



THE SALES INFORMER

Association of Publishers for Special Sales

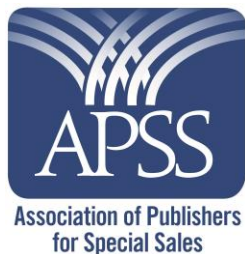
**A monthly e-zine dedicated to helping APSS members sell more books
to more buyers, more profitably.**

Volume 5, Issue 5, Number 49 May 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

Sell your ebooks and audio books in the APSS ebook Store



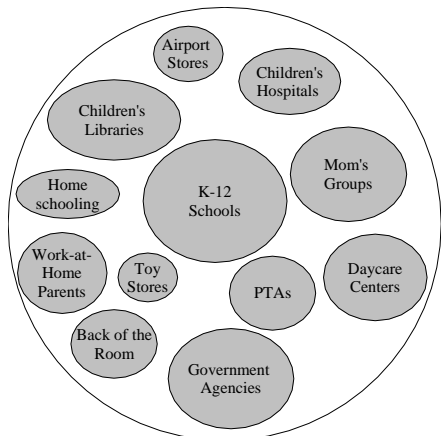
“In total, e-books’ share of trade unit sales was 23% in 2016...”
Publisher’s Weekly

Are you getting your share? Sell your ebooks and audio books in the APSS ebook store at <http://associationofpublishersforspecialsales.com/papertrell.com/> You keep 50% of the sale price.

Complete as much information as you can on the form at www.bookapss.org/Uploadformforebookstore.xlsx and send it with a jpeg of your front cover to Gregory Lee (greg@hummingbirdm.com). If you are a member of an APSS Chapter, include that with your submission

APSS Tip for Finding Potential Non-Bookstore Buyers

Market segmentation is the process of dividing the overall sales opportunity for your titles into unique defined, manageable groups of people in mini-markets. You know this as a fundamental marketing technique, but if you look at it in a new way it is even more likely to increase your sales, revenue and profits.



The image on the left shows the result of segmenting the market for a children's title. Each segment has its own needs, procedures and sales opportunities. Buyers at toy stores purchase in different ways and for different reasons than would parents purchasing the same book for homeschooling purposes. Knowing this difference makes your sales efforts more effective, efficient and profitable.

But look closely at the image. Segment boundaries are defined and limited. Competitive rules (such as “pay to play”) are understood and accepted in some. A book must have a knock-off factor for a retailer to replace a book already on shelf.

The Oh So Popular Press Release: How-To Win at the PR Popularity Contest

Heather Melcer



Every artist or business needs great press, yet in our modern digital era the competition is fierce just to get noticed, let alone get press. Which let's face it, it something we all want because we are all doing it with the purpose to sell something, offer a service or somehow make some money. And since we now live in the DIY era, please let me give you a few insights as you set off to become your own media marketing guru...

There are a few things that confuse people about press releases—mainly the purpose—which then affects the results. What's happening these days is kind of like a young kid who doesn't know there was anything called a camera whose only function was to take photos before the iPhone was invented, LOL. In the advertising and marketing industry there are still a few things that surpass even the technological advances, and that is the PURPOSE of the press-release.

The purpose is NOT for advertising, it is NOT for sharing an upcoming event, a newly released service, book, etc. – it is for sharing — NEWS in the hopes that SOMEONE ELSE working for some publication or website somewhere is going to write about you, and advertise and share your event or new product with the world. It is not a stand-alone piece no matter what the new genre of press companies online may seem to indicate.

This may sound counter-intuitive, but let me explain. I hate to break this to you, and if you know me in person, you know how polite I am, so it pains me to say this, LOL, but if you write a book, start a new business, release a new product, etc., no one cares, it's NOT NEWS. It may seem like news, but it's only news to your family, friends and loved ones, maybe some peers or clients, but to the general public and media outlets it's not news. So sorry to be the bearer of this marketing tragedy :-)) but I promise the insight will be helpful in the long run.

For example, let's say you create a new environmentally friendly, non-toxic cleaning product that you believe is the absolute best in the world. Sure, you can let people know, at a smaller level and in some niches you may get some traction, but major news outlets that reach mass public are not going to care. Now say the actress Jessica Alba creates a new line of eco-friendly products for babies and launches a new company to sell it, that is news to many major mass media markets and large demographic markets. Or let's say actress Gwyneth Paltrow's new book about cooking just landed on the New York Times Best-Seller list this week, that's also news and will surely have publicists spinning their wheels to get more press and in turn garner more sales.

So what's a small DIY'er to do? A few things...First you have to get creative and put a spin on something so it IS news. You need to find even just one element that makes what you have to say groundbreaking to peak a journalists' interest. Then you need to know your "local" target market, not just meaning geographically local, but demographically local and where to find them. Next, make connections before you need them. Network, get to know someone from various publications and news outlets ahead of time in your local target market. The top business writer from the NY Times may not care, your local community magazine or one specific to your niche anyone on the internet, maybe so.

Here is an example of a press release I wrote for my Synagogue for a recent new service series they started this year. In and of itself, a Friday night Shabbat service is not news, however, having no Friday services for decades along with an old lineage, yet being newly growing this year, to me did indeed make it news, and I spun it as so. It was picked up in our local community newspaper, which

is where it was relevant to us and gave the organization a boost of press. They printed it nearly verbatim to what we sent in. Read the .pdf sample [here](#).

Now when it comes to the actual writing there are plenty of tips and you can goggle around to find a million, but here are a few basics:

Go back to 6th grade English class – each release must address the 5 W's – who what, when, where, why and how... (I've never quite understood how "how" made it in there, but it did according to Ms. B in room 206, so I'm stickin' to it!). A quote from someone noteworthy within your field or organization can be a good tactic. Create a catchy, newsworthy title and subtitle. Keep it simple and to the point; leave out wordiness. No more than one page, less is always more. Make sure your list of contacts is as relevant and targeted as you can. Proper format/design is still key, but do it directly in your email. Do not send an attachment. Be aware you are sending this to journalists who get hundreds of releases each day, so follow the guidelines so you look professional and make it stand out the best you can.

Even if you want to use an online service that touts grandiose promises of getting your release seen by the masses of journalist for one low fee, you are just still a fish in a big sea of every other fish trying to get their fins noticed, then get someone to write about how great their fins are, and then someone to buy the very thing you made with those fins! Once you start getting noticed, then getting press, then growing your business, then making real profits, then to keep the ball rolling, you simply hire someone to do this all for you!

APSS Tip for Negotiating Large-Quantity Orders

Do not give in to ultimatums. Your prospect may say that you must sign now or lose the order. Even if you know the terms are satisfactory, resist the temptation to agree too quickly for it could minimize your negotiating position in future deals. Ask for the reason behind the need to move so quickly. Your prospect may be getting pressure from a supervisor to get the campaign started. Or the prospect may be facing the end of a budget period where he or she has to spend the budgeted money or lose it. Once you know the reason you can help your prospect deal with the underlying cause.

Similarly, do not give your prospect an ultimatum to buy now or never. You will usually find that they have other alternatives and you have cornered yourself into a losing position.

APSS Tip for Making Persuasive Sales Presentations

Whether you are cooking a meal, planning a vacation or making a sales presentation, it is the preparation that determines the relative success of the outcome. The more time you put into planning what you will say and how you will say it, the more likely it is that you will get the order.

However, it may surprise you to know that preparation is not about your book, it is about your prospect. And since every prospect is different, with individual needs, the preparation you do for each presentation is different, too. Do not have a stock presentation in which you change the name of the company and make a few minor changes. Each presentation is built from the ground up, customized for the decision makers and opportunity at hand.

How Involved Should an Author Be in Book Marketing?

8 Lies We Tell Ourselves About Book Promotion

By Anna Sabino



Yes, I know what some of you may be doing now: rolling your eyes or thinking that this post doesn't concern you. There's a common misconception about how involved should an author be in book marketing. We may think that our involvement should finish with writing stellar content and completing the book.

After having spent countless hours doing research, writing and revising our work, we enter the editing stage. Numerous hours going back and forth with the developmental and line editors will definitely make us feel like we should be done with the book after the writing and editing stages. Isn't writing for writers and marketing for marketers? I mean how many hats should one person wear?

In normal circumstances, we can wear one hat but not if we have chosen one of the most difficult industries to thrive in—publishing. Fewer people read, people want to consume content in short bits, bullets and lists. We want summaries and we are to pick up the actual book, it better over-deliver or we will opt in for another medium.

There are still some authors who think that they don't need to do any work to promote their books and here are the 8 explanations they are giving themselves:

1. **Only non-fiction authors should market their book.** Fiction authors as well as non-fiction authors build their platforms, they gather fans around their ideas, start groups, share valuable content and connect however they can to make sure they have the entourage when their book launches.
2. **I'll start marketing when I'm done writing.** I have my hands full with writing the actual book. No one said that writing a book is an easy task. It's challenging and not for everyone. It requires enormous amount of hustle to make it and be successful.
3. **My publisher will do all the marketing work.** You may get assigned a publicist three months before launch but he can't do it all for you. You need to provide him something to work with—author's website, press kit, hooks for your book. Your book needs to have a strong platform to stand on to maximize the exposure potential you'll be offered.
4. **My agent will promote my book.** From what I noticed agents connect authors and publishers. When your book will be published, they will be busy making other connections and closing other book deals.
5. **It's enough to just put out the book on Amazon and wait.** The minimum number of reviews for the book to get visible on Amazon is 25. Amazon is a promising platform with a large opportunity for exposure but you can't solely rely on Amazon.
6. **If I write great content, the book will market itself.** This is unfortunately not enough. Lots of books with great contents get undiscovered because we never hear about them. Word of mouth can only do that much.
7. **You only have to do book marketing when you self-publish.** Publishing houses don't have enough help to provide a comprehensive publicity service for the author. If you rely only on what the publishing house provides, your book may not earn out the advance.

8. **I'll start marketing when I have the actual book in hand.** It will be too late. Building author's platform takes months if not years of delivering consistent work and connecting before the book launch.

Your commitment to building your author platform and marketing your book will highly influence the success of your book and your career as an author, regardless of the publishing route you choose.

All the best-selling authors are involved in self-promotion and marketing. They start podcasts, write blog posts and entice us to sign up for their email lists. Even if we don't see their end in mind, they do have one. You'll keep hearing from them especially when they launch their books. As an author, you need to keep connecting and publishing content. You can't just one day show up out of nowhere expecting people will buy your stuff.

APSS Featured Supplier



Tired of Trying to Find Speaking Engagements on Your Own? Subscribe to www.SpeakerTunity.com, the twice-monthly Transformational Speaker Leads Tip Sheet to reduce the headache, time and cost of locating new engagements! This \$25/month subscription-based service provides insight on speaking opportunities in hot regions of U.S. and Canada, top

book tour sites, local chapters of national organizations, local grass roots organizations, multi-speaker events and expos, conferences and conventions, leading Spiritual Living Centers, Unity and Christian churches, wellness events, yoga centers, women's organizations, fraternal organizations, chambers of commerce, resort and retreat centers and more! SpeakerTunity™ delivers to you the direct contact, phone number, email, website and-- when required-- a link to the online form to fill out-- across the US and Canada. Get more leads! jackie@consciousmediarelations.com

APSS Chapter News – APSS-Mid-Atlantic



President: Zorina Alliata (zorina@bookapss.org)

Zorina Alliata is a Romanian-American writer and owner of independent publishing house Better Karma Publishing. Since 2001, BKP focused on bringing foreign authors to the US market, as well as promoting American writers. The publishing house prefers creativity and genre-bending works, and focuses on first-time authors who need help taking their first steps towards a great writing career. Zorina lives just outside Washington D.C. with her husband, son, and too many pets. Outside of writing she loves the ocean, animals, and theories of everything.

Tips for Selling to Non-Bookstore Buyers

By Guy Achtzehn



Most products, including books, are combinations of tangible and intangible elements. People do not buy the tangible features of a book, i.e., the paper and ink that create it. They buy the intangible benefits they receive from reading fiction: a vicarious feeling of fantasy, romance, adventure or mystery. And when purchasing nonfiction, they are buying information, motivation and help.

As an independent publisher, you will become more successful at marketing when you stop selling your books and begin selling what your books *do* for the people who read them. That is the difference between marketing a *feature*, an *advantage* and a *benefit*. A *feature* is an attribute of your book. It could be its size, binding, title or number of pages. An *advantage* describes the purpose or function of a feature, and a *benefit* is the value the reader receives in exchange for purchasing your book. People buy value, not generic books.

One way of distinguishing among these three definitions is to use the "So What?" test. When thinking of a reason why someone would purchase your book, put yourself in the place of the prospective buyer and ask yourself, "So what?" Keep doing that until your imaginary customer says, "Oh. Now I understand." Then communicate *that* concept in your promotional literature and they will be more likely to buy.

Feature: A four-color cookbook with a spiral binding. (*So what?*).

Advantage: It will lay flat while you are preparing the meal, making it easy to read. (*So What?*)

Benefit: It contains recipes that are easy to prepare and guaranteed to please your guests. You will have more time to socialize and enjoy yourself at your parties. (*Oh. Now I understand.*)

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

Marketing Strategy Rules

By Brian Jud



Did you ever think about taking a long trip? If so, you probably thought about how you would get to your destination, perhaps traveling by car, plane, train or bus. Then you planned where to stay each night, what to pack and how much it would all cost. Finally, you made a checklist so you didn't forget to do anything and spend your money wisely.

That is the same process you can use to plan your book-marketing activities. First you think about what you are going to do, analyzing alternatives. You choose those that will maximize results, write a plan as a reminder to perform each action in the proper sequence, at the right time and within your budget.

This process begins with creating all the possible ways you might fulfill your mission, evaluating each and then choosing the best combination that will optimize your sales, revenue and profits. That in a nutshell is your marketing strategy. It lays the foundation for your trip, and if done properly the rest of your journey is more enjoyable and profitable.

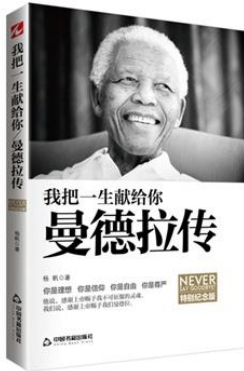
Here are a few rules for creating solid marketing strategy:

1. **Generate quantity vs. quality of ideas initially.** Develop many possible ways in which you could sell your content to your target readers and buyers. Consider the possible forms of your product (a printed book, ebook, app, booklet or audio book). How might you distribute it (through bookstores, discount stores, online or vending machines, or to corporations, schools and libraries)? Will you penetrate your markets with a low price, skim for profits with a high price or choose a different pricing strategy for each segment? What will you do to promote your content online and offline? Think only possibilities at this point, without wondering how you will do it. Then choose the combination of actions that is most likely to increase your revenue.
2. **Keep your strategy statement simple.** Write a sentence describing what you will sell, where, to whom and at what price. Then explain how you will implement the various marketing actions you have chosen.
3. **Do not strive for perfection, but for direction.** Strategy is thinking about what you could do given current and foreseeable circumstances. But things can change. Make a list of what you will do given your objectives, resources and current market conditions.
4. **Create checkpoints.** Your mission is cast in stone, but your strategy is dynamic. Do something, evaluate your results and then take any necessary corrective actions. Clarify your definition of results. Do not simply say you will increase sales, but by what amount? Do you want to expand into new markets? Which ones? Set a target for each title and segment. Erect quarterly milestones against which you can objectively evaluate your progress. Also define your exit strategy, the point at which you will abandon a particular title or your strategy for marketing it.
5. **Have a top-line orientation.** An over-simplified formula calculates profitability: top line – costs = bottom line. When designing strategy to increase profitability, do not just focus on reducing costs, but on increasing revenue.
6. **Allow your strategy time to unfold.** Publishers with a short-term perspective may give a strategy six months or less to produce verifiable results. Instead, give your strategies sufficient time to prove (or disprove) their validity. For example, large-quantity, non-returnable sales to corporate buyers can take years to consummate, but the reward can be significant.

Once your strategy is defined, write your checklist of all the actions you will take, when you will take them, the cost for each and your return on that investment. That is your marketing plan. Then implement your plan and evaluate your progress periodically and tweak it as you move forward. The foundation of this entire process is the thinking you do initially. Marketing strategy rules!

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?



The function of the title of your book is to sell. It should quickly get a shelf-browser's attention and clearly communicate what the content offers. The function of the subtitle is to tell (what the book is about). Even if potential readers are familiar with the general subject matter, they will not buy your book if the message is not clearly communicated to the potential buyer.

Speak the language of your prospective buyers. Quickly connect with them by telling how your content is different, unique and will benefit them.

Novel Ideas

Tips to Help You Sell More Fiction in Special Markets

Judith Appelbaum – Sensible Solutions

Does the novel fit into a category that has well-developed sales and publicity networks?

Is it, for instance, science fiction, romance, mystery, Jewish, Christian, gay, feminist, or literary? Routes to feminists -- to take just one example -- include more than 175 bookstores; a publication, *Feminist Bookstore News*, in which you can advertise and which sells its mailing list on labels for a modest fee; and at least 60,000 academics involved with Women's Studies courses, who can be reached via lists available from the College Marketing Group.

Upcoming APSS Marketing Webinars

July 11: "The Basics of Cover Design and Layout," by Tamara Dever; 6:00 pm ET, <http://tinyurl.com/yd857whd>

July 20: "Write A Book That Grows Your Business," by Robin Colucci; 6:00 pm ET, <http://tinyurl.com/ybllagzu>

July 25: "The Marketing Begins BEFORE the Writing Ends: 7 Steps to Getting It Right for YOUR Book," by Sharon Castlen; 6:00 pm ET, <http://tinyurl.com/kqfrbws>

Read It And Reap

An APSS Recommendation for a Book That Can Help You and Your Business Succeed

Red Teaming: How Your Business Can Conquer the Competition by Challenging Everything by Bryce G. Hoffman.

Red Teaming is a revolutionary new way to make critical and contrarian thinking part of the planning process of any organization, allowing companies to stress-test their strategies, flush out hidden threats and missed opportunities and avoid being sandbagged by competitors.

