



# 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 8, Issue 8, Number 85 August 2020

Here is your August 2020 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

#### **Attend the APSS Free Virtual Book Selling Conference (September 10 – 11)**

##### **Today's Way to Market Books for Tomorrow**

Discover how to sell to non-bookstore buyers you never thought of for profits you never dreamed of

Yes, this two-day virtual conference is presented to you for free. You will discover how to sell your books in more ways than you ever imagined and to people you never knew existed— in large, non-returnable quantities. National speakers on all critical book-marketing topics. You may attend one course or all of them – at no charge.

Here are some reasons to attend and comments from attendees of previous APSS conferences

- **You will leave with new ideas, creative marketing tips and a long “To Do” list**

“I now have some immediate actions.” Kim Catalano

- **Learn where to find and how to contact non-bookstore buyers**

“I recommend this program to anyone seeking to sell more books.”

Laura Dobbins

- **High content – no hard sell**

“I was so impressed with the speakers and content...” Erika Liodice

- **Build a lasting stream of long-term, recurring revenue**

“I’m eager to put all this new knowledge and my new connections to work.” Gail Woodard

- **Become more profitable**

“I was impressed with the amount of new information about the publishing business of which I had previously no clue” Eleanor Jones

- **Discover practical, yet creative book marketing tips and tactics that you can put into place immediately.**

“Awesome meeting at a great time for me to go for o marketing to infinity!” Barbara D. Hall

- **Get customized help for selling your books to non-bookstore buyers**

“I woke up at 2:15 am buzzing with all the new ideas I learned. That was just after the first afternoon!” Laura Larson

- **Different speakers and topics from last year.**

“A fascinating conference with dynamic, knowledgeable speakers.” Jeanne Rogers

For more information, an agenda and to register, go to <https://bit.ly/3oYOPyu>

## APSS Tip for Finding Potential Non-Bookstore Buyers

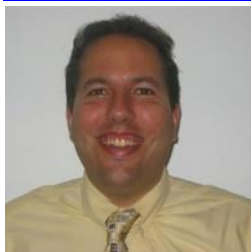


Use referrals as a sales strategy. When you ask one of your corporate customers for a referral you could say, “Do you know of anyone else who could use my services?” You might get the names of two or three people who may or may not have any interest in your content. They are suspects, not necessarily prospects. Instead, ask, “If you hear of anyone that I might be able to help, would you let me know?” And then stay in touch periodically by sending your customers articles of interest, pertinent books, promotional items – things that will keep you on their minds and at the top of their list of referrals.

### Brian Feinblum

Chief Marketing Officer, SVP at Media Connect, a div. of Finn Partners

<https://bookmarketingbuzzblog.blogspot.com/2019/>



### Why Will the Media Want to Talk to You About Your Book?

Does your book solve a problem, reveal a secret, give rise to a breakthrough idea, entertain, enlighten, inspire, or help us be better people? If not, why did you write something that’s virtually unmarketable and not promotable to the news media?

Okay, so there are many purposes a book can fulfill, but if your book is to sell better than a vanity project, and if you want help to build a brand as a writer and to garner media coverage, you have to identify a major reason as to why your book exists and how it will do something for someone. Otherwise there’s nothing driving the consumer to purchase it and there’s no story of any consequence for the media to eagerly explore.

So, assuming your book has a reason for existing, and assuming the media will be curious about it, start to identify your hooks – the things that will draw people to your book.

Figure out the top three things your book will do for someone and make those items the key to your press release or pitch to the media. For instance, let’s say your book is discussing raising kids, in particular, how to handle bullying, social media addiction, being involved in the community, getting strong grades, and

developing into a mentally and physically fit individual. Pull out three areas – maybe bullying, grades, and fitness. For each one, draft a provocative quote. Then think of timely examples of how you address trending challenges and problems.

You can't emphasize everything – only a handful of ideas. Further, one of your selling points you – your training, education, work experience, personal experience, your access to established experts, and your passion for what you write about. Don't rattle off a resume, but do highlight things such as number of years in the field – are you a teacher, psychologist, researcher? Are you a parent, tutor, or nanny? Do you have a relevant college or graduate degree? Did you work for or with anyone who is famous or well-credentialed?

You need to have an answer to the questions the media are thinking, including:

- What's new, unique, or different here?
- Who are you? Are you really an expert on this?
- Is this news?
- What story ideas are you offering?
- Does your book content match the demographics of my media outlet?
- Do you have a strong platform?

Tracking down and reaching the media is challenging enough, but the real challenge is finding the right 15-second speech that will entice a media outlet to take a look at your book, press kit, or website. Figure out what you can say and offer – then sharpen your words and make each and every one count. Choose words that say a lot, reflect what you mean, and appeal to what the recipients want to hear.

## Update on Book Selling University

(Sponsored by APSS, BookLife, Bowker and Ingram Spark)

**FREE  
COURSES**

New to Book Selling University – a live course. BSU-501: “Lead Generation, Book Sales and Follow Up” is a live, virtual, one-on-one meeting with Guy Achtzehn See it and more at <https://bit.ly/2IAQn55>

## APSS Tip for Making Persuasive Sales Presentations



Have a big message, a big idea for how buyers can use your book. You inspire people when you have a dream that is bigger than theirs. Come to every sales encounter with passion and a big reason why they should buy your content and how they will benefit.

**Sell More Books with Guest Blogging – Get the Visibility You Need**  
**By Sandra Beckwith**



Like so many other bloggers, I welcome relevant guest posts from authors and other experts who have something to say that will interest my readers. I know that guest posts from authors help sell more of their books because of one simple trick: I use an Amazon Associates link for their book in their bio and in the post.

I don't do this to earn money – the pennies will barely pay for my beloved tall, extra hot, skinny vanilla latte at Starbucks. I do it so I can see which topics resonate with my readers. When the writer's book sells well, I know we've struck a chord. That tells me I need more content like that.

### **Why you want to be a guest blogger**

There's no question in my mind that guest blogging helps sell books. But it's a powerful book marketing tactic for other reasons, too. Here are several of them:

#### **You will reach more readers than you could on your own.**

When you contribute information to someone else's blog, you're sharing your message with people in your target audience who might not know about you.

#### **It will help you develop relationships with your host's readers.**

You probably know by now that "engagement" is a publishing buzzword, but it's an important one. Readers love connecting with authors.

#### **It helps build credibility.**

If you write nonfiction, guest blogging is an excellent way to demonstrate your subject knowledge. Novelists can use it to showcase their storytelling and writing skills.

#### **You can add the right readers to your mailing list.**

Your guest blogger bio or text within your guest post can include an incentive for your host's readers to add themselves to your email list.

#### **It will help you create and solidify important relationships that will support your activities over the long run.**

If you don't already know your host, the back-and-forth process involved with guest blogging helps you establish a new and important relationship with an influencer.

#### **It will generate backlinks that improve your site's search engine optimization (SEO) so it gets found in searches.**

Google likes backlinks – a link from one site to another (yours) – between relevant, credible sites. Because any smart guest blogger includes links back to their site – even if it's just in their "about our guest" bio – this tactic contributes to good SEO.

#### **You get the point, right? Guest blogging is an important online book marketing tactic.**

How to make your guest posts work hard for you. If you want to get the most from your guest blogging, be strategic about it. Here are three tips that will help you use guest blogging to reach more readers:

#### **Select a topic that serves your host's readers.**

Ask yourself, "How can I contribute something useful or interesting?" Make it about what the site's readers need, not what you need. There are two good reasons for this, and the first is the most obvious. If it doesn't interest your host's readers, they won't read it. That doesn't drive traffic to your site, help you build connections with more readers, or sell your books. In addition, Google doesn't like it when content doesn't make sense for the site. Instead, Google knows when your guest post is relevant to the host site and rewards that accordingly.

**Provide a top-quality blog post.**

Don't crank out something quickly and send it along without composing thoughtfully, then editing and proofreading. If the post needs heavy editing, the host will reject it. That rejection leaves a hole in the host's editorial calendar, so you've damaged your relationship with them. Nobody likes that kind of disappointment – not your host, and not you.

What's more, Google values high-quality content. While the evaluation process doesn't include a roomful of grammarians checking for "your" vs. "you're," bad content doesn't serve (or influence) anyone. Low-quality content actually hurt you, too. You're an author, after all, and we expect authors to be writers. If your guest post isn't well-written, we'll presume your book isn't either. Get professional help if you need it.

**Guest blog only for sites that are appropriate for your goals.**

That might seem obvious, but many overlook this key point. They shoot for quantity, not quality. Focus on collaborating with blogs that have a connection to your topic, genre, or audience. For example, if your book is about how to sell crafts on Etsy, you shouldn't be guest blogging for the "Eat Clean Now!" blog just because the host is your friend. That won't help either one of you – and it could hurt your host because Google doesn't like off-topic content. Similarly, novelists should be guest blogging on sites their readers read, not on sites hosted by writer friends who serve a different genre.

**Do it right, and word will spread**

Just as publicity begets publicity, writing great guest posts will help get you invitations to contribute to other sites that reach your audience. It's the difference between cold calling and accepting an unsolicited invitation.

Plus, being a top-quality guest blogger is like being a good house guest. Do it the right way, and you'll be invited back.

It is about more than submitting a relevant, well-written post, though. It's about the little things that most guest bloggers overlook – requesting and following the site's guidelines, providing everything the host has asked for, meeting your deadline. (I'm still waiting for a guest post that was due three weeks ago on a deadline the author selected.)

If you want to learn how to stand out, be sure to download my free Guest Blogging Cheat Sheet. It offers nine best practices that will make take your guest blog submission from sub-par to superior.

**Just do it**

Guest blogging is a smart book marketing tactic. In addition to helping you sell books, it can get you the visibility and credibility you need to get clients, contracts, and speaking gigs.

But perhaps the best reason for authors to guest blog is that it helps you connect with more of the people you wrote your book for. It helps you find the right readers. Give it a try, then watch your sales. If you provide guest blog posts, what's your best tip for others who want to start doing it?

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Sandra Beckwith is an author and national award-winning former publicist. She teaches authors how to save thousands of dollars by doing their own publicity, promotion, and marketing. You might have seen her on "The Montel Williams Show," or "CBS This Morning," or read about her in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, or USA Today. Feedspot has ranked her website, Build Book Buzz, in the top 10 among thousands of book marketing blogs worldwide; it has also been named a top website for authors and writers six other times. Get your "Top 5 Free Book Promotion Resources" when you subscribe to the free Build Book Buzz newsletter at <https://buildbookbuzz.com/gift> .

## APSS Tip for Negotiating Large-Quantity Orders



Years ago, I (Brian Jud) was a sales manager for a Fortune 250 company. When I was interested in hiring a salesperson, I would tell him or her that I was not going to hire them. If they gave up and left, they were not hired. But if they tried to sell me on themselves, I would hire them. I wanted a salesperson who would not give up when hearing “No.” Think the same way when corporate buyers say no to your proposal. Consider that they are simply testing your belief in your recommendation. Continue by asking why they do not feel your proposal is right for them, then counterattack.

## APSS Top Ten List

Every month *Fortune* magazine interviews a successful entrepreneur. Each is asked for his or her top pieces of advice for budding entrepreneurs in a wide variety of industries. APSS has published many of these tips. Here are **Ten More Tips from Successful Entrepreneurs** gleaned from recent issues of the “Venture” column in *Fortune* magazine:

Herb Greenberg, Founder and CEO of Caliper

1. **Hire with potential succession planning in mind.** Does a person applying for a financial role show leadership potential?
2. **Sidestep stock interview questions.** Instead, for example, ask the person to describe a time he lost a sale... and how he was able to learn from it and move on to the next challenge.
3. **Ask references more than just, “Did she do the job well?”** Ask, “What was she like?” and “How did she work with others?” You can always teach skills. You can’t teach attitude.

Kim Jordan, Founder and CEO of New Belgium Brewing

4. **Codify what you stand for as a company and talk about that a lot with your co-workers.** Every August we have a companywide retreat outdoors with 550 employees, where everyone talks about what we need to do in the next year to meet our core values. That kicks off our strategic planning for the year.
5. **Give people the opportunity to try again.** Rather than go around asking who made a mistake, we ask, “How did the system fail, and what can we do to be less prone to fail again?”
6. **Stay on the forefront.** When we invest in new technology, we expect some of that to fail. If you expect things to always succeed, you’re probably not far enough out on the learning edge.

Charlie Clifford, Founder of Tumi and Compass Partners

7. **Don’t advertise too soon.** Wait until your product is ready for primetime. We



advertised in the *New Yorker* magazine in the late 70s but didn't get any results from the ads because our products weren't sufficiently distinctive yet.

8. **Be inclusive.** Tumi didn't become a successful brand because I sat in a room coming up with a game plan by myself. Our management meetings grew to 20 people over time. Decision making by consensus slows the process down, but in the end the decisions are sounder.
9. **Be original.** Our designs were modern for their time and highly functional. It was a strong statement that made traveling executives and professionals want our products
10. **Take pride in what you do.** I'm proud of putting together the top-notch team that built Tumi. I'm still amazed when I see all the Tumi bags people carry. It's part of an executive's uniform today.

## Author Beware: Burnout Happens

By Jeff Davidson, MBA, CMC



An over-emphasis on efficiency, often characterized by attempting to handle too much at once, can lead to burnout. Some authors proceed as if they can handle everything as long as they stay focused. This is embodied by the person who wants to increase his output by 12%, enroll in an evening course at a local university, spend more time with his/her spouse and kids, rise to an even greater position in the community, and maintain peak fitness.

Such authors harbor the notion that if they can find a way to work more efficiently, they'll be able to "get it all done." So, they race through some tasks as fast as possible, slow down a bit for others, rarely pause and reflect, and remain in that mode for hours or days or weeks on end. When doing things rapidly doesn't seem to be enough, this manager stays on the job longer each day.

### Campaigns, not Marathons

To be sure, there are times when it makes sense to put in a long day. When weekly work hours start to stack up and cut into one's personal time, stress, anxiety, and exhaustion are all too predictable. The stakes seemingly increase, as one's perspective decreases.

Some authors fall into the "I must do it all" trap because they don't trust others. Some fall because they have no inkling of how to delegate effectively. Others succumb because they see fellow authors putting in exorbitantly long hours. Hence they believe that this is the only way to approach one's work and get things done. The key is to create and maintain a sense of balance between the two. Success comes when both effectiveness and efficiency meet.

### Don't Equate Organizing Time with Wasted Time

Sometimes it seems as if the energy and effort you expend at getting organized will be a waste. After all, if you're already feeling behind and have much to accomplish, wouldn't good time management necessitate simply jumping in and handling those things that beg for your attention? Not exactly.... Often, you have to slow down in order to speed up.

In general, being organized greatly enhances your ability to manage your time thereafter. Knowing where items are located on file or on disk puts you in charge, and provides freedom to concentrate on creative,

fulfilling, or necessary tasks and not the clutter that surrounds you.

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Jeff Davidson is "The Work-Life Balance Expert®" whose passion is helping organizations achieve rapid progress for their employees. The premier thought leader on work-life balance issues, Jeff is the author of 59 books, among them "Breathing Space," "Simpler Living," the "60 Second Innovator," and the "60 Second Self-Starter." Visit [www.BreathingSpace.com](http://www.BreathingSpace.com) for more information.

## Tips for Selling to Non-Bookstore Buyers

By Guy Achtzehn



Change questions. An old tale tells of a curious plague that struck a village long ago. When afflicted, its victims went into a death-like coma, and most of died within a day. The problem was that villagers couldn't tell if a victim was dead or alive. After discovering that someone had been buried alive an alarmed town council convened. The majority -- hoping to save lives -- voted to put food and water in every coffin. Another group proposed a cheaper solution to implement: a long stake in every coffin placed directly over the victim's heart. Thus, all doubts about the victim's condition would vanish. What differentiated the solutions were the questions used to find them. The first group asked, "What if we buried somebody alive?" The second group asked. "How can we make sure everyone we bury is dead? How can you change your questions to come up with different answers? For example, define your target readers and then ask, "Who else could use this content?"

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

### 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)

**"Can you give me an example of how to define my target readers?" Andrea Solver**

Perhaps the most popular means of dividing a target reader is by quantifiable, demographic characteristics such as age, income or gender. People who are of similar ages, genders, educational levels and income brackets may exhibit similar buying habits. You may find your sales efforts more successful if you define your typical buyer by these objective criteria in each category. As an example, if you find that readers of your book are 55+ years of age, you might design the page layout with a larger type size and greater leading.

Consider the market for selling job-search books to unemployed people. Not everyone in that total market has the same career needs, skills or aspirations. There are college students seeking their first position. There are 50+ year-old people with families and greater financial obligations. Women, minorities, blue-collar workers and Latinos all have different needs, require different information and may look for job-search assistance in diverse places. A title describing the basic functions of how to get a job could -- and should -- be marketed differently to each segment.

It is not necessary to be too specific. Just know that people who need your book are in a high, medium or low-income bracket. People who are unemployed have little or no income and may not purchase books. Instead, they seek free job-search information at libraries or from their state departments of labor. Therefore, you would aim your sales efforts at libraries and state governments. Students are typically frugal, so you could reach them through their colleges or parents.



# How to Work With a Book-Marketing Consultant

By Brian Jud



Over the past 30 years I have been an author, publisher and book-marketing consultant. During that time, I have learned a valuable lesson: a mistake may be the costliest part of the publishing process. If you work well with a knowledgeable, competent book publishing/marketing consultant, you can minimize – or hopefully eliminate – costly errors. Here are some things to consider when choosing and working with an advisor.

- Seek people who are recognized leaders in their specialty. Ask members of your local publishing group or Facebook friends for their recommendations and/or experiences with one of the consultants you are evaluating. If you get a negative response, do not automatically eliminate the potential consultant. The client may not have properly implemented the consultant's good advice with poor results. Then choose carefully after doing your due diligence.
- When you contact your first few choices, ask how they work with their clients. Is it on an hourly basis? If so, must all calls last an hour or is there some flexibility of the time for each? Are the fees based on a project basis? How do they track the time? Get all details in writing prior to your first meeting. Ask the potential consultants about their personal experience on their topic (writing, publishing, marketing, SEO, social media, etc.). Did they study the topic or did they actually implement the actions they may prescribe?
- Ask for referrals – people you may contact. Understand that they will give you the names of their most-satisfied clients.
- Do not be afraid to pay for quality information, but do not assume that the hourly rate that the consultant charges is necessarily an indicator of the quality of the information you will get. Compare the offered services to the price charged and factor in the success ratio of previous clients. Do not discount the “personality factor.” What does your gut tell you? Do you like and respect this person, or do you think there could be a personality conflict?
- Do not ask your consultant for free time outside of your the agreed-upon time. For example, asking him or her to read your book or review your website is not appropriate. Similarly, do not call between appointments and say, “I just have one quick question...” Quick questions generally require an in-depth answer.
- Take control of each meeting. Have an objective for each meeting and prepare a list of questions or topics in advance of each meeting so you cover what you want in the allotted time. Similarly, do not divulge your opinion while opening a subject because the consultant may reply with what you want to hear. You are the client -- make sure your advisor responds to your needs.
- Ask a question and then do more listening than talking. Remember that a comment is not necessarily a fact simply because the consultant states it. Ask for clarification or proof if you suspect or do not understand an instruction. (“Why do you say that?” Or, “What do I do if this happens...?” Or, “How does that apply in my situation?”)

Most consultants will give you directions and advice that they believe will work for you. Get specific instructions and then do it. If necessary, arrange additional time with your advisor as you move ahead to discuss how to handle unanticipated obstacles.

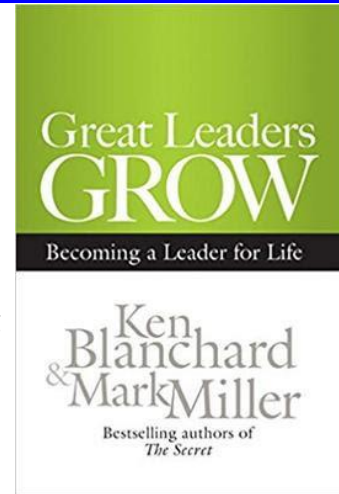
Give the relationship time to work. The more you get together the more relaxed – and perhaps productive – your meetings will become. As your consultant gets a good feel for your ability to carry out instructions, he or she can make more appropriate remarks.

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Brian Jud is the author of *How to Make Real Money Selling Books* and now offers commission-based sales books to buyers in special markets. 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) [twitter.com/bookmarketing](https://twitter.com/bookmarketing)

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

*Great Leaders Grow: Becoming a Leader for Life* by Ken Blanchard. Successful leaders don't rest on their laurels because leadership is not a title on a business card. Leadership is a living process - and life means growth. As Ken Blanchard and Mark Miller write in the introduction, "the path to increased influence, impact, and leadership effectiveness is paved with personal growth.... Our capacity to grow determines our capacity to lead. It's really that simple." *Great Leaders Grow* shows leaders and aspiring leaders precisely which areas to focus on so they can remain effective throughout their lives.



## **What's The Big Idea?** **Editorial by Brian Jud**

How did written punctuation originate? It wasn't until the end of the fifteenth century that the Italian printer Aldus Manutius introduced the system of markings we call punctuation. The proper use of punctuation marks is a learned skill that has eluded even great writers ever since. Mark Twain once filled the last page of a manuscript with all the various symbols of punctuation and instructed his editor to disperse them within the story as he saw fit. (*The Little Book of Answers*, by Doug Lennox) Here are some examples of lesser-known editing symbols:

