**How to Sell Children’s Books**

**By Brian Jud**

A person could spend a lifetime attempting to make contact with every business, institution, and media outlet that reaches children and their parents. Fortunately for publishers, though, they do not have to. There is a broad range of children’s titles, and not every title is appropriate for all children. Similarly, not every outlet that reaches children necessarily reaches those that your book tar- gets. Thus, depending on the topic of the book and the age level it is geared toward, the mass market can be broken down into a less overwhelming and more relevant list of potential sales outlets.

Examples of smaller segments to which children’s books could be sold include toy stores, children’s museums, children’s libraries, children’s hospitals, daycare centers, restaurants, and clothing stores. The list goes on to include gift shops like Restoration Hardware, craft stores like Michaels, and specialty stores like Gymboree. Children’s books could also be sold to Parent Teacher Organizations to be used as fundraisers, or to schools for use as recreational or supple- mental reading. Additionally, they might be sold to corporations such as Mattel, Hasbro, Fisher Price, or Gerber to be used as premiums, or to members of groups such as the International Mom’s Club or Working Mom’s Refuge. Creating a list of only those outlets that reach the children your book is geared toward will significantly reduce the time and cost of your marketing actions.

As you can see, breaking down the mass market makes it much more manageable. It also saves you time and makes your marketing efforts more economical, because you end up only targeting the people who might be interested in your book. If you apply the ideas behind each of these examples to your own title, the non-trade mass market will not seem quite so intimidating.

With a little strategy and imagination, you can find sales opportunities for almost any title—fiction or non-fiction—in the non-trade marketplace. Think in terms of who else could be in your target market, including who else buys books for your target readers and where else your target readers shop. Then find out how to get your books into their hands.

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