

Book Marketing Matters™

Brian Jud's free, bi-weekly ezine dedicated to helping you get your fair share of the special-sales markets, and sell more books profitably

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Notes From the Front Lines

(Excerpted – with permission – from the Book Publishers' Handbook, by Eric Kampmann, President, Midpoint Trade Books ekampmann@aol.com)

"Returns" is a word nobody in the book biz wants to talk about. But like the proverbial uninvited guest, they seem to keep showing up at the party and making a nuisance of themselves. But whatever you've experienced with returns, they are here to stay in the book trade and so we need to understand them and account for them. Books have been sold on a returnable basis since the 1930's when some of the major publishers decided to offer accounts an incentive to take greater up front risks. We have been living with the aftermath of this innovation ever since. Today, new titles generally experience a 30% to 60% return rate. Books stay on the shelf about 90 days and then come back if they are not moving at sufficient velocity. The situation is even worse with mass-market retailers. With backlist titles the story is different. Here returns will run between 5% and 15% of sales. A very low return rate might suggest that you have too few books in the marketplace. Finally, you need to factor returns into your P&L. For new titles I would use 30% as a starting point, but if you are shipping more than 10,000 books I would budget a higher percentage.

Editor's Note: To have your books sold on a non-returnable, commission-only basis to non-bookstore buyers, go to www.premiumbookcompany.com

Poynter's Pointers

(Excerpted - with permission - from Dan Poynter's Fifteenth Edition of *The Self-Publishing Manual*: <http://www.parapublishing.com>. To receive Dan's free newsletter, *Publishing Poynters*, go to <http://parapub.com/sites/para/resources/newsletter.cfm>)

Toll-Free Ordering Number. Some publishers have joined together to share the costs for a staffed toll-free telephone number that may be used by customers to order books. This is less-expensive than using an order-taking service.

The Cover Story

(Tamara Dever, TLC Graphics. For a free publishing consultation or to learn more about book design, please write to info@tlcgraphics.com or visit www.TLCGraphics.com.)

What happens when you want to take your back-of-the-room-only seller to a more mainstream market? It usually needs a redesign! That's something Cathy Stucker knew when she came to us looking for a new cover. The original had all the right elements—prominent title, readable subtitle and author name, accompanying graphic—but there was nothing unique about the cover and it lacked dynamics. It needed an upgrade to reach a more competitive market.

We gave the new cover a fresh look with retro art, typefaces, and color palette to attract female shoppers—the majority of the book's buyers. Each element, with its relative size and placement, work together to attract and move

your eye through the cover's space and directly off the right side of the page, causing you to open it up and see what's inside. In the words of a Barnes & Noble rep, the new cover gives the book "curb appeal." This cover is fun, reflecting the subject matter and bringing all-important enthusiasm to its potential readers.



Marcella's Magic

(Marcella Smith, Small Press Business Manager, Barnes & Noble)

The process for contacting Barnes & Noble for our decision about whether or not we want to distribute the book into our stores is straightforward and simple. All you need to do is send a copy of the finished book to us along with a cover letter letting us know how you're going to promote the title, what you're marketing and publishing plans are, when you plan to publish the book and what your credentials are for writing it.

The Book Shepherd

(Judith Briles, www.TheBookShepherd.com Follow me on Twitter, <http://twitter.com/JudithBriles>)

Is There A Book Signing In You? I'm not a fan of indiscriminate book signings — ask an author and most will tell you that they can be downright awful. Do them, but be selective. To enhance your event:

- 1 *Do make sure that the bookstore has ordered a sufficient quantity of books and bring extra books for signings* — stores do sell out and most will happily “buy” from your stock, paying you later.
- 2 *Do be pro-active.* Don't expect people just to “show up”. You've got to be the key factor that they come. Send post cards, emails—anything to encourage them to come.
- 3 *Do make it festive.* Bring cookies, colored napkins. Ask your contact before if it's OK. Do think about give-aways. Your book is a celebration. The only folks who get to truly sit are the literary celebs whose name alone brings in the crowds—you know...the ones that the bookstore says that tickets will be available starting at 5:30PM.

You're On The Air

(Benita Zahn, Noon News anchor and talk-show host on WNYT-TV, Albany, NY)

Listen to the people who are interviewing you. If they pick up on something neat you say you can go with the ball that they toss back in your court.

Kremer's Korner

(Excerpted - with permission - from John Kremer's Sixth Edition of *1001 Ways to Market Your Books*. Contact John at <http://www.bookmarket.com>)

The library market is not a homogeneous whole. There are more than 150,000 libraries in the U.S., including 9000 public library systems, 3275 college libraries, 100,000 el-hi libraries, 1000 governmental libraries and more than 1000 formal church libraries. Plus almost every organization in the country has its own small collection of books.

Interior Designing

(Dick Margulis, editor and book designer, New Haven, Connecticut.
Contact Dick at dick@dmargulis.com)

Dressing the part: Typically, the design of a book page should be transparent to the reader. That is, you do not usually want the reader to notice what a lovely and interesting typeface you've chosen or what a cleverly designed border you've added. No, you want the reader to understand what the author is trying to communicate, and that message is embodied in the words, not in their graphic representation. Nonetheless, there are times when it makes sense to let those creative juices flow.

Chapter pages are a good place to add display elements to a book. Some fiction for adults consists of many short chapters without chapter titles, and a modest chapter number is sufficient. Often such chapters run into one another without so much as a page break. And that's fine if that's what the book calls for. But in many other books, the chapter divisions are more important. Young readers in particular like to get a little visual reward for completing one chapter and starting on the next.

Browse in a library or bookstore to see some of the many ways designers have handled chapter pages and, where they're present, part pages. There may be an outside number; the start of the text may be sunk far down the page; the chapter title might be in a decorative (but still legible) typeface; there may be decorative rules. And of course there are many other possibilities. One thing you will see frequently—and a good way to dress up even the plainest book—is a drop cap or other special treatment for the first letter of a chapter. A two-line drop cap, followed by three or four words in small caps, is a modest way to signify the beginning of a major new thought, which is what a chapter break or section break is, after all, or a good place to close the book and take a break. But in other sorts of books, that chapter initial can be something quite ornate. There are hundreds of beautiful sets of decorated initials, and they can really dress up a book where they're appropriate.

How you treat the chapter page depends on the type of book you're designing. Look at what other people have done and decide what approach works best for you.

Author 101

(Excerpted - with permission - from *Author 101: Bestselling Book Publicity*, by Rick Frishman and Robyn Spizman; contact Rick at FRISHMANR@PlannedTVArts.com or www.author101.com)

In a book proposal, clarity comes first; you must vividly describe your book so that readers have no question regarding what it's about. It's better to be rejected because agents or editors don't like your concept than because they don't understand it. If you can be clear and also be clever and humorous, that's great, but consider it a bonus, not a mandatory requirement for your lead sentence. Don't risk obscuring or not adequately describing your book in order to show off; editors don't buy books from authors who don't write clearly.

The Very Idea

(Editorial by Brian Jud)

Be larger than life. Catch people by surprise and demonstrate a benefit of your book at the same time. That will focus their attention on your message. The more different you can be from your competition and from expectations, the more books you will sell. What can you do to get a prospective buyer's attention in a positive, provocative way?



Marketing to Non-Bookstore Buyers

(Excerpted from *Beyond the Bookstore a Publishers Weekly* book by Brian Jud
<http://www.bookmarketing.com>)

When selling to catalogs, do not expect a large order immediately since most catalog buyers will do a smaller-scale test first. The term *smaller-scale* is relative because a test may require 500 or more copies of your book. The time period in which this occurs varies with the frequency of the catalog's publication (some publish monthly, others quarterly) and the applicability of your product to the buying period and complementary products.

Catalog buyers may fear that a small publisher cannot stock to their demand. And they may require you to hold inventory sufficient to meet their expected sales. You may also have to guarantee your price for the period of your contract. Offer them proof that you will do so, or that you can reprint and deliver within a suitable time. If you cannot meet their requirements you may have to reconsider using catalogs as a selling tool.

Savvy Self-Promotion

(Penny Sansevieri, author of *From Book to Bestseller*, penny@amarketingexpert.com.

Follow me on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/bookgal>)

Five Easy Ways to Grow Your Platform. We always hear having a platform is important, the term is confusing to many authors but the breakdown of what it takes to grow or enhance a platform is pretty basic. Here are some tips to get you started:

- 1) Get to know your network: getting to know people, clubs, web sites, and organizations in your network, market, or niche is important.
- 2) Starting working your market: You'll want to begin networking with your audience, perhaps attending events or contacting groups to pitch yourself as a speaker.
- 3) Get a website: the quickest way to getting online exposure is to get a website. Remember your website is your 24/7 business card, if you're going to market online or off, you'll want a virtual presence.
- 4) Enhance your virtual presence: once you have a web site, get some social networking real estate too. Go after a page on Facebook, MySpace, or Squidoo and start building a presence there.

If your business is your platform, start digging into your market by gathering names and email addresses of your customer base. These are the people you'll want to market to when your book comes out, you'll be able to pitch events, special offers, and future books.

Booklet Ideas – Paulette Ensign

(Paulette is President of Tips Products International, Paulette@tipsbooklets.com

Follow me on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/pauletteensign>)

One day while looking through the mail I saw a direct mail piece from a well-known copying machine manufacturer. They were touting their new model copier that produced a large quantity of copies at very high speed. As an incentive to have a sales person call on you, they offered an executive flashlight as a gift. The entire thing hit my funny bone. I drafted a letter to the senior vice president whose name was at the bottom of the letter: "Dear Mr. So-and-So, Congratulations on your new model 6000 that produces a gazillion copies in a nano-second. When your new buyers reach the bottom of the pile of copies and see the light with the use of the executive flashlight you've provided them, they may find useful a copy of the enclosed booklet on organizing your business life." That company did order 500 copies of my booklet, to test it against the flashlight to see which offer brought a better response for sales calls. The booklet did not get past the test, though it could have. Checking your mail each day through creative eyes can provide new sales opportunities. And, a sale of 500 booklets was a sale of 500 booklets!

Pam's Publicity

(By Pam Lontos, Owner of the publicity firm PR/PR and author of *I See Your Name Everywhere*; sign up for free publicity tips at www.prpr.net)

Put a media page on your web site: On this page list all the articles you've had published, as well as those articles you are interviewed in as an expert source. Make sure people can click on the article title to read the full text, which will, of course, include your great resource box. Also put a notice on the page that companies and publications are free to use your articles as needed, provided that they keep your resource box intact and send you a copy or tearsheet. Finally, include your publication history in your web site bio. For example, you could write, "Joan has been published in over 150 magazines, such as Agency Sales Journal, Auto Success Magazine, and Broker Agent News, just to name a few."

Book-Marketing Tips – Roger C. Parker

(Roger C. Parker is the \$32 Million Dollar Author. Test your Book Publishing IQ at his www.publishedandprofitable.com)

Always review your articles and blog posts for SEO effectiveness. When submitting articles or adding new posts to your blog, always review them from the perspective of search engine appeal. Evaluate how effectively your articles and blog posts will attract the search engine traffic your business needs to promote your book and build your business. Ask yourself questions like these:

* **Keywords.** Do your article headlines and blog post titles incorporate the keywords you are using to attract qualified traffic to your website and blog?

* **Repetition.** Do you repeat the keywords used in your headlines and titles in the first sentence of your article or blog post? Do your keywords appear elsewhere within the body content of each article and blog post?

Every article and blog post serves two purposes; one is to showcase your expertise, professionalism, and personal style. The other purpose is to attract new readers and new prospects to your website or blog.

Before you press "submit" or "update," review your article titles and blog posts for their search engine effectiveness. Instead of just assuming that your first headline or article is the best, try writing several alternate headlines and titles. Then, rewrite the first sentence of your article or blog post. Subtle rewriting and rewording can pay big dividends in terms of attracting the right traffic to your website and blog.

Bartlett's Quotations on Powerful Publishing Ideas

(Robin Bartlett is a former member of the IBPA Board of Directors and is the Publishing University Chair
rbbartlett@aol.com)

Respect the buyer's time. If you make an appointment with your buyer for 20 minutes, be sure to wind up and conclude on the stroke of 20! If the buyer invites you to stay on for some additional time, it's OK to say yes, but I recommend you spend the extra time building rapport and not on making a longer presentation.

Marketing Planning

(Excerpted from Brian Jud's e-booklet, *Plan Your Work and Work Your Plan: 461 Tips for Profitable Marketing Planning*;
www.bookmarketing.com)

Categorize your customers and prospects by their purchasing needs, growth potential, relative bargaining power, steadiness of order flow, shipping costs, selling costs, and need for customization.

Marketing Strategy

(Excerpted from Brian Jud's e-booklet, *The Buck Starts Here: 635 Tips for Creating Successful Marketing Strategy*;
www.bookmarketing.com)

Title differentiation says, "Here is what this title means for you." Competitor differentiation says, "We are better than *Title B* because...."

Guest Columnist – Ellen Reid

(To learn more about Ellen please visit www.bookshep.com and e-mail Ellen at bookshep@mac.com or ellen@bookshep.com)

The Seven Deadliest Mistakes New Authors Often Make. The world of publishing is changing on what seems like almost a daily basis. And a rapidly growing percentage of the 400,000 new titles reaching bookstores annually are independently or self-published. So if you are considering putting out your own book, there are a number of pitfalls you can avoid to save you time, save you money, and give you a far better shot at success. There are seven deadly mistakes I have seen new authors make, with ideas to help you avoid them. One will be described in each of seven installments.

1. Thinking they can do it all themselves. You may be an expert in your field, however, you are most likely not an expert in the highly specialized arena of book publishing and production. Read all the books on publishing and self-publishing you want to. Then keep in mind that while you can read all the books on brain surgery, too, would you want to operate on someone you love? Use what you learn from your research to support yourself in selecting the right people to assist you.

Helpful Website of the Week

Writers and Editors

<http://www.writersandeditors.com/>

This site aims to connect writers and editors with "great resources and each other, with publications and clients who can fund them, and with audiences who appreciate them." It offers free information for people who need the basics and those looking to advance their writing careers. Those who are looking for an editor might start with the job banks. The site offers free links to other sites and organizations for writers and editors, and lists of recommended books and other useful resources.



Buy Lines -- Free Information to Help You Sell More Books

**Learn How to Make More Money Selling Your Books
IBPA Publishing University -- May 26-28, 2009 at the Roosevelt Hotel, NYC**

The three-day conference is an excellent opportunity to learn how to sell more books, run a more profitable publishing company, meet the industry's pros and network with your peers between sessions and during the social events planned before, during and after hours. Go to <http://thepublishinguniversity.com/> for more information and to register

Book Marketing Blog

For more information on special-sales, book marketing in general, as well as all of the topics discussed in each edition of *Book Marketing Matters*, go to the Book Marketing Blog at <http://blog.bookmarketing.com>

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Book Central Station™

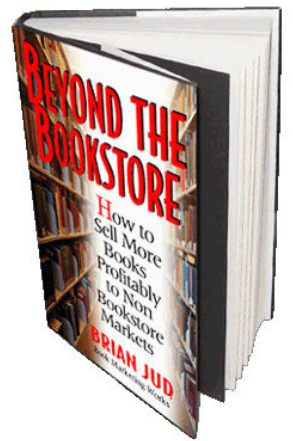
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Check out the Writers and Publishers Bookstore and give your favorite books a “Thumbs Up Rating.” Discover and rate the best books on writing, publishing and marketing (<http://www.bookmarketingworks.com/bookstore/bookstore.htm>)

Brian Jud’s *Beyond the Bookstore* is now available in softcover and as a pdf document

Order *Beyond the Bookstore* and CD-ROM (\$24.95) -- Softcover

Order *Beyond the Bookstore* and CD-ROM (\$19.95) – pdf and CD-ROM contents will be emailed to you



Contact Information for Brian Jud

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I won't share or sell your email address.

Discover even more information about non-bookstore marketing by visiting the *Special-Sales Tip of the Week* at www.bookmarketing.com

Brian Jud now offers commission-only sales to buyers in special markets and several other programs to contact prospective buyers in special markets for you through personal sales calls, customized mailings and telephone calls. There is a program for any budget. www.premiumbookcompany.com

Brian is also an author and book-marketing consultant helping publishers market and promote their books to increase their sales and profits. Find rated lists of suppliers to publishers at www.bookcentralstation.com. Brian is a media trainer, frequent speaker at publishing events and host of the online Publisher's Bookstore listing many discounted titles on publishing, publicity, planning, marketing, publishing law, design and writing. Visit his blog at <http://blog.bookmarketing.com> and contact Brian at P. O. Box 715, Avon, CT 06001; (800) 562-4357; brianjud@bookmarketing.com or go to <http://www.bookmarketing.com>

