joel Friedlander, Founder of TheBookDesigner.com
Contact him at jfbookman@gmail.com)**



Joel Friedlander is a renowned self-publishing blogger and consultant. He is most widely known for his blog, *The Book Designer*, which boasts a collection of resources on topics such as book printing, self-publishing basics, marketing, design and much more. We had the pleasure of interviewing Joel and hearing his thoughts on the secrets to a successful self-publishing experience.

1. What are the biggest factors that contribute to a book's online sales and success?

There's no doubt that the biggest element in the success of your book is the quality of the book itself. And I don't mean just the quality of the writing, but the overall idea behind the book, the way it's positioned within its particular category, genre, or niche, and the care with which the book has been published and marketed.

2. What are the must-haves for starting self-published authors that want to reach online audiences?

Authors who want to succeed at self-publishing need to have an entrepreneurial streak; an ability to manage the publishing project, which may require contracting with various vendors and suppliers; and a real desire to share their passion with other people who have similar interests. And depending on the kind of book you plan to publish, you may need a substantial budget or the ability to raise money to finance the preparation and production of your book.

3. Can you share some inspiring success stories of self-published authors you've worked with/helped?

Last year I designed a very complex nonfiction book intended for use by psychiatrists. The book went on to win a very prestigious award from the British Medical Association as the best book in its category for the year. Because they also considered the design and formatting, in addition to the content, this was a significant achievement. And when you looked at the other entries, it turned out his book had come out ahead of books from many of the biggest publishers in the world. This author has now gone on to start his own publishing company, specializing in books like his, and his book continues to sell strongly. That's pretty amazing for a self-publisher.

4. In this post you talk about book-related products, how can these help self-published writers and how hard is it to make these a success? Can they ultimately contribute to book sales?

As you get further in publishing, you start to develop a relationship with your readers and others interested in the topics that you write about. What you'll find is that people have many needs that are related to, but not completely satisfied by, your book. For instance, you might find that many people would prefer a live presentation on your topic in addition to your book. Topics that you cover in your book make great candidates for webinars or seminars that you can conduct live for an audience, then package as a digital product you can sell for years to come. Keep in mind that many people prefer to hear or watch your content, and you should find ways to satisfy their needs.

5. Although the publishing industry is experiencing a fast-paced shift towards digital, print is still preferred by many readers. What are your thoughts on print on demand? Is it a valuable vertical for authors?

Despite the extensive media coverage about eBooks, readers have always preferred print books by a wide margin. With the exception of genre fiction writers who are trying to break into the publishing world, and who can acquire a large readership solely through offering eBooks, every author should include print books in their planning. And for nonfiction authors, I would consider a print version of their book essential.

APSS Chapter News – APSS Santa Fe



APSS-Santa Fe is an active group run by Mary Neighbour and Karen Bomm. In addition to a monthly Lunch /n Learn meeting they prepare an informative monthly newsletter, You can see it at <http://tinyurl.com/n9yg3bg> To learn more about or to join this vibrant group contact Mary at mary@medianeighbours.com

Tips for Selling to Non-Bookstore Buyers

By Guy Achtzehn



Do you intend to use a flip chart as a visual aid when making your sales presentation? This can be a versatile, audience-involving visual aid. It can also demonstrate your confidence as you begin with a blank sheet of paper. As you make points, you can also reinforce them by writing them as you speak. And when you ask questions you can write keywords about the respondent's answer on the page. As you make your summary, refer back to the pages with the remarks made by your prospects that support your proposal. If there is a particularly important point – or a positive point made by a top executive – “dog-ear” that page so you can easily refer to when making your summary.

Consider bringing your own pre-written flip chart. This can help you make your points sequentially and more completely than if or rely on your memory. Have a “Welcome” page customized to your prospect's company, and a summary page that makes a trial close. Make notes on pages in pencil to

remind you of major topics to discuss. No one will see these reminders but you. Also, have small tabs on pages to remind you of its topic so you can easily refer to that page to answer questions or to make your trial close later. In any case:

- Print large letters and numbers on your flip-chart pages so that the data will be visible from the back of the room. That will also prevent you from placing too much information on a page
- When practicing your presentation (or if you create your pages in advance), test the visibility of your printing before you get too far into it. Try to read the first page from ten feet away. If you cannot read it, start again using larger words and figures.
- Make your major points on each page with dark-colored markers in advance. Light-colored (yellow or pink) ink is not readily visible from a distance. Consider using a variety of colors (black, navy blue, green) to make your charts more visually stimulating.
- If you bring your own pad, tell your prospect that you will need an A-frame to hold it if that is the case.
- Write only in the top two-thirds of each flip chart sheet so people seated farther away can see everything.
- Leave two blank sheets between each page. Flip-chart paper can be thin and semi-transparent and your markers can run on the next page. And if you have to come back to that page to add more information you will have an extra page to keep everything together that is related to a particular topic.

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

A New Twist to an Old Marketing Technique

By Brian Jud



There is a fairly common marketing concept that can help you write a better press release, perform more successfully on the air and sell more books in large, non-returnable quantities to corporate buyers. It is called a Customer Value Proposition (CVP) and it is a concise way to clearly and quickly portray to prospective buyers how your content can benefit them.

This concept of communicating benefits to get people to buy your books is certainly not new, but its common implementation belies that fact. Publishers still send press releases with the headline, “We are proud to announce the publication of ...” the reaction to which is, “so what” as the readers pass over it in search of something of more value to them.

There are two examples at the other extreme, too. First are those who talk in positive but general terms that “this is the best (or *greatest, latest, most unusual*) book ever written on this topic.” Such hornblowing makes authors feel good but elicits the yawning response in buyers, “That’s nice, but what’s in it for me?” Second, publishers simply list all the reasons why they think their books are good. They believe that if the list is long enough, the buyers will recognize the benefits and make a favorable decision. But each additional benefit is one more thing to possibly misunderstand and another item to search through when looking for the one they want.

Both of these attempts to sell dilute what could be potentially strong buying motives. They erroneously

presume that your prospects care about your book at all. That is unlikely until you give them a reason for doing so. It also suggests that your list includes a benefit important to each prospect. And it assumes that your prospect is only considering whether or not to buy your book, which is rarely the case given competitive issues.

When corporate buyers are evaluating alternatives for a promotional campaign there are usually a variety of forces competing for budget dollars. Alternatives could include 1) purchasing a competitive title, 2) writing the material themselves, 3) choosing a non-book promotional item, or 4) not doing the campaign at all. A CVP recognizes that your proposal must offer a significant point of difference relative to the next best alternative.

Communicate not just why your book is better than the next best alternative, but why it is best for this particular prospect. Unless you demonstrate and document your claims in terms of their relevance to potential buyers, your prospects will likely dismiss them as hype and the sale is lost.

The new twist

To correctly implement a CVP, learn what is important to your prospective buyers before you customize your promotion to them. Instead of listing a variety of benefits, demonstrate that you grasp their critical issues. Communicate the unique value of your proposal, simply yet powerfully, conveying your understanding of your prospects' priorities.

Complicating this process is that fact that different prospects have their own reasons and procedures for buying. Approach each prospect with an appeal to his or her unique needs. For example, retail buyers want increased store traffic, inventory turns and profit per square foot. Librarians and media producers do not. Nor do corporate buyers who want to know how your content can help them sell more of their products. Show each buying group that the information in your book can help them reach their objectives.

There is an advertising copywriter's formula that will help you construct your CVP. The formula is the acronym AIDA and it can be applied to a press release, a performance on the air, an advertisement or a personal sales pitch. Each letter represents one step in creating your CVP.

Attention. Your opening remarks should get the positive attention of your prospects, alerting them that you understand their pain points and alluding to the fact that you have a potential solution. This could be delivered as a direct statement of a benefit, a newsworthy item of interest, advice or a question. Use the *Results* column in the PAR statement I described in my blog posting here on May 10, 2011 (*Use a PAR Statement to Sell More Books*) as the basis for getting your prospect's attention.

Example: "Several companies like yours have used this book as a promotional item to increase their sales. There are at least three ways you could use it to exceed your sales objectives, too."

Interest. Now that you have your prospect's attention, expand upon it with additional facts. Relate the general attention-getting statement to this prospect's circumstances.

Example. "The first way has proven to be the most effective in increasing sales at the end of the year. Here is how we can do the same thing in your annual fourth-quarter marketing blitz."

Desire. Expand upon the interest generated so far, introducing another benefit that could accrue by using your book in their upcoming marketing campaign.

Example. “As I mentioned before, companies have used this book to increase their sales. But in addition, their profits improved by over 10%. Here is a testimonial ...”

Action. Finish with a summary of why your recommended course of action is the best choice for this prospect. Remind them that they agreed with each point you made that satisfied their criteria. Ask if there are any more questions. If not, ask for the order. Do not present it as a *fait accompli*, but as your recommendation for how to proceed.

Example: “I have a letter of agreement here, but we just need to fill in a few blanks. First, you wanted delivery of the 10,000 books in 8 weeks, correct?”

The concept of a customer value proposition is not new, but when implemented correctly it can be significantly more effective in convincing your prospects to make a favorable decision regarding your books. Make your prospects feel that you are truly interested in helping them succeed. Focus your message on the needs of each particular prospect and let them know you have their best interests at heart.

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?

Use creative promotion to get people talking about your book. For example, what if there were a way to make your book known to every potential buyer--*for free*? There is, and it is called word-of-mouth advertising -- people talking to people. It is the most inexpensive and productive way to spread the word about your books. People singing your praises removes the aura of commercialism and instills a sense of objectivity about their recommendations. Be creative and use some of these ideas for stimulating word-of-mouth advertising for your books:

Place your advertising message in:

1. Discounted remnant space or in card packs
2. Co-op advertising
3. Coupon books
4. Chamber of Commerce publications
5. Information racks in motel and hotel lobbies
6. Your own show on your local cable TV station
7. School newspapers
8. Association newsletters
9. Package inserts
10. Your outgoing phone message
11. Community group and association newsletters
12. A magnetic sign on your car
13. A vanity license plate
14. “Take Ones” at tourist information centers
15. In visible places such on bus commuter straps



Novel Ideas

Tips to Help You Sell More Fiction in Special Markets

Judith Appelbaum – Sensible Solutions

What geographical areas does your book relate to and depict? Because people love to read about places they inhabit and visit, it's relatively easy to generate publicity and sales in the neighborhood, city, county, state, or country where the action in a novel takes place. The more you can narrow the locale, the better. There's nothing like hometown pride. Geographic targeting also works if you focus on where your press is and where your author comes from. Saybrook, a Dallas publishing house, released *The Dark Path to the River*, a first novel by Joanne Leedom-Ackerman. The author was raised in Dallas, and the book made the bestseller list in *The Dallas Morning News*. As the author did readings at the local university and independent bookstores and got coverage in area papers, *Dark Path* not only stayed on the list, it got to #1.

Upcoming APSS Marketing Webinars

Apr 4: Book Fulfillment as a Distribution Alternative, By Lindsey Brown; 12:00 pm ET; <http://tinyurl.com/lz9vu5t>

Apr 11: How to Increase Your Sales through Creative Promotion, APSS-NJ; 12:00 pm ET, <http://tinyurl.com/m4uv2pt>

Apr 24: How to Sell More Books at Trade Shows, APSS-Philly; 6:00 pm ET; <http://tinyurl.com/z7b4nf9>

Apr 27: Fully Booked! 10 Secrets Successful Speakers Use That Keep Their Speaking Engagement Calendar Full Year Round, By Jackie Lapin; 6:00 pm ET; <http://tinyurl.com/k7kfuf4>

May 9: It's Show Time: How to land and perform on more TV and radio shows, APSS-NJ; 12:00 pm ET, <http://tinyurl.com/kubo33k>

Read It And Reap

An APSS Recommendation for a Book

That Can Help You and Your Business Succeed

ABCs of Speaking: Your Building Blocks to Speaking Success, by Adryenn Ashley Bret Ridgway and Caterina Rando. The authors share their combined decades of experience from both the platform and the promoter perspectives. They pull back the curtains and give you a sneak peek into how the speaking world really works. You'll learn how to build a profitable speaking business that allows you to more effectively build your platform and share your powerful message with the world.

ABCs of Speaking literally covers the world of speaking from A to Z and even if you already consider yourself a professional speaker you're guaranteed to pick up a few nuggets that can help you take things to the next level with your speaking. Get more gigs, make more money and impact more lives today!



