



# 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 6, Issue 8, Number 63 August 2018

Here is your August 2018 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

#### Display your book to thousands of gift-store buyers at the Northeast's Largest Souvenir & Resort Trade Event

The Ocean City Resort Gift Show, the Northeast's largest souvenir and resort industry trade event, will be held at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center in Ocean City, MD from November 11-13, 2018. Custom-tailored to the specialized needs of coastal retailers from Maine to North Carolina, this show features 450+ booths filled with best-selling designs, top brands, new introductions and new resources.

#### A special twist to make your book more saleable

The types of books that should do well at this show are those about holidays, beach events, vacations, resorts, travel, fun times and for children. As appropriate, we will "bundle" your book with a product that relates to it. This means we will pair it with an item such as a glass, plush toy, shirt, picture frame, coffee mug or other gift item. For example, if your book is about Christmas, we could "bundle" it with a glass for Santa's milk, a Christmas ornament, or a plate for Santa's cookies. The "perfect beach read" could be bundled with sun screen or a beach towel. A party book could be bundled with a beer mug. A "relax in the bathtub book" might be combined with a wine glass or aromatic candle.

**Deadline for listing is September 1** and books are due by September 15. This will give us time to create the bundled package. The display offer of \$75 per title will be limited to the first 30 people who respond (five spots are still open).

- All books are displayed face out, visible to all attendees
- You will receive a photo of your book on display
- All books be listed in a "Titles on Display" ordering catalog customized for this show, listing full ordering information handed out to each prospective buyer. You can also provide your own order forms/ promotional materials.
- The exhibit will be staffed by Guy Achtzehn and Brian Jud, two experienced representatives tasked with the responsibility of generating orders for each book.

For each title, please email the cover image, author and list price to [brianjud@bookmarketing.com](mailto:brianjud@bookmarketing.com). To make the \$75 payment per title please use Paypal account [brianjud@comcast.net](mailto:brianjud@comcast.net) or contact [brianjud@bookmarketing.com](mailto:brianjud@bookmarketing.com) for other payment arrangements. We will need one copy of your book and you will receive the address to which to send it.

## APSS Tip for Finding Potential Non-Bookstore Buyers

Know what your competition saying before you call prospects. This task can be accomplished by visiting and observing the competition (websites, social-media posts, books on Amazon.com or store shelves).

## Update on Book Selling University (Sponsored by APSS, BookLife, Bowker and Ingram Spark)

Book Selling University has courses to help you produce better books and sell more of them. Today's featured course BSU 110 Create an Online Course Based on Your Book, by D'Vorah Lansky See it and more at <https://bit.ly/2IAQn55> View each course up to 5 times

## APSS Tip for Making Persuasive Sales Presentations

Later in the sales cycle, your presentation can be more specific and informative, addressing the basic needs and showing the benefits you bring to the table. Your prospect identifies with the foundation you have created. Your objective is to reach the “Aha” moment where their eyes light up upon realizing how you can help them. At this point your preparation is based on your answers to your earlier questions.

Presentations toward the end of the sales cycle are usually to larger groups, more specific and lead to a call for action. Most of the questions have been answered and your comments speak to the fine points to reach agreement and close the sale. Once you feel every “i” is dotted and “t” crossed, go back up to 30,000 feet, summarize your benefits and ask for the order. Prepare your closing statements, anticipate potential objections and know how you will respond to each.

## APSS Tip for Negotiating Large-Quantity Orders

Negotiations tend to go awry because the two parties incorrectly assume that they understand the other's motivation and therefore do not explore further. Negotiate as if you are a crime-scene detective by learning as much as you can about the other people involved and what is important to them (i.e., what is *their* ultimate objective and what are *their* criteria for reaching it).

## Library Sales Opportunity

Display your books at the Virginia Library Association Conference. This is traditionally the largest exhibit and most comprehensive collection of titles and publishers presented at this meeting each year. Literally any subject area is going to find its audience here. The exhibit company has served this group for years and knows literally hundreds of the delegates on a first-name basis and as such “the VLA and its members look to our activities for the top professional service, products and representations in this exhibit hall.” We look forward to working on your behalf at VLA 2018.

**The cost with the APSS discount is \$30 per title** and the deadline for listing is September 11, and books are due by September 18. The show dates are September 26-28, 2018 and the location is the Colonial Williamsburg Lodge, Williamsburg, VA

- All books are displayed face out, visible to all attendees
- All titles would be listed in a “Titles on Display” ordering catalog listing full ordering information handed out at each exhibit. You can also provide your own order forms/ promotional materials.
- Each exhibit is staffed by experienced representatives tasked with the responsibility of generating orders for each book.

For each title, please email the title, author, pub date, list price and discounted price (if any) to [brianjud@bookapss.org](mailto:brianjud@bookapss.org). To make the \$30 payment (per title) please use Paypal account [brianjud@bookapss.org](mailto:brianjud@bookapss.org) or contact [brianjud@bookapss.org](mailto:brianjud@bookapss.org) for other payment arrangements. The display company will need two copies of your book and you will receive the address to which to send it.

To learn more about APSS go to [www.bookapss.org](http://www.bookapss.org) or contact [brianjud@bookapss.org](mailto:brianjud@bookapss.org)

## APSS Creative Exercise - The “Potential” Pyramid

A way to judge ideas is to group them according to their relative potential. Draw a large pyramid on a flip chart or blackboard, then divide it into three sections. The top is labeled “Promising,” the middle “Possible,” and the bottom “Poor.”

“Promising” ideas are those that most agree have potential, even though details may be scarce at this point. “Possible” means that while the idea has merit there are some reservations. However, the consensus is to keep it in contention for now until later evaluation moves it higher or lower in the pyramid. “Poor” ideas are those with serious drawbacks – actual or perceived. They may have been welcomed initially, but don’t hold up under subsequent scrutiny.

If it’s necessary to protect the egos of contributors, label the pyramid (from top to bottom) “Proceed, Probable and Possible. This also analyzes the ideas based their practicality rather than relative merit. The “Proceed” section does not necessarily mean that the finished idea will be enacted, but that there is sufficient promise to devote additional time on it to give it further scrutiny.

## Save 30% on Shipping Your Books -- With Your APSS Discount By Keith Korhely

Whether you are shipping one package a day or hundreds, finding the right fit for your packaging can reduce costs and offer more protection for your products. Companies — maybe even your own — often use boxes that aren’t the right fit for the items being shipped. And to keep the item in place, they use a whole lot of paper or other material to fill in the extra space. While this may be necessary to protect fragile items, nonessential additional packaging can cause cost you big.

See tips to optimize your packaging here: <https://smallbusiness.fedex.com/right-size-packaging.html>

Save on your shipments by using the right packaging and enrolling in the APSS Shipping Program, managed by PartnerShip. APSS members receive exclusive discounts on select FedEx ® services. Visit [www.PartnerShip.com/APSS](http://www.PartnerShip.com/APSS) or call 800-599-2902 to enroll today. Save Up to 30% on FedEx Shipping – with the APSS discount

## APSS Top Ten List

The Top Ten List of “Fun with Words and Letters,” from *The Book of Useless Information*, by Noel Botham

1. Certain sounds in the English language are real germ spreaders, particularly the sounds F, S, P, T and D
2. Of all the words in the English language, the word *set* has the most definitions
3. The letter *W* is the only letter in the English alphabet that has more than one syllable
4. The most-used letter in the English alphabet is *E*, and *Q* is the least used
5. The only 15-letter word that can be spelled without repeating a letter is *uncopyrightable*
6. There was no punctuation until the fifteenth century
7. In English, *four* is the only number that has the same number of letters as its value
8. *Bookkeeper* is the only word in the English language with three consecutive letters
9. You would have to count to one thousand to use the letter *A* to spell a whole number
10. Ten body parts are only three letters long: eye, ear, leg, arm, jaw, gum, toe, lip, hip and rib.

## APSS Featured Supplier



Looking to get your titles in front of the widest audience possible? BookPal can help! With our extensive knowledge of the publishing industry and special markets, we will implement a strategy to meet all your book needs. We specialize in large order fulfillment, coordinating books for speaking events, pre-release promotions, and more! Learn more about BookPal's author/publisher services by contacting Raquel at [raquel@book-pal.com](mailto:raquel@book-pal.com) / 866-522-6657.

## What Makes the Perfect Cover?

By Jane Dixon-Smith



Jane Dixon-Smith, author  
and graphic designer

Jane Dixon-Smith, author of *The Importance of Book Cover Design*, is always being asked about what makes the perfect cover. Here she talks about what works and what doesn't.

I've been in the book design industry for some years now, and before that I worked for a branding agency. I have hundreds of books on my shelves I've not had the chance to read, because I have an addiction to buying beautiful books with stunning covers.

For me book covers are about selling books. I'm a sentimentalist but also a realist. Most authors and publishers put books out into the world to either be found, or to be found and make money. If we publish books just to gather dust on one of Amazon's

virtual shelves, we might as well have left them on our hard drives. And from a personal perspective, I feel we writers owe it to our books to make them the best they can possibly be. So what should you bear in mind when creating a book cover that sells?

**1) Appeal to the right market.** If you want to sell books and for people to think your book is good, then it must be targeting very specifically at a market that will enjoy your book. Time and again I hear people say ‘but there are no other books out there like mine!’ There are always books out there like yours, and if you as an author don’t know what they are you are about to make your job marketing your book really tricky.

Check out the bestselling lists in your genre, whether that’s crime fiction, women’s fiction, young adult etc. Whose books do you read that you enjoy? Will the readers of those books enjoy yours? Are the tone, style and characters similar to your own?

This is really important. I cannot stress that enough. This is the basic key to creating a cover that will sell in your genre to the right market. Do you write like Mark Billingham? Then you want to attract his fans. Do you write like Philippa Gregory? Then you want to attract her fans. That’s not to say you want to copy their covers, but you need to have a similar feel, and to present your book with visual clues that scream ‘if you enjoyed their book you’ll enjoy mine.’

**2) It’s all in the detail.** Good cover design doesn’t just refer to the amount of time or money spent on it. A cover I’ve designed isn’t better because I’ve spent twice as many hours on it as another book, or twice as many images. A cover can be simple and equally as effective. It can be the first design I’ve done for a specific book rather than the third. It’s all about hitting the right balance between images, text, colour and so on. There are many elements within a cover that make it work.

**Good Imagery.** Imagery should be suitable to the period in which the book is set. Here, in a dark-ages style fantasy epic, the images chosen are relevant – the hair on the man isn’t a modern cut, neither character wears modern clothes, the sword is ancient, and the woman isn’t wearing make-up or appears as if posing for Vogue.

The other important key here is that the overall cover is made up of multiple images. A common mistake is to blend images into one another, but not correct the colors in the images so they match.

**Good Color Choice.** It’s vital to use colors which stand out; white and black here. When using a color, it should be a hue picked out of the imagery used, or a direct complement. It shouldn’t just be a random color, which clashes with everything else.

**Good Contrast.** Contrast will make a cover really stand out. Here we’ve got a stark contrast between the male figure and the background behind him, together with the paleness of her face, which makes the cover jump. This can be achieved in other ways, such as using strong colors, light on dark and dark on light.

**Good Font Choice.** The font needs to be something in keeping with the style of the book. If you look at covers in your genre, you’ll notice a trend: Chick-Lit using curly, girly fonts; Historical Romance script fonts; Action solid, impact style typefaces; Literary Fiction often uses classic serifs or light sans-serifs and so on. It’s not strict, but chosen right the font will say as much about the contents of the book as the image. Get it wrong and it’ll either look bad or will appeal to the wrong audience.

**Good Typography.** The composition of the title and author name are really important in creating a professional feel. Here you’ll notice that the title is stacked. Note that the left hand edge of the ‘K’ of ‘Keeper’ is aligned with the left hand edge of the ‘R’ of ‘Dragon’ and so on, whilst at the same time ‘Of The’ is right aligned with the last letter of ‘Dragon’. It fits in a grid which, when locked tightly together, is therefore attractive to the eye.

**Good Composition.** Composition is very much a grid. Look at your subject and set up your shot to a grid. Below you'll notice that the title takes up approximately a third of the lower half of the page, whilst the characters two thirds. Whereas the horizontal composition is constructed of the man on one half and the woman on the other half, with the sword running through the middle. That's a little general as it doesn't always work quite like that, but there's always a balance to be reached.

Another trick is to line the text up so that it's of equal distance from, say, the top edge of the page to the right and left-hand sides. If it's not going to be equal, it needs to be deliberately unequal, otherwise it just looks poorly positioned. These are just examples, not global rules, of subtle things designers do subconsciously to make sure the cover is balanced.

**3) Trust your instincts.** One mistake I see authors make time and again is designing by committee. Friends and family are great, they are supportive and keen and want you to be happy and fulfilled in your writing career. They are even excited that you're publishing a new book. But they aren't the right people to ask for an opinion unless they are your target market. You need to ask people who read the kind of books that you write. What appeals to one fan base, won't appeal to another.

Other writers are also a natural source of opinion, however there are a lot of 'experts' out there. People who have 'been in the industry for so many years', etc. That's great, and sometimes those people will have very valid opinions, but other times they'll just regurgitate general industry opinion, such as 'the title must be as large as possible, until it's filled the entire cover and you can't see anything but the title' – an exaggeration, but you get the idea. The principles behind what they are saying are usually sound, but don't necessarily apply to every genre, or trend, or what will actually work and sell your book. They just want to sound like they know what they're talking about. Trust your own opinion.

**4) Straplines, quotes and thumbnails.** But they won't be seen in thumbnail, I hear people chorus. No, probably not. So why have them? 'It needs to work in thumbnail' is one of the most overused phrases in publishing these days. It's also one of the least understood.

Not everything on the cover has to be visible when your book is postage stamp size. This actually depends on your genre and market. Not all markets lean toward the title and author name as being important, for example.

So what's the point of having a quote or strapline? Well for starters, it will be visible if not legible, so a reader will know it's there. Lots of traditional books have one or the other or both, and so your book can appear more professional. It also gives a subtle indicator that you've been endorsed by a big name author, or that the strapline might state that you are a NY Times Bestseller.

**5) Think to the future and your brand.** Once you have established a readership you need to keep that readership. Make it easy for readers to find your books when browsing. Ensure the style of each cover in a series is similar, so that readers easily identify with the next release. You as an author can be recognised not just by your name on a cover, but by the way it's typeset and the overall look and feel of your covers. Make sure marketing materials tie in well and are sympathetic to your cover design so that everything works as one to build your brand.

Only when a reader has picked up the book do they actually read anything, and that includes the back cover blurb that you will have spent hours and hours honing. If the blurb was worth all that effort, then the cover is equally if not more deserving.



## Tips for Selling to Non-Bookstore Buyers

By Guy Achtzehn



If a prospect says *no*, think to yourself, “I heard what you said, but it’s not what you meant.” A negative position today is not necessarily carved in stone. Terms or positions that seem inflexible today may be open to discussion tomorrow. Over some period of time, constraints, interests, positions and people change. Stay in touch with your prospects and bring new ideas to them as warranted. Pursue the opportunity to re-open the negotiation at some point in the future.

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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

## Seven Ways to Find New Book-Marketing Ideas

By Brian Jud



Innovation is not an event. It is a mindset. It results from a mind open to the possibility that there is (or could be) a different, better way of doing something. Few people find great ideas on a blank sheet of paper. Most of us need our imaginations channeled

The force behind innovation is insight – an imaginative understanding of an internal and external source that can be tapped to reach your objectives in ways that are different from those done by everyone else, or what you have done in the past.

Creativity can be powerful, but where do you find it? How do you tap into it? How do you recognize it? Many ideas arrive serendipitously, but they may be found systematically, too. Organize your creative sources in categories, just as you segment your market opportunities. Here are seven insight channels you can use to focus your imaginative powers, organize your thinking and find valuable ideas for growth.

**1) Incongruity.** Information is everywhere. However, it may often be used ineffectively because people seek averages instead of anomalies. Sometimes the real opportunities lie in the results that deviate from the norm.

For example, the publisher of a job-search book might find there is an average of 8,000,000 people unemployed in the depths of a recession. But these are not potential buyers. They do not want to spend money for books when they can obtain them for free from other sources (libraries, churches, state governments. These sources become your prospects, not the millions of unemployed.

To find incongruous data, ask questions like, “How can we reach people who need our content? Where else do people seek information on my topic? Are sales in Segment A increasing or decreasing? Are sales high in one, often-overlooked segment? Are sales in one segment more profitable than sales in others?” The deviant numbers may be the tip of the iceberg, hiding valuable hidden insight.

**2) Convergence.** When several trends become evident, their intersection may be fertile ground for creativity. Pharmaceutical salespeople traditionally gave physicians pads, pens and other sales-promotional items to promote their drugs. PHARMA rules now state that any such items must be educational. Enter books as

promotional items. These are educational and may be given to physicians who in turn may give them to patients or sell them for profit. The confluence of these concepts creates an enormous opportunity for book publishers with appropriate content.

To find convergence, ask questions like, “What are the major trends in my target markets? How could my content be used or adapted to exploit those trends?”

**3) Frustration.** You may have written your book in response to one of life’s irritations (weight gain, money loss, annoyances while traveling). Over time you may become equally frustrated with low or unprofitable sales through bookstores. Subsequently, you could seek other sales opportunities by selling directly to gyms, financial advisors, airport stores or airlines seeking to make their passengers flights more comfortable and serene.

To find opportunities resulting from frustration, ask questions such as, “Who else experiences (or has customers who experience) the same frustration and could benefit from the information in my books? Who could purchase my book in large quantities?”

**4) Tradition.** When you and all your competitors act in similar fashion, it’s worth asking if there is another way. Traditions often block potential innovations because people are reluctant to abandon the tried-and-true. But when conditions change, so must traditions.

For example, many publishers have and will always sell books only through bookstores (bricks and clicks). One solution would be to sell books differently but in the same way. That may appear to be an oxymoron, but it can be done. Selling to non-bookstore retailers is very similar to selling to bookstores. For example, work with distributors or wholesalers that call on airport stores, supermarkets, discount stores, etc. Here, books are sold on a returnable basis and you get paid in 90- 120 days. Sound familiar?

To find opportunities that apply your traditions in a different way, ask questions similar to, “What beliefs do we hold sacred? Why do things have to be that way? What opportunities would present themselves if we abandoned those assumptions? How can we seek new opportunities with the least disruption to existing beliefs?”

**5) Visionaries.** Some people look at what is and think something different. These prophets can be a rich source of mind-opening ideas or insights. These may be authors of cutting-edge books, or people who see solutions, not problems. To find opportunities not immediately apparent to you, ask questions such as, “What can we learn from what others have done and how can we apply those lessons to our circumstances? Why not try... ? What if we ...?”

**6) Road trips.** When sales stagnate, get out of your office and meet with customers, suppliers, distribution partners and buyers. It is difficult to see how they think about your products if you do not go out and ask them. This shows much more interest on your part than simply calling them.

Attending trade shows, personal networking or conducting focus groups can also accomplish this. You might perform brainstorming sessions or join (or start) a mastermind group. Informal research may be as simple as meeting with potential buyers to learn their terminology and strategies.

For example, if you intend to sell books to associations, immerse yourself in their organizations so you both speak the same language. You may find they use terminology such as “non-dues revenue” or “cause marketing.” And you will notice sharp differences between for-profit and not-for-profit groups. The latter focus on fundraising, not sales, and donors, not customers.



To learn the language of your prospects, ask questions like, “How do their terms differ from ours ? What are their objectives? How do they strive to reach objectives now? How could they do that?”

**7) Analogies.** As you search for new ways to do business, look to other industries or businesses to see what they have done under the same conditions. Innovation is not always about bringing something new into the world. It’s about usefully applying something that is new to your state of affairs.

To borrow ideas from others, ask questions such as, “Can we import part or all of their solutions? How are our circumstances different? Similar? What can we learn from what they did? Will that apply to our situation? What if we tried something different?”

Being innovative is not the end of the process. You must implement your newfound ideas. But when most people see a new idea they feel uncomfortable and have a natural, negative bias. Instead, when you see a new idea, focus initially on its positive and interesting features. Think of the acronym PIN when you have a new idea. First make a Positive comment, then something Interesting, and if necessary make a Negative observation. When making that observation, be “positively negative” by offering a twist that could make the idea potentially successful. An idea is like a round peg that won’t fit into a square hole. It needs some re-shaping. What is positive about your latest “round” idea?

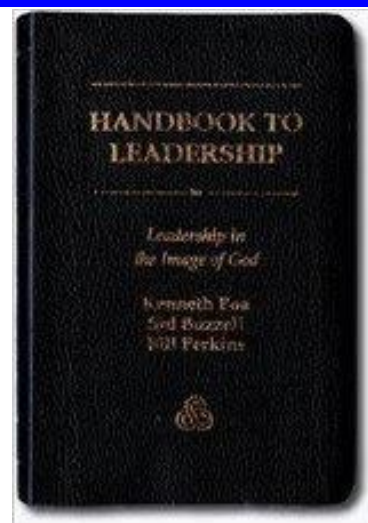
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*Brian Jud is the Executive Director of APSS and the author of How to Make Real Money Selling Books. company offers commission-based sales of books to buyers in non-bookstore markets. For more information contact Brian at P. O. Box 715, Avon, CT 06001-0715; (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*

## Read It and Reap

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

*Handbook to Leadership* by Kenneth Boa. All the features of *The Leadership Bible*, created by Kenneth Boa, Sid Buzzell, and Bill Perkins have been combined in this volume. *Handbook to Leadership* has three parts:

52-Week Leadership Guide  
Topical Leadership Guide  
Leadership Character Studies



## What's the Big Idea?

(Thanks to Rob Ratcliff for sharing this.)

This can be a very productive exercise. I've used this model several times in the past. I highly recommend it.

1) First, select a 3rd party - someone you admire and trust 100% - ideally it would be your personal life coach.

2) Then you select 5 or 6 individuals (not family) who you really value their opinion.

3) Next you send this document (pictured here) and ask them to rate you on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest) on each of these characteristics with the following instructions:

"Please candidly rate me on each of the following items. Then mail the responses to my coach (or whoever you have chosen.) In 100% total confidence, your coach will average your ratings with the others doing the same exercise. They will then share with me the average scores."

4) Once that has been completed, meet with the coach and they will interpret the scores.

5) Next you create a personal development plan that you share with all the raters.

6) I did this several times every year and it made a huge difference in my personal and professional growth.



Obviously, this can be adjusted to fit your situation including the items on the rating sheet BUT confidentiality and trust are critical elements.

## APSS Pro-File

### APSS Board Member Rudy Shur



**Rudy Shur** the founder and publisher of Square One Publishers began his work in publishing as a field representative for Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company and William C. Brown Publishing Company, where he ranked as a top salesman in each sales force. In 1976, Mr. Shur and his partners founded Avery Publishing Group. Over time, Avery was developed into a successful mid-size firm, achieving market dominance in the field of alternative health books. In 1999, Avery was sold to Penguin Putnam Inc. Square One Publishers began as a dream of Mr. Shur, who is enjoying the opportunity to once again achieve success in the publishing arena.

## Answers to Your Questions About Non-Bookstore Marketing

(If you have a question about selling books to non-bookstore buyer, send it to [BrianJud@Bookmarketing.com](mailto:BrianJud@Bookmarketing.com) and he will answer it here)

**“How does defining my target reader help me sell my book?” Karen Clock**

Once you define the typical person who will buy and read your book, the next question to ask yourself is, “Where do they congregate, work or shop?” The answer to that question will tell you where to sell your books. If they travel, then you could sell your books as a premium to travel agents and AAA, or sell your books in airport stores or on cruise ships. If they attend church, then place your books in church libraries, retreat centers or mobile bookstores that visit churches. If your target readers are avid golfers, then sell your books through Dicks Sporting Goods or in golf pro shops.

These market segments are identifiable subgroups within the total population, comprised of a limited number of people that exhibit a common need for the content of your books. And they are not mutually exclusive: your target reader may be a church-going, avid golfer who loves to travel.

The essence of special-sales marketing is this 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 of different size and with varying degrees of suitability to your title.

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