



THE SALES INFORMER

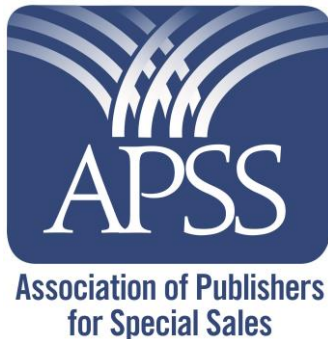
Association of Publishers for Special Sales

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

Volume 7, Issue 9, Number 76 September 2019

Here is your September 2019 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 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 2019.

The cost with the APSS discount is \$50 per title (\$70 for non-members)

Registration Deadline: October 9

Books Due Deadline: October 16

Show Dates: October 23-25, 2019

Location: Hilton Norfolk The Main, Norfolk, 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

To make the \$50 payment per title (\$70 for non-members) please use Paypal account brianjud@bookapss.org or contact 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 or contact brianjud@bookapss.org.

To Your Success,

Brian Jud
Executive Director, APSS
BrianJud@bookapss.org

APSS Tip for Finding Potential Non-Bookstore Buyers

Which production technologies have changed the most since the book's latest printing? Since technology is constantly advancing, look to see whether any new platforms would work with your information. You might attract more people to a book through apps, webinars, podcasts and/or e-readers than you would through traditional channels, and your previously published videos might be more profitable in DVD format. Who might prefer to read your book on their phones?

To Promote A Book, Avoid These 21 Worst Media Practices!

By Brian Feinblm



My first pitch to the news media came in 1989. I don't recall if it was by mail, phone, or fax. There was no e-mail back then. But even three decades later, regardless of how you deliver your pitch, the rules are the same – find the right person at a targeted media outlet, contact them with a short, focused, timely pitch. If one method, say phone or email, doesn't work, try another, such as mail, social media, or messenger. Simple enough, right. Well...

Amazingly, the media receives more pitches than it can handle, and of those it bothers to read or listen to, few are very good or on point. With several hundred thousand professional promoters out there – along with millions of authors, celebrities, institutions, businesses, politicians, non-profits, schools, and government agencies pitching the news media, there is a lot of crap floating around. Why, you ask? The motive to get PR is simple: It's one of these at play -- always:

MONEY – sell something.

EGO – pride of fame.

POLITICS -- persuade people on an issue.

HELP – serve the community/public service.

There's a lot at stake in the world. Competition is fierce, whether to sell a product, get a job, elect someone to office, or get people to donate money. PR is the first step for someone to seek to influence the masses.

Unfortunately, out of desperation, low morals, lack of training, or brutish pride, there are a lot of bad tactics employed to share lousy pitches to the media. Don't make these mistakes:

1. Never send a very long pitch. Be prepared to say what you need to say in 20 seconds or state it in a letter of no more than 4-5 short paragraphs (which should include bullet points and answer the who-what-when-

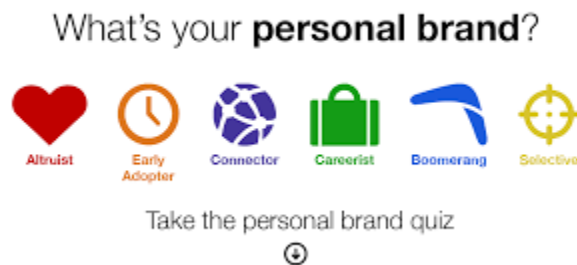
where-why-how).

2. Do not send the same exact pitch to everyone on your media list. Customize it to the media outlet, the type of beat covered, or a specific journalist-producer.
3. Stop pitching yourself. Pitch a story. Your persona can show through it and your credentials are important, but the media wants to know WHAT will be discussed and WHY now?
4. Avoid cold-sending attachments. Spam filters may gobble what journalists don't just delete without opening.
5. Don't ask the media for a favor. They are not there to be your friend, serve your needs, or build your brand. They want what will help their career, meet the demographics of their patrons and advertisers, and serve society well. They hate bullshit, begging, or getting nothing new to work with.
6. Think of pitching media the way you want someone to leave you a voicemail. You don't want a whole story on your answering machine for two minutes – you want people to get to the point and leave contact information. Don't make the media search for basic details and do not blitz them with links to a zillion things. They simply don't have time to play detective and investigate all of this stuff.
7. Never bribe them or suggest compensation for their coverage. You will offend them.
8. Know the media outlet and media person before you pitch it and them. Showing you know nothing about them is a quick line to the waste basket.
9. Don't present a generic angle to a common story – highlight your uniqueness to an interesting story.
10. Do not risk alienating or offending the media with an insensitive joke, comment, or story idea. Avoid race, religion, sex, and politics – unless that's what your book is about.
11. Don't lie, make false claims, or throw out crazy accusations that are baseless. The media likes some controversy but they don't want to boost irresponsible statements from unknown nut jobs.
12. If you mail something, do not pack and tape it so well that one needs a saw to open it. Rely less on fancy packaging or give-away premiums, and more on the substance of a good pitch.
13. Do not pitch an exclusive to more than one media outlet in the same medium until one says yes or no.
14. Make sure you can backup any claims that you make and never do a bait and switch headline where the pitch has little or nothing to do with the headline.
15. Don't bore the media. Your pitch should be lively with snappy vocabulary words that reflect the level of subject matter being presented. Avoid clichés, profanity, or extremist propaganda statements.
16. Don't send a pitch until you have done your homework and fact-checked your message. Make sure you use reliable sources to quote facts/stats.
17. Do not be impolite. Write please, thank you, and hello.
18. Avoid sending a pitch that wasn't proofread. Nothing gets tossed faster than a misspelled or illiterate pitch.

19. Avoid pitching the media anything if you are posting inappropriate content on social media or if your website looks like crap. They will check you out. You need to have a good brand.
20. Avoid repetition in a short pitch – that means don't state or restate the same thing and don't keep using the same words (vary them). Also, don't include images that are ambiguous or deemed sexist, racist, or anti-Semitic.
21. Lastly, don't act as if what you say is superior, stated for the first time, or so insightful – unless it really is. See if others are saying what you say. Be careful in your bid to stick out or sound confident – you may be seen as a braggart and a blowhard.

The good news here – so many people provide bad media pitches. Good ones can still stick out. Go for it!

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. This month's featured course BSU-130: How to Create Your Personal Brand, by Carol McManus. See it and more at <https://bit.ly/2IAQn55>
View each course up to 5 times

APSS Tip for Making Persuasive Sales Presentations



There are several types of opening statements that will frame the objective, intrigue your audience and build anticipation for your presentation. Practice writing openers using one of these, or combinations of them, to draw your audience into your presentation and take action on your recommendation.

Sharing something newsworthy is a common method of starting a sales presentation, featuring your pitch in the same manner as if it were a noteworthy item of timely interest. Simply select the outstanding benefit of your book (from the perspective of the audience) and present it clearly and quickly.

Relate your presentation to something that happened recently. Begin with something like, "I read about your company's recent success in the *Wall Street Journal*. Congratulations." Or "I love your new commercials." Most authors start by talking about their book. Instead, talk about your prospect.

APSS Tip for Negotiating Large-Quantity Orders



Buying decisions are made on a rational and emotional basis. In addition to giving buyers facts, give them a good feeling about you. People buy from people they like and trust. When you do anything during the negotiation that diminishes your likeability you reduce your chances of success. It is more than being polite, it's about managing tension. Close the sale on terms equitable to both sides without seeming greedy and be persistent without being a nuisance.

Eliminate the Ingram Spark \$49 set-up fee -- With Your APSS Discount

Save \$49 set-up on the IngramSpark set-up fee with your APSS membership. IngramSpark is an award-winning online service for indie authors that provides the same quality print and distribution services enjoyed by big-time publishers. Once you finish and format your book, IngramSpark makes it possible to share it with the world, including readers, over 39,000 booksellers, and librarians, and more than 70 online retailers. Focus on what you do best — creating innovative content — and let IngramSpark do the rest: print, ship, and distribute your book.

APSS members contact Kim@bookapss.org for the IngramSpark Promotion code

The link to IngramSpark: <https://myaccount.ingramspark.com/Account/Signup?source=APSS>

APSS Membership Benefit

Are you taking advantage of all APSS has to offer?

Distribution to Bookstores. Cardinal Publishers Group (CPG) will provide distribution for adult non-fiction books (no fiction, inspirational or children's books) published by approved APSS members to bookstores and other non-bookstore retailers across the United States and Canada. CPG will consider distribution of printed books and ebooks by APSS-member authors and publishers, even if the member has only one title on their list. In addition, CPG reserves the right to reject any book if production standards, formats and genre categories are not an effective fit. This arrangement excludes books with the ISBN of a print-on-demand company. For more information on CPG visit www.cardinalpub.com

APSS Top Nine List, By Tony Jeary (info@tonyjeary.com)

I can't even count how many meetings I've been in over the years, and I'm sure you can't either. Meetings are necessary, but sometimes they are a waste of time, especially if you get in the habit of making the same meeting mistakes over and over.

After analyzing my own team's meetings and the meetings run by some of the world's highest achievers, I've nailed down nine meeting mistakes you and your team should watch out for. If you want to supercharge your meetings and make them timely and purposeful, don't make these mistakes ...

1. Thinking "objectives" and "agenda" are the same. Objectives start with an action word and are the things that should be accomplished in the meeting. The agenda is a fluid set of topics to help guide the group to reach the objectives.
2. Lack of preparation. Obtain mental buy-in from participants by sending out a proper invitation, doing research upfront, and asking attendees to bring the right material.
3. Wrong attendees. Invite the right number of people (no more than are needed to accomplish the objectives) and make sure the right people are represented in person or by phone/computer.
4. Poor notetaking. Taking notes by hand is a minimal requirement; taking notes on the computer is better; and using a notetaking matrix live, on-screen, in real-time is the best.
5. Wrong facilitator. Using no facilitator or one that's not exceptional costs morale and synergy—and hence results. The best facilitator has SME (subject matter expertise), tools, and a team.
6. Wrong venue (meeting onsite or at the wrong site). It's best to pick the best, most inspiring, most easily accessible meeting venue that has the right technology and an environment that supports your objectives and inspires breakout sessions.
7. Expectations not clear. Start defining your expectations early, refine as you build, and reconfirm them to start the meeting.

8. Not gaining buy-in so everyone supports. Don't talk at people; it's better to talk with people, and it's even better to facilitate the meeting where everyone supports the overall win—not just the top person.
9. Action assignments are not clear. Many meetings have fuzzy or even no written action assignments. It's best to make a list everyone can see as the meeting moves along, including who is responsible and when the action is expected.

APSS Featured Supplier



Move from dream to reality with the team at TLC Graphics! We love transforming manuscripts into beautiful, salable books and will escort you along the way with outstanding, personal service. Providing custom publishing guidance for the serious small or indy publisher for 20+ years, services include award-winning cover and interior design, editorial, printing, ebooks, and beyond. Contact Tamara for a free consultation: tamara@tlcgraphics.com or www.TLCGraphics.com.

Tips for Selling to Non-Bookstore Buyers

By Guy Achtzehn



Help buyers justify the value of your proposal. When you conquer the emotional side of the buying equation, buyers still need a rational motive to buy if for no other reason than to validate their purchase to themselves or to a supervisor. Your proposal can serve this purpose so they “see everything in writing.”

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

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 and he will answer it here)

“Why do you say not to start out selling to Big Box stores? It seems to me I could sell a lot of books through them.” Jeffrey Rainey

Think outside “the box.” Many people think getting into the big-box and club stores (Sam's, Costco, Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Target, etc) is the Holy Grail of special-sales marketing. Independent publishers imagine quick, national celebrity as tens of thousands of their books fly off the shelves and tables of these outlets. However, there are several reasons why sales to this segment may not be the place to start your special-sales activities.

In order to sell tens of thousands of books in retail outlets, you first must get them in the stores. This means you must arrange distribution, then print tens of thousands of books. And since they are returnable, some outlets may require you to maintain an escrow in the amount of potential returns. Some require expensive product-liability insurance coverage. If buyers agree to put your book into a *planogram* for their stores then you are expected to keep enough books in stock, ready to ship, during the promotion month(s). For example, they may order 10,000 copies to be shipped immediately and expect you to be able to provide 10,000 more on demand. In this case you would have to print 20,000 books and warehouse 10,000. If your books do not sell through and are returned, you could be left with 20,000 copies on your hands. Those facts can place significant pressure on your finances and cash flow.

That is the bad news. The good news is that if you have a distributor, a good book, an established platform and consistent publicity exposure you can sell a lot of books through these outlets.

You may be able to get some of these rewards without as much risk by starting locally. Go to your nearby stores and contact the department managers. Describe how the content of your book is appropriate for the stores' customers. Tell of your plans to create local publicity to build store traffic. Demonstrate your ability and willingness to conduct in-store events to further attract attention, store traffic and increased sales.

Reasons Why a Distributor May Turn Down Your Book

By Brian Jud



There are many opportunities for book sales through non-bookstore retailers. These could be airport stores, supermarkets, discount stores, gift shops and many more. The good news is that you sell to them in ways in which you are already familiar: you get a distribution partner and they contact buyers for you. The bad news is that the distributors are inundated with books that they cannot take on and therefore must reject them. Even a good book may be declined if not submitted properly or has missing information.

The Association of Publishers for Special Sales (APSS, www.bookapss.org) has a program to submit our members' books to distribution partners, many of which specialize in selling to non-bookstore retailers. Years of experience has helped us develop solid information about what they may or may not accept – and why. There are many reasons why a well-written book may be turned down for purchase, but too often the books are rejected due to several common mistakes. Any one of these may be cause for it being declined. Here are some common reasons why a book might not be accepted by a distributor or wholesaler.

The book is not a good fit with them. Most book distributors specialize in certain genres and will not accept books outside them. For example, Cardinal Publishers Group (CPG) will provide distribution for adult non-fiction books (no fiction, inspirational or children's books) to bookstores and other non-bookstore retailers across the United States and Canada. If you send them your children's picture book it will be turned down. Check their websites before submitting books so you adhere to their guidelines.

No marketing plan is submitted. Demonstrate that you know your target audience, competitive titles and prices, and are willing to promote your book. Give detailed information about the pre-publication promotion you have done and the post-publication marketing you will do. Indicate the size of your platform and what you are doing to maintain and build it.

Not understanding the retailers' hot buttons. Retailers want products that do three things for them. One, bring more people into the stores. Two, increase profit per square foot and three, increase inventory turns. Describe how your heavy promotion will help them meet those criteria. If not, your book won't sell, will be returned for full credit and replaced by another product.

Not providing specifications. What is the size of your book? Case quantities? Number of pages? Photos or illustrations? Is it one of a series? List the ISBN and LCCN or CIP data. What other books have you published? How many did you sell?

Know the customer of your target retailers. Think of the types of people who frequent airport stores before submitting your book to the Hudson Group. For example. If your book is not appropriate for travelers, it will not be accepted. Think about how much different the customer is for a Hallmark gift store than those who go to Spencer Gifts.

What are the author's credentials? The author must have credible credentials for writing a book on the topic, not just the fact that he or she has a special experience raising children or overcoming a particular illness. Certain subjects require the education and knowledge of experienced professionals. If fiction, Has the

author written other books? How many were sold?

Cover art and interior design look self-published. Chose an experienced book designer to produce your cover and page layout. Distributors can look at a book's cover for just a few seconds and judge the book's sophistication and professionalism. The cover design includes the spine and rear cover, too.

The book was not edited. If your book passes the initial design test, the acquisition people will read the first few pages and other pages chosen at random. If your content is rife with typos and grammatical errors, it will be declined.

Testimonials should be from people with impressive credentials. It is common to have a quotation from a businessperson on a business book, but unless that person has nationally recognized credentials it hurts the book's chances more than it helps. The same concept applies to endorsements attributed to initials only (BJ, Avon, CT).

The format does not fit the age group. For example, a children's picture book with pages that have large amounts of text no longer works as a picture book. If your target reader is in an older demographic category you might need a large-print edition.

The book is inappropriately priced. It is not difficult to research competitive prices before establishing the retail price. If the price of your book is outside the parameters for your category and format it may not be accepted. The price should also be shown on the rear cover.

To stay in the retail stores – including bookstores -- your book should sell well in 60 to 90 days. It will remain there as only as it is more profitable than a replacement product. And you must keep up the heavy promotion over time to keep it selling, or your unsold books will be returned.

Retailers do not sell books, they display books. And they don't want your book on their shelves, they want it at their cash register. They want products that can sell themselves in terms of design, content, fit, price and promotion. The easier you can make it for a potential distribution partner to sell you book, the more likely it is they will accept it. Make them confident that your book will be profitable for them by giving them the information they need to make a decision.

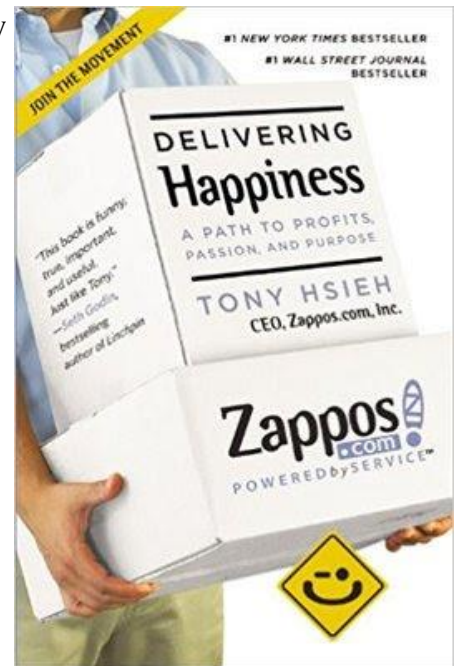
*Brian Jud is the Executive Director of APSS and the author of *How to Make Real Money Selling Books*. His company offers commission-based sales of books to buyers in non-bookstore markets. For more information contact Brian at P. O. Box 715, Avon, CT 06001-0715; (860) 675-1344; Fax (860) 673-7650; brianjud@bookmarketing.com or www.premiumbookcompany.com @bookmarketing on Twitter*

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

Delivering Happiness: A Path to Profits, Passion, and Purpose, by Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh.

- Pay brand-new employees \$2,000 to quit
- Make customer service the responsibility of the entire company-not just a department
- Focus on company culture as the #1 priority
- Apply research from the science of happiness to running a business
- Help employees grow-both personally and professionally
- Seek to change the world
- Oh, and make money too . . .

Sound crazy? It's all standard operating procedure at Zappos, the online retailer that's doing over \$1 billion in gross merchandise sales annually. After debuting as the highest-ranking newcomer in Fortune magazine's annual "Best Companies to Work For" list in 2009, Zappos was acquired by Amazon in a deal valued at over \$1.2 billion on the day of closing.



What's the Big Idea?

This was on the back of a cereal box. Does it give you any ideas? You may not have a children's book, but what if you wanted an idea for a corporate tie-in for selling your book?

The Subaru Loves Learning initiative conducts the annual Science Books & Film Prizes for Excellence competition to recognize outstanding scientific information (fiction and non-fiction) for young audiences.

They not only recognize the best science books for kids, they “distribute” books to schools around the nation. See www.subaru.com/partners for more information.

